

Annual Report

2022 to 2023



Strong **foundations.**

GUUDJI YIIGU

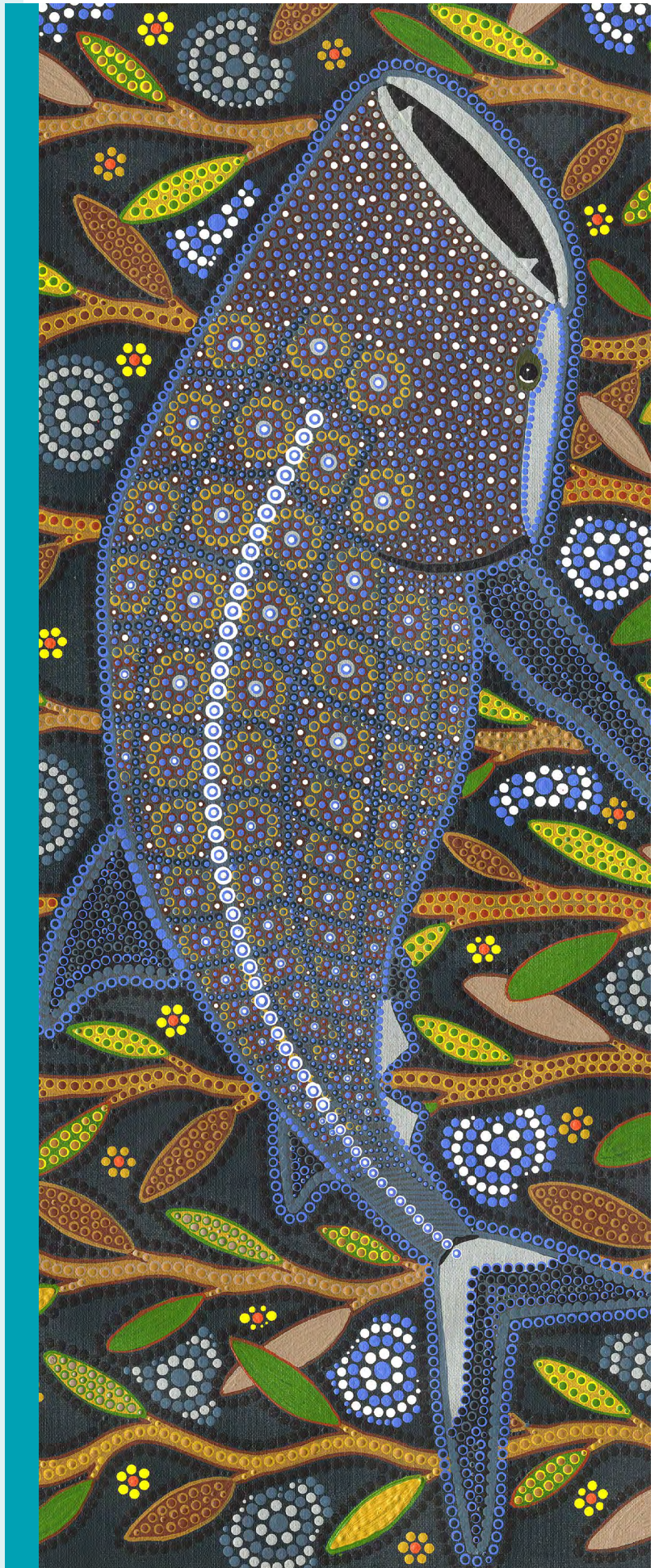
(GOO-JEE IK-KOO)

We welcome you to Port Stephens – part of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation. Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi people as traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which we all live, learn, work and play.

We value and respect the Worimi people and the legacy 60,000 years of Aboriginal Nation traditions and culture brings with it. As part of Council's culture of acceptance, diversification and harmony we walk alongside the Worimi people on a journey of listening and learning.

Together we will strive to make this a better place for all people. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



Welcome to the 2022 to 2023 Port Stephens Council Annual Report.

This report is designed to share our highlights, challenges and performance between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023. It also provides a guide for the year ahead.

We're committed to a transparent reporting and accountability process. We want our community to understand the organisation, our opportunities and constraints and help guide decision making. The report takes a plain English, honest and authentic approach.

Volume 1

OPERATIONS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

for the year together with statutory and governance information.

Read these 3 sections for general information about our Local Government Area and Council.

1 | Our Port Stephens

2 | Our Year in Review

3 | Our Leadership

Jump to this section to read stories that highlight our achievements across the 4 main focus areas as identified in the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032: Our community | Our place | Our environment | Our council.

4 | Our Performance

These 2 sections contain information that we're required to include by regulation and supplements information provided elsewhere in the report.

5 | Statutory Statements

6 | Appendix

Volume 2

contains our

AUDITED FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

If you love to look at finances displayed in spreadsheet style tables, then this volume is for you.

It outlines our audited financial accounts including performance, financial position and cash flows for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

We use the integrated Planning and Reporting framework in the Local Government Act 1993 to regularly report on our progress towards implementing our Delivery Program 2022 to 2026. This Annual report is the first year of our Delivery Program 2022 to 2026 following Council's adoption on 28 June 2022 of the revised Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032, Delivery Program 2022 to 2026, Operational Plan 2022 to 2023 and Resourcing Strategy 2022 to 2032.

You can read the full documents at portstephens.nsw.gov.au.

We acknowledge the Worimi people as the traditional custodians of this land.

© 2023 Port Stephens Council

This report has been prepared in line with Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 and section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

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Our favourite stories

Read our favourite stories that highlight key achievements across the 4 main focus areas as identified in the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032: Our community | Our place | Our environment | Our council.



Mobile library
refresh and refurb

58



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Our Port Stephens

Section 1

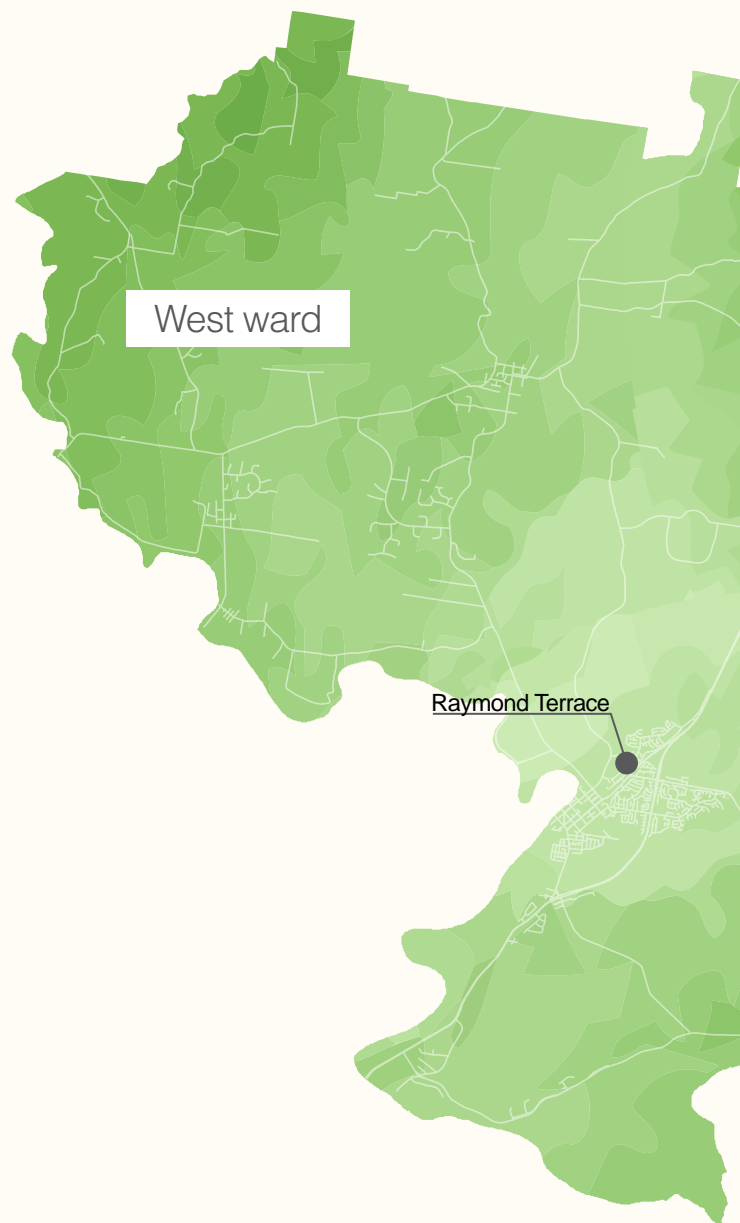
This section includes an overview of the city's history, our population, economy, location, and our people.

06 | Port Stephens snapshot

- Our location
- Our Council
- Our people
- Our economy
- Our stakeholders

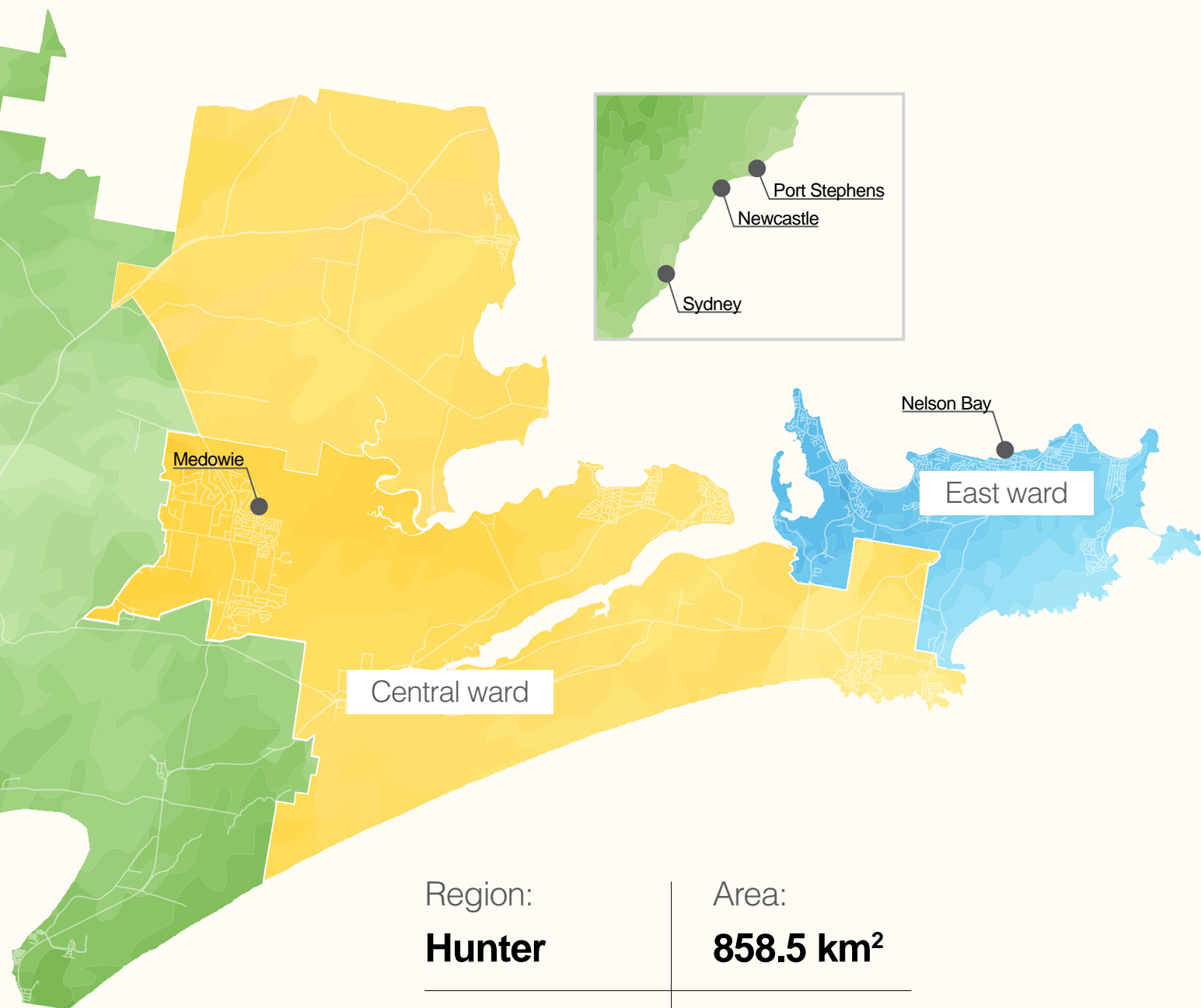
11 | Who are we?

- Community's vision
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Our location

Located on the east coast of Australia about 2 hours north of Sydney, Port Stephens is known for its incredible natural beauty, diverse economy and its distinct towns and villages. It's these unique characteristics that make it such a great place to live, work and visit.



Region:
Hunter

Area:
858.5 km²

Population density:
89 persons/km²

Major centres:
Raymond Terrace
Medowie
Nelson Bay

Our Council

Port Stephens Council's history stretches back almost

200 YEARS



TO THE EARLY
1800's

when the Raymond Terrace and
Dungog District Council was formed.



IN
1937

Port Stephens Shire Council amalgamated with Raymond Terrace
Municipal Council to form the modern Port Stephens Council.

Port Stephens has



A POPULARLY
ELECTED
MAYOR AND



9 COUNCILLORS
REPRESENTING



3 WARDS

They are supported by

581 EQUIVALENT
FULL-TIME
EMPLOYEES

who work hard to deliver
our community's vision
of a great lifestyle in a
treasured environment.



Our people

POPULATION

76,672



(2022 Estimated
Resident Population)

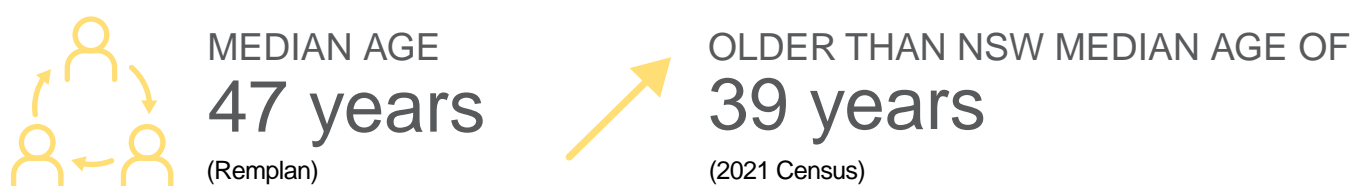
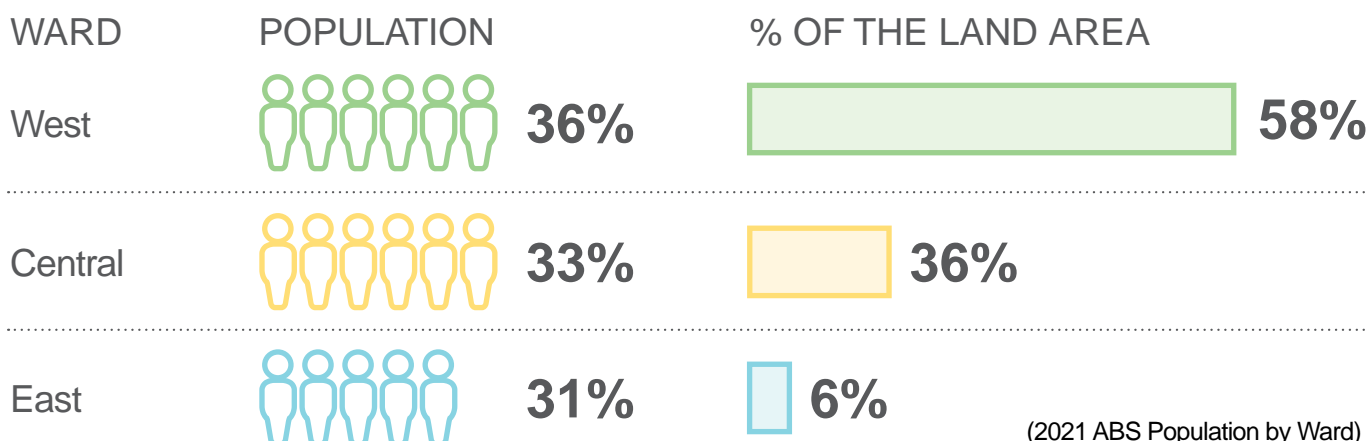


POPULATION
PROJECTION

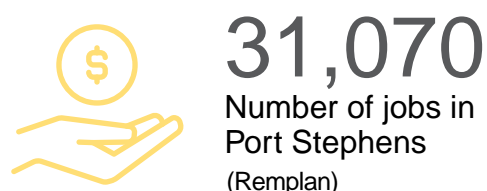
93,658
by 2041

(NSW Government
Department of Planning)

Our people



Our economy



MAIN EMPLOYING INDUSTRIES

Public Administration and Safety **14%** Manufacturing **11%** Construction **11%**

 You can read more about Port Stephens in our economic and community profiles:
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community/our-profile

Source: Remplan 2023

Our stakeholders

We work with a diverse range of stakeholders in delivering projects and services for our community. Understanding why each stakeholder is important and our importance to them is vital in working together to shape our place.

We use a range of methods to communicate and engage with our stakeholders. Methods differ across stakeholder groups depending on the level of influence they may have. This is outlined in our Communication and Engagement Strategy.



Who are we?

Community's vision

A great lifestyle in a treasured environment.

Council's vision

Engaged and resilient people in strong healthy relationships, working collaboratively enhancing community wellbeing.

Council's purpose

To deliver services valued by our community in the best possible way.

Values

Respect – creating a unique, open and trusting environment in which each individual is valued and heard.

Integrity – being honest and inspiring trust by being consistent, matching behaviours to words and taking responsibility for our actions.

Teamwork – working together as one Council, supporting each other to achieve better results for everyone.

Excellence – improving the way we work to meet the challenges of the future.

Safety – providing a safety focused workplace culture to ensure the wellbeing of staff, their families and the community.



Our Year in Review

Section 2

This section includes a snapshot of our highlights, challenges, performance and what's been happening in the community.

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Strong foundations

In Port Stephens, we're proud of our strong sense of identity and community spirit. It's our strong foundations that have allowed us to endure several years of frequent lockdowns and natural disasters. This year has been about building on these foundations, continuing to make them stronger as we set a path for the future.

Our ongoing commitment to securing long term financial sustainability and ensuring services across Port Stephens were retained. During this time, we reviewed our Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Resourcing Strategy – the nuts and bolts of what we do. Making sure the structure of our organisation was stable and strong.

With this strong foundation, we've been able to enjoy the character and design of our community. It's the community's values and priorities that underpin the work that we do to make Port Stephens a great place to live, work and visit.

Within these strong foundations, our teams have been able to focus on making our community great, working hard to deliver core services and facilities – with a willingness and perseverance, to get the job done.

We hope you'll enjoy reading about how we've reinforced our Strong Foundations in preparation for a new year. We proudly present our Port Stephens Annual Report 2022 to 2023.

Our community highlights



114,222

CHILDCARE PLACES

provided throughout Port Stephens. Places takes into account the total number of sessions delivered across the year. For example, if a child attended OOSH every morning and afternoon for 40 weeks of the year it would be counted as 400 placed filled.



1,602

NEW LIBRARY MEMBERS



296,365

LIBRARY
COLLECTION ITEMS



127,011

AQUATIC CENTRE VISITS



21,452

CUSTOMER
REQUESTS RAISED

with 82% closed within 21 days

Our place highlights



59,000+

POTHoles REPAIRED



827

DEVELOPMENT
APPLICATIONS

determined with a median turnaround time of 22 days and a total capital investment value of \$326 million



86

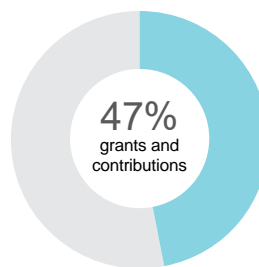
IT'S ON! ACTIVATIONS

held across the LGA



\$39

MILLION
OF CAPITAL
EXPENDITURE



including amenities, depot upgrades, shared pathways, and significant road upgrades for Clarence Town Road, Tanilba Road and Gan Gan Road (this does not include Newcastle Airport, dedicated assets or land under roads)



\$10M

FUNDING FOR ROADS

Commitment secured through
NSW Election

Our environment highlights



5,664
TREES PLANTED

with the help of volunteers



32,000
GARDEN ORGANIC
BINS ROLLED OUT



5,930
TONNES OF
RECYCLING



200m³
OF EXPANDED
POLYSTYRENE
RECYCLED

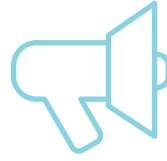
and converted into 500KG of reusable plastic.



Stage 3
COASTAL MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM (CPM)
ENGAGEMENT
COMPLETE

With letters delivered to 4,500+ impacted residents

Our Council highlights



8,000
PEOPLE PARTICIPATED

in our Rate Rise Options community engagement campaign
Special Rate Variation application approved as part of our financial sustainability strategy



5
AWARDS WON

from place planning to PSCare



\$19
MILLION
OPERATING GRANT
FUNDING

received mostly from State and Federal Governments



AT LEAST
645
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS ENGAGED
FACE TO FACE

through 28 formal community engagement opportunities



Challenges

- We started the financial year with another natural disaster in July 2022, closing over 20 roads. Ongoing flooding, off the back of previous natural disasters, and increasing prices continued to put a strain on our finances. Due to other weather events we also had to postpone various events, including the highly anticipated Illuminate Raymond Terrace Festival.
- We also experienced delays to our major project schedule as we continued to get back on track following the weather event of July 2022. We had to focus our efforts on repairing infrastructure. Our road network was suffering due to extended periods of severe wet weather, with limited funding available to repair and maintain it to the required standard. With our limited resources we've prioritised projects, sought additional funding for our roads and reviewed our ongoing financial sustainability.
- Like many other government and private sector organisations, we've faced challenges in managing and delivering both ongoing and new projects due to supply chain issues with people, materials and equipment. Since the unfolding of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Australian construction industry has experienced a significant constraint on the growth of its workforce. This has contributed to increased labour costs and made it difficult for contractors to resource projects at reasonable rates, putting projects under stress. Simultaneously, material costs have soared due to global supply chain disruptions and limitations, making it more difficult, costly, and timely to procure material. This is increasing project costs and delaying project timelines.
- As has been felt by many business, we experienced staff shortages and vacancies across all our sections. We've done our best to reprioritise our resourcing, delivering our services with less.



What's next?

- We'll continue planning and voicing the need for further funding for our community. Our Community Advocacy priorities focused on financial sustainability, grant funding opportunities, funding for road maintenance and responses to natural disasters.
- We're committed to playing our part to protect our environment, with a focus on our koala population and our coastlines. With the support of government funding we'll roll-out a number of initiatives to better understand koala habitats within Port Stephens. We'll also finalise our Coastal Management Program.
- Employees are one of the strongest pillars of our foundations. We're focused on letting the job market know the personal and professional benefits of working and are developing an Employee Value Proposition (EVP) to strengthen our brand and values in a competitive labour market.
- With the successful SRV, we'll be able to increase resources to meet current services levels. We'll continue to report back to the community about how we're using the SRV funds through our reporting.
- The 2023 to 2024 financial year budget will be spent on key major projects, like upgrading our town centres and the work being undertaken at Little Beach, Nelson Bay, as well as delivering our core community services. From 2024 to 2025, the community will also see additional funding for the delivery of road repairs along with improvements to public spaces and the natural environment.
- We'll be finalising a number of projects, programs and strategies that required further investigation, including the Wellbeing Strategy, and Carbon Neutral Action Plan.



Mayor's message

Over the past 6 years, I've been fortunate enough to be Mayor of Port Stephens. Although tough at times, I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to lead our Council and work closely with a very dedicated and passionate group of people.

It's very easy to underestimate the work that our Council delivers. I know before I was elected to Council, I really only had a small inkling of the size and scale of the projects and services Council provided. From our libraries, waste, roads, parks and sports grounds to events, business support, childcare, emergency services and planning – Port Stephens Council is a large and complex organisation.

The past year, with our new Council in place, we've worked hard to make sure the services we deliver are aligned with the community's needs. We've sharpened our focus and rebuilt the strength in our foundations.

In April and May of 2022, our Council worked closely together to delve deeper into what we do and how we do it. We worked hard to engage with our community and understand their priorities. We used this feedback to build our Integrated Plans and Reports – a technical name for all the strategies that guide our 10 year plan. We bundled all of this up to inform our Community Strategic Plan – which we aptly named 'Our place. Our plan. Our future'.

Planning for our Places

As a Council, we're committed to developing plans that create genuine outcomes for our community – we don't want documents that sit on a shelf – we want plans that deliver outcomes, help us access funding and most importantly, improve the wellbeing and liveability of all our communities.

Our Public Domain Plans provide the blue print for our two major town centres – Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay. They guide the delivery of big projects like the removal of the overhead bridge in Nelson Bay and smaller projects like new wayfinding signage and street furniture in Raymond Terrace.

Our Place Plans are focused on our unique towns and villages. We've recently completed Place Plans for Karuah, Medowie and soon Shoal Bay. We also have a new Hinterland Place Plan on the way and will commence engaging with our community on the Tilligerry Place Plan.

These Place Plans can cover everything from land use to building heights, pathways and roads to events and activation. As a Council, we know that with an action-oriented plan in place, amazing things can happen. Many actions are community-led and we've seen great outcomes already in Karuah since this plan was completed like the Karuah Bridge Mural project

completed in December 2022 and the Mainstreet Beautification project planned for July 2023.

Building a stronger future

Like many regional communities across Australia, Port Stephens has faced a huge challenge – the trifecta of housing supply, diversity, and affordability. If not managed now, it has the potential to threaten the long term sustainability of our communities.

The NSW Government has suggested that Port Stephens need to find housing for an additional 20,000 residents over the next 20 years. With increasing investment in Tomago and Heatherbrae and the expansion of Newcastle Airport to accommodate international flights, it would be naïve to think more people wouldn't want to choose Port Stephens as a place to call home.

With limited opportunity for new housing developments, we've seen housing prices increase – pushing low to middle income families out of the market. This not only causes significant social impacts but also, economic impacts. As we lose our students, our young professionals and in some cases retirees who can no longer afford to live in our community, we struggle to find people to fill jobs. Aged care facilities, health, hospitality and trades are all looking for more people to fill more and more vacancies. Unless we find solutions, these problems will only get worse over time.

As a community, we're facing a critical point in time, where our collective actions and decisions will shape the future of our communities for years to come. We must face this challenge head on.

As a start, to help us address these issues, Council will be reviewing our Housing Strategy. This strategy will guide future land use planning decisions for new housing throughout Port Stephens in all our unique towns and villages, particularly Raymond Terrace.

In partnership with the community, we'll seek solutions to how we can enable a move away from the standard detached home, how we encourage more town houses and apartments around our town centres, how

we encourage developers to invest in a mix of housing types and what we need to do, as a community, to drive this change.

The revitalisation of Raymond Terrace

Over the last year, we've been rolling out a program of works to create better places and spaces. This year, we've been reinvigorating the William Street Precinct by installing new shade structures, decking with seating, planter boxes and pavement stamping to highlight the William Street crossing area.

We also kicked off our Streets as Shared Spaces program working with local aboriginal artists and students to bring vibrancy and colour to the town centre. You'll see street art on furniture, walls and other underutilised spaces, pavement art and a new community corner that will bring the old Fire Station site to life.

We also invested in road and traffic improvements to slow down cars and increase safety and built a new shared path to better connect the community to the town centre.

Through grant funding, we were also able to bring events to the Streets of Raymond Terrace. After lots of planning, the much anticipated Illuminate Festival was cancelled at the last minute due to bad weather but in a few months, we look forward to holding the Raymond Terrace Festival.

So, our journey is far from over. Together, we'll keep shaping the bright future of Port Stephens, fuelled by our shared vision and determination. Thanks for your support and commitment to this incredible place we call home.



Ryan Palmer
Mayor of Port Stephens



General manager's message

This year, we've had the opportunity to strengthen our foundations – the bedrock that kept us strong during some tough times over the past few years. These foundations have enabled us to withstand multiple storm events and the far-reaching impacts of a worldwide pandemic.

Over the past year, we've worked to further secure these foundations. We've focused on making sure we're financially stable, that we deliver services valued by our community and that we include our community in our decision making.

A resilient and connected community

Despite kicking off the new financial year with another natural disaster, we supported the community by helping to close local roads and provide resources where needed, and most importantly maintained the Emergency Dashboard.

With over 20 roads closed during the flooding event, Council played a key role in assisting the SES, Police and other emergency services.

Our support continued after the floodwaters receded as we collaborated with Resilience NSW and other Government agencies to establish 5 Rapid Assistance Points across Raymond Terrace and Hinton.

The beginning of 2023 saw us celebrating our most significant Australia Day yet, during which we welcomed 83 new citizens. The 'It's On!' activation program continued and major events like Karuah by Night and the Raymond Terrace Festival became a reality thanks to external funding.

These grants allowed us to implement a comprehensive program of events and activations across Port Stephens all of which helped build community connections and increase the vibrancy of our public places.

Leading up to the NSW Election, we continued our advocacy work by voicing our community priorities. With the support of the incoming NSW Government, we secured a commitment of \$10 million for the repair and rehabilitation of our local roads.

We also established the Homelessness Stakeholder Advocacy Group to help with addressing the impacts of homelessness in Port Stephens. Together with key agencies, we're working on both short and long term solutions to help those struggling to find a place to live in Port Stephens.

Responsible Resource Management

One of the most important roles we have here at Council is the responsible management of our resources – balancing the needs of our growing community and our Council's long term financial sustainability is always a challenge but one that we continue to improve.

This year, we've worked with our community to identify ways to build our financial sustainability. We focused on finding efficiencies, reviewing our fees and charges, increasing smart parking revenue, asset sales and focus on obtaining state and federal grants. We also resolved to apply for a Special Rate Variation to support the ongoing delivery of our services.

On 15 June 2023, IPART announced that our application was successful. The new rates commenced on the 1 July 2023 and will support the reduction of projected budget shortfalls and ensure services across Port Stephens can be retained.

This outcome from IPART followed extensive engagement with the community. Over the past year, we heard more than 16,000 active responses via our community drop in sessions, presentations to community groups, through social media or our online surveys.

This is not the end, though. We'll continue to make sure we have our foundations right; we'll continue to focus on our service review program and where we find savings, we'll use these to improve services that are important to our community; fixing our roads, protecting our environment, and improving our public spaces.

This year, through savings made within our Waste Services, we've been able to introduce our new Green Bin system. By separating and recycling our green waste we've been able to generate significant cost savings allowing us to provide this service – you can find out more about this as you read on page 105.

Delivering outcomes that matter

As the financial year came to a close, we finalised one of our largest capital works programs to date. We repaired more than 12,802m² of road, filled more than 59,000 potholes, welcomed 170,142 people to our libraries and held more than 86 events and activations with the support of external funding.

Over the next year, we'll continue to work closely with our community and focus on issues we know are a priority. Housing, resource management, town centre improvements economic development and infrastructure improvements will be front of mind as we plan for the future.

I want to acknowledge and thank our Mayor and Councillors for their commitment to our community and our teams for their dedication to delivering outcomes that matter.

I am exceptionally proud to lead such a strong and committed group of people and look forward to an even bigger and better year ahead.



Tim Crosdale

General Manager of Port Stephens Council

Scorecard

Our 7 key result measures underpin everything we do at Port Stephens Council.

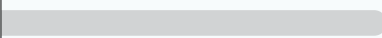

At the end of each focus area, we've included a detailed scorecard of our performance in that area, showing our aspirational measures and what we actually achieved.

Aspirational measures are the goals we set ourselves to make sure we deliver our services. Sometimes these goals are big, and for one reason or another, we can't meet them within the financial year. Even if these specific goals aren't met, we're still delivering our core services. Sometimes we have to extend a project to make sure it's delivering the best outcomes for the community. We're all about doing the right thing, the best way possible.

We review our aspirational measures each year, learning from our previous progress and aiming to create achievable targets moving forward.

 For more information, visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/integrated-plans

1. Service delivery

Target  Over 95%
Result  93.5%



Target: Over 95% of Integrated Plans delivered on time	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Result: 93.5% as at 30 June 2023	97	97	97	97	97	98	98	100	98	94	94

2. Community satisfaction

Original Target Over 75%
Result Baseline reset

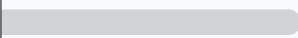
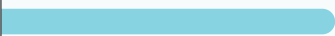


Original 2022-2023 target: Over 75% satisfaction score

Result: Baseline reset

Following a Council resolution on 13 December 2022, we've changed our Community Satisfaction Survey. This means we aren't able to compare this year's results with previous years, but will use this as a benchmark for years to come. Refer to page 117 for more information.

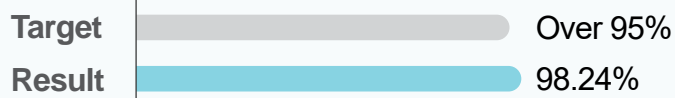
3. Employee wellbeing

Target  Over 75%
Result  83%



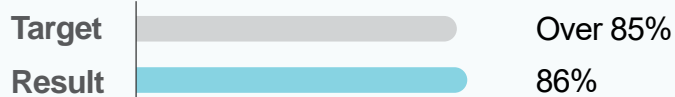
Target: Over 75% employee engagement	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Result: 83% Read more about the result on page 120	52	63	70	69	70	68	74	81	83	83

4. Governance



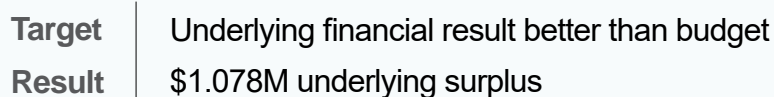
Target: Over 95% Governance Health Check	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Result: 98.24% as at June 2023	94.6	N/A	96.1	96.9	98.1	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.24

5. Risk management



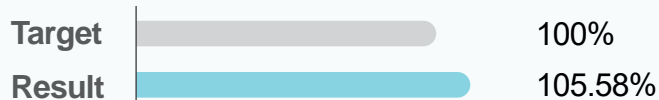
Target: Over 85%	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Result: 86% as at August 2023	57	68	74	83	83	86	86	86	87	87	86

6. Financial sustainability



Target: Underlying financial result better than budget	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Result: \$1.078M	\$313K	\$2.74M	\$1.144M	\$1.287M	\$1.414M	\$1.078M	\$1.003M	-\$185K	\$583K	\$586K	\$1.078M

7. Asset management



Target: 100% asset maintenance ratio	2022	2023
Result: 105.58%	97%	106%

Financial summary

Port Stephens Council has achieved an underlying operating surplus of \$1.078 million. The underlying result excludes non-operational transactions and is a component of Council's financial sustainability measures along with a range of other indicators. The 2022-2023 financial year was challenging due to a number of factors including rising inflation, State Government cost shifting and rate pegging. The surplus has been achieved through tight cost control measures, which didn't impact on community service levels and favourable investment portfolio results.

Financial overview 2022 to 2023

The income statement summarises Port Stephens Council's total income and operating expenditure. The 2022-2023 operating result was a surplus of \$40.9 million, which includes income from capital grants and contributions. This income is restricted for the purpose of constructing new assets and renewing existing assets as shown in the statement of financial position.

When capital grants and contributions are excluded, the operating result is a surplus of \$8.5 million for the 2022-2023 financial year. This is lower than the surplus of \$8.9 million for the 2021-2022 financial year. Income levels increased due to improved patronage at the Holiday Parks and Newcastle Airport. Both of these operations were significantly affected in the prior year due to COVID-19 and are now returning to normal operations. Expenditure levels increased due to rising inflation and the operating costs associated with the improved visitation at the Holiday Parks and Newcastle Airport.

Income statement \$'000	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
Total income from continuing operations	147,497	146,900	160,410	172,936	188,430
Total expenses from continuing operations	122,293	126,833	127,601	131,154	147,553
Operating result from continuing operations	25,204	20,067	32,809	41,782	40,877
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	3,892	-4,251	2,817	8,853	8,535

The statement of financial positions provides a snapshot of Port Stephens Council's assets, liabilities and net wealth (equity) at 30 June 2023. Council's total asset base increased primarily for 2 reasons. We undertook asset revaluations to reflect the renewal cost of public infrastructure and our capital works program grew during the year thanks to successful grant applications. Council's liabilities increased due to bank loans being sourced to assist in the funding strategy of the Newcastle Airport terminal expansion.

Balance sheet \$'000	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023
Total current assets	63,701	53,939	70,007	62,737	87,157
Total current liabilities	35,876	37,093	41,692	48,999	51,198
Total non-current assets	1,015,884	1,064,256	1,095,591	1,249,305	1,366,387
Total non-current liabilities	15,806	37,635	36,501	40,117	53,484
Total equity	1,027,903	1,043,467	1,087,405	1,222,926	1,348,862

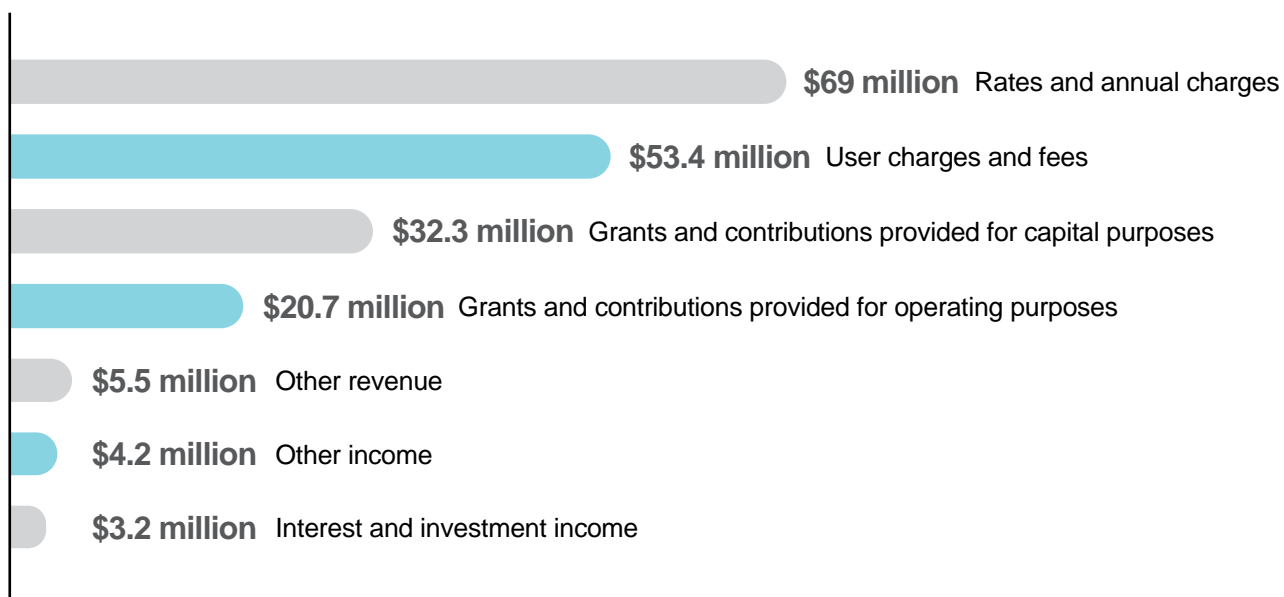
For detailed information on our financial performance, refer to Volume 2 of this report.



Our revenue – where the money came from

We received \$188.4 million in revenue in the 2022-23 financial year. The largest income sources were rates and annual charges which totaled \$69 million and user charges and fees which totaled \$53.4 million. Rates and annual charges and user charges and fees were also our largest sources of income in 2021-2022.

Rates and annual charges such as domestic waste management service charges are crucial income sources for Council. User charges and fees such as holiday park fees and Transport for NSW works charges are also important sources of income.





Our expenses – where the money was spent

We spent \$147.6 million during the year on operations.


Major Infrastructure spending included:

-  Roads, bridges, footpaths and car parks **\$14 million**
-  Drainage **\$3.1 million**
-  Buildings **\$2.8 million**
-  Newcastle Airport **\$18.6 million**
-  Other open space or recreational assets **\$2.3 million**

The above figures include assets that have been dedicated to Council. The total value of assets dedicated to Council in 2022-2023 is \$7.1 million.










Total equity

What we own, minus what we owe

-  Port Stephens Council community equity (defined as our net worth) was **\$1.3 billion** at 30 June 2023.

Our assets – what we own

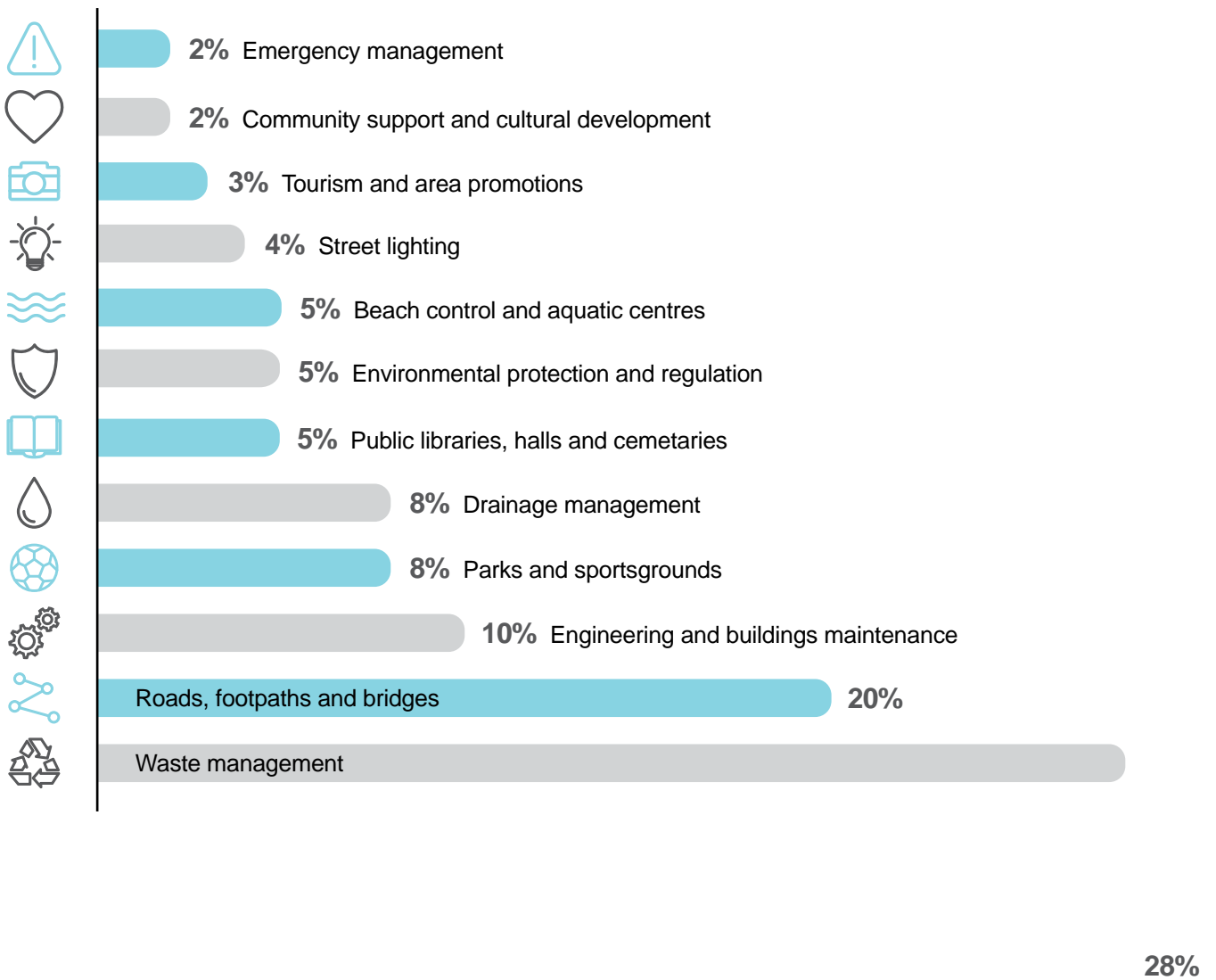
Our infrastructure, property, plant and equipment was valued at \$1.3 billion and our investment property assets were valued at \$28 million at 30 June 2023. The value of our infrastructure is:

-  Plant and equipment **\$9.5 million**
-  Office equipment, furniture and fittings **\$1.2 million**
-  Land **\$161.5 million**
-  Land improvements **\$8 million**
-  Roads, bridges, footpaths and carparks **\$542 million**
-  Buildings **\$167 million**
-  Drainage **\$247 million**
-  Other infrastructure **\$47.7 million**
-  Other assets **\$1.9 million**
-  Newcastle Airport **\$73.9 million**



Where your rates go

The diagram below outlines the contribution rates and charges had to the following key service areas.



Major events

Jul 2022



NAIDOC Week

Snak n Rap

My Little Ecosystem workshops x 4

Whale Tales x 4

Aug 2022

Adrenaline Junkie Adventure Race Fingal Bay

2022 Rugby League Final Series – Raymond Terrace

Sep 2022

Outdoor sunset cinema Raymond Terrace and Medowie

Friday Flavours Nelson Bay

2022 TreX Multisport Festival – Fingal Bay

Oct 2022

Outdoor Sunset Cinema Nelson Bay

Hunter Surf Life Saving Carnival – Fingal Bay

King of the Box – Surfing event – Box Beach

Homegrown Medowie

Friday Flavours Raymond Terrace



Nov 2022



Remembrance Day Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace

Friday Flavours Raymond Terrace

Nelson Bay Super Sprint Triathlon

NSW Beach Volley Ball Tour – One Mile

Tilligerry Festival

Dec 2022

Tastes Like Summer Karuah, Fern Bay and Lemon Tree Passage

Seaham Community Carols

Nelson Bay Carols

Swim, Bike, Run Port Stephens

Medowie Christmas Carnival

It's On! This Season – Christmas Activations Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay

Tilligerry Christmas Twilight Market

NYE Fireworks Nelson Bay



Jan 2023



Australia Day Celebration and Pool Parties

Port Stephens Annual Awards

Tastes Like Summer Karuah, Fern Bay, Raymond Terrace and Lemon Tree Passage

Snak n Rap x 4

It's On! Kids Zone Hinton, Medowie, Karuah, Raymond Terrace, Nelson Bay

Australian Flying Eleven National Championship, Soldiers Point

Ultimate Frisbee – Newy Gold Cup 2023

Feb 2023

Mayoral Academic Scholarship Ceremony

Tastes Like summer Karuah, Fern Bay, Raymond Terrace and Lemon Tree Passage

Peter Wilson Memorial Cup – Tomaree

HSLs 2022 Age branch Champs – Fingal Bay

Garmin Billfish Shootout Nelson Bay

NSW Game Fish Championship Nelson Bay

Port Stephens Pro QS1000 (Surfing Event) Anna Bay

Seniors Week 1 to 12 Feb



Mar 2023

Port Stephens Produce Market Launch

Tastes Like Summer Lemon Tree Passage

International Women's Day Scholarship

Clean Up Australia Day

Port Stephens SUP Challenge 2023 Anna Bay

2023 ILCA Oceanic and Australian Masters Championships (Sailing) Soldiers Point

Trailer Boat Fishing Tournament

Apr 2023

Youth Week

Clean Up Australia Day

ANZAC Day

It's On! Outdoor Cinema Medowie, Raymond Terrace, Nelson Bay

Karuah by Night

Sail Port Stephens

Port Stephens Surf Festival

May 2023

Medowie Town Teams Launch event

Illuminate Raymond Terrace (later cancelled due to weather)

National Volunteer Week

Aboriginal Elder Olympics

Sail Port Stephens W/L Series, featuring the NSW Yachting Championships and TP52 Gold

Port Stephens Triathlon 2023

Local & Live (William St Stages)



Jun 2023

NAIDOC Week

SBR Port Stephens

Local & Live (William St Stages)

Having your say

We're committed to actively communicating and engaging with our residents, stakeholders and staff in the development of policies, plans and the delivery of services for our community.

Our Communication and Engagement Strategy recognises that community information sharing, consultation and participation are vital for effective decision-making. You can read it at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community-engagement-strategy

There are many ways you can have your say on the governing of Port Stephens and the future of our place:

- Vote for Councillors every 4 years through the local government election for Port Stephens Council.
- Arrange to speak face to face with Councillors via public access prior to Council meetings.
- Write to or call elected members of the Council.
- Get social and connect with us on our social media channels, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.
- Make submissions on major projects or notified consents that are consulted or advertised throughout the year.
- Participate in the annual Community Satisfaction Survey.
- Via our online Report and Request tool.

Our major formal community engagements were on:



RATE RISE
OPTIONS



COASTAL
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM STAGE 3



SMART PARKING
EXTENSION AT
SHOAL BAY



THE LAUNCHING 3 NEW
COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUPS



PLACE PLANS AT MEDOWIE,
SHOAL BAY, HINTERLAND
AND TILLIGERRY

21

KEY FORMAL
ENGAGEMENT
PROJECTS

6,037

NUMBER OF SURVEYS
COMPLETED LAST
FINANCIAL YEAR

28

NUMBER OF FACE TO
FACE (includes online)
COMMUNITY
OPPORTUNITIES
PROVIDED

645

NUMBER OF FACE TO
FACE (includes online)
COMMUNITY
ATTENDEES

We also spoke to the community about the Community Satisfaction Survey and Library Survey, Fingal Foreshore upgrade and Aliceton Reserve/Memorial Park, Karuah.

Next Steps: The following projects are in the planning phase and we'll be engaging with the community in the next financial year:

- Anna Bay Place Plan
- Wellbeing Strategy

- Green Waste drop off
- Dogs at Boat Harbour Beach Formal Review
- Hinterland Place Plan Public Exhibition
- Tilligerry Place Plan Workshops
- Smart Parking extension to other areas



Learn more at haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Awards and recognitions

At Port Stephens Council, we believe in doing the right things in the best way. We're proud of our culture of excellence and the recognition we have received this year for achieving the best outcomes for Port Stephens.

Awarding body	Award
Australasian Reporting Awards	Gold – 2021–2022 Annual Report
2022 NSW Tourism Awards	Silver – Tourist Attractions – Koala Sanctuary
2023 Hunter Safety Awards	Win – Best Health and Wellbeing program (SME) for PSCare
2023 StateCover Awards	Win – Wellbeing Category for PSCare
2023 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards	Win – People, Workplace, Wellbeing Category for PSCare
2023 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards	Highly Commended – Community Partnerships Category for Karuah Place Plan
2023 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards	Finalist – Asset and Infrastructure Category for Stuart Park
2023 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards	Finalist – Special Project Initiative Category for Foreshore Drive

Every year, we recognise the contribution of community members as part of the Port Stephens Annual Awards. You can read about these on page 64.



Our Leadership

Section 3

This section includes an overview of our leadership and organisation

33 | Our elected Council

39 | Our governance

40 | Our Executive Team

42 | Organisation structure

43 | Our employees

Equity, diversity and inclusion

Work Health and Safety

45 | Our volunteers



Our elected Council

Port Stephens Council has a popularly elected Mayor and 9 Councillors representing 3 wards – East, Central and West.



Learn more about our elected council at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/mayor-and-councillors



Ryan Palmer **Mayor**

A lifetime resident of Port Stephens, Ryan was popularly elected as Mayor in 2017 and in 2021. He is passionate about the Port Stephens area and has brought a new level of transparency and consultation to the Council.

Since being elected, Ryan is proud of the actions he's taken to create a place for all generations to live an active and healthy lifestyle.

Ryan has a strong interest in economic development activities and believes in providing employment opportunities, not only for today but for future generations, like his 2 children, Bella and Knox.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
0402 749 467
mayor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Chris Doohan
Central Ward**

Chris Doohan has lived in Medowie for nearly 2 decades, and the greater Port Stephens region for more than 40 years. He was elected as a Central Ward Councillor in 2012 and has been Deputy Mayor in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2020.

Chris is passionate about Port Stephens and is incredibly proud to represent his community, participating in many local committees, councils, associations and groups.

Chris has 2 children, Holly and Jaike, who have been schooled locally and are active in local sporting teams.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace 2324
0434 601 957 or 0418 744 445
chris.doohan@
portstephens.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Jason Wells
Central Ward**

Jason has called Medowie home since 2006 where he lives with his wife and 2 children. He's worked in a local NSW public school for 19 years.

For the last 5 years Jason has held the role of President of Medowie Little Athletics Club, engaging with the local community and supporting young people.

Jason has a thorough understanding of the needs of local families of Central Ward and advocates strongly for the provision of high quality and cared for public spaces and safe and accessible pathways.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace 2324
0466 171 173
jason.wells@portstephens.
nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Steve Tucker
Central Ward**

Steve was first elected to Council in 2004 and lives at Tanilba Bay.

He has served as Deputy Mayor on 2 occasions in 2006 and 2014.

A retired engineer, he is most interested in building community and sporting infrastructure to support local communities.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace 2324
0437 045 940
steve.tucker@portstephens.
nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Leah Anderson
East Ward**

Leah relocated from her original home town of Camden to Port Stephens in 2005, where she’s raised her 2 children and has been actively involved in the community for many years.

She founded and was President of Port Stephens Women In Business, is the past President of Business Port Stephens and was proud to be awarded Port Stephens Woman of the year in 2018.

Leah wants the best for the people of Port Stephens, and she will listen, care and act, to work hard for the community.

PO Box 306
Nelson Bay 2315
0448 354 668
leah.anderson@
portstephens.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Glen Dunkley
East Ward**

Glen is another lifetime Port Stephens resident. Married to Kate with 2 teenage children, Glen is in his second term on Council as a representative of the East Ward. The safety and environment manager holds a degree in Occupational Health and Safety.

A life member of the Fingal Bay Surf Lifesaving Club and President between 2007 and 2011, Glen has picked up a number of National Awards as a result of his outstanding service that stretches back to 1992.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
0438 550 356
glen.dunkley@portstephens.
nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Matthew Bailey
East Ward**

Matt Bailey is a first time Councillor on Port Stephens Council and has a background in financial planning and education.

Matt has spent most of his career as a financial planner and has a Bachelor of Business from the University of Newcastle where he majored in Human Resources and Management. He also has a Diploma in Financial Planning.

Matt is a father of 2 boys and grew up in Tamworth before moving to the Hunter Region in 2006. Matt is currently studying a Master of Primary Teaching at the University of Newcastle.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace 2324
0423 418 530
matthew.bailey@
portstephens.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Giacomo Arnott
West Ward**

Giacomo has lived and worked in Raymond Terrace his whole life. He is a Law and Business graduate and has his Diploma of Legal Practice.

He is a professional firefighter based at Raymond Terrace and volunteers with many local groups and community-based initiatives. He also works in industrial law, fighting for the rights of workers.

Giacomo has spent his time on Council delivering for the ratepayers of Port Stephens, standing up for what's right and improving communications with the Port Stephens community. He is continuing to try and improve transparency, while delivering valued services and infrastructure to the local community. Giacomo was the Deputy Mayor from 2022 to 2023.

PO Box 144
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
0468 391 459
giacomo.arnott@
portstephens.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Peter Francis
West Ward**

Peter has been involved in communications, marketing, advocacy, sales, and influencing people's opinions for most of his professional career.

He's been granted several National and International awards in recognition of his various acts in the areas of diplomacy and humanitarian works.

Peter is a mental health advocate, presenter, facilitator, public speaker, blogger, writer, and master of ceremonies and his views on community consultation and advocacy are ones which are integral to bringing about a cohesive and integrated whole.

127 Richardson Road
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
0493 217 117
peter.francis@portstephens.
nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Peter Kafer
West Ward**

Peter and his family moved to Raymond Terrace in 2000 from Stockton and he is a former Port Stephens Councillor from 2008 to 2017. Peter is an active member of many community organisations in Stockton, Newcastle and Raymond Terrace including Aboriginal Corporations, Community Advocacy groups and Historical Societies.

He's had careers in Nursing, NSW State and Federal Police and teaching, as well as a mentor in High Schools for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men. Peter advocates for the mental health and awareness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community.

Peter is an Internationally recognised Aboriginal artist in USA and European Countries with active exhibitions in California and throughout Hunter Valley.

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace 2324
peter.kafer@portstephens.
nsw.gov.au



Councillor attendance 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

Port Stephens Council is required to meet at least 10 times a year. These meetings are known as Ordinary Meetings and are presided over by the Mayor or in their absence, the Deputy Mayor.

Our Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at the Council Chambers in Raymond Terrace. Meetings are live-streamed online and the public is welcome to attend.

2 Way conversations are informal meetings held between the Mayor, Councillors and staff with specific subjects that the Mayor or Councillors wish to discuss. They form part of an elected members' ongoing professional development.

Port Stephens also has 20 community committees and a further 24 groups in which the Mayor and Councillors represent Council. These can be viewed on page 153.

COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

	Ordinary meeting	Extra ordinary meeting	All meetings combined	2 Way conversations
Number of meetings	19	0	19	84
Mayor Palmer	17	0	17	52
Councillor Anderson	19	0	19	84
Councillor Arnott	19	0	19	84
Councillor Bailey	14	0	14	62
Councillor Doohan	9	0	9	43
Councillor Dunkley	12	0	12	22
Councillor Francis	16	0	16	67
Councillor Kafer	16	0	16	28
Councillor Tucker	15	0	15	61
Councillor Wells	18	0	18	66



Councillor induction and professional development

Our Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy requires an annual report on all councillor induction programs, ongoing professional development and training sessions.

The following professional development opportunities were provided to all elected members. The table shows those who participated.

A councillor induction program was conducted following the Local Government election in December 2021.

For the total cost of professional development including accommodation and training for this period, refer to page 131. Travel costs for the Mayor are included in the provision of a Mayoral vehicle.

Professional development	Attendees
AICD Company Directors membership	Mayor Palmer, Cr Dunkley, Cr Tucker
ALGA National General Assembly	Mayor Palmer, Cr Anderson, Cr Kafer, Cr Tucker
LGNSW Annual Conference	Mayor Palmer, Cr Anderson, Cr Arnott, Cr Tucker
LGNSW Chairing Effective Meetings Training	Cr Anderson
LGNSW Media Training for Councillors	Cr Anderson
Locale Learning – Lift Off Coaching Package	Cr Anderson
Institute of Local Governance – Finance Course	Cr Anderson

Our governance

Port Stephens Council is a body politic under the Local Government Act 1993. The elected Council must abide by this Act and the associated State and Federal legislation. Our governance framework is based on the Australian Public Service Commission's principles of public sector governance – accountability, transparency, integrity, stewardship, efficiency and leadership.

Code of Conduct

The overarching element of governance in council is the Code of Conduct. Training in the Code of Conduct is compulsory for all staff, Mayor, Councillors and volunteers. The code sets high standards for ethical behaviour and decision-making. It states Mayor/Councillors' roles and responsibilities and outlines the process for making and investigating allegations of breaches. During 2022 to 2023, there were 10 Code of Conduct complaints about Councillors or the General Manager. Of the 10 complaints, 8 were addressed by alternate means and no action was taken on 2 complaints.

Privacy and personal information

The Privacy Management Plan was reviewed and adopted by Council on 25 August 2020. There was 1 internal review under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 conducted by our Council this year. There were no other contraventions of any information protection principles, nor of privacy codes of practice or disclosure of personal information kept in a public register

Audit Committee

Our Audit Committee aims to enhance the corporate governance of our Council. It provides independent oversight, review and advice on our governance, risk, control and compliance framework. The Audit Committee comprises 2 Councillors and 3 independent external representatives:

- Ben Niland
- Frank Cordingley
- Shaun Mahony
- Councillor Leah Anderson
- Councillor Chris Doohan
- Councillor Glen Dunkley (alternate)

The 2022 to 2023 Internal Audit program included 5 audits into:

- Environmental Risk Management
- Risk Management Framework
- Payment to Mayor and Councillors
- National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme compliance audit
- RMS Drives compliance report.



Find out more about our audit committee at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/committees

Our Executive Team

Port Stephens Council is led by General Manager Tim Crosdale, who is supported by 3 group managers.



Learn more about our Executive Team at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/executive-team



General Manager Tim Crosdale

Appointed 2022

Tim joined Port Stephens Council as Group Manager Development Services in 2018 and since 2020 was Group Manager of Corporate Services.

With extensive experience at senior and executive level management across private consulting and in local government, Tim has a successful track record in leadership, professional services provision, business and staff management.

He brings extensive skills and experience in development and strategic planning, project delivery, and business operations including HR, marketing, financial management and business development.

Tim is focused on working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure the delivery of valued services to the Port Stephens community.



**Facilities and Services
Group Manager Greg Kable**

Appointed 2016

Greg joined Port Stephens Council in 2011 and soon became Section Manager Capital Works in 2013.

With over 30 years experience in local government and 20 years managing large operational workforces, Greg enjoys leading and motivating multi-disciplinary teams to deliver building, engineering and maintenance programs.

He holds postgraduate qualifications in Commerce, Engineering and Management.

Greg is passionate about the delivery of quality infrastructure and customer service to the people of Port Stephens.



**Corporate Services
Group Manager
(Acting) Zoë Pattison**

Appointed (Acting) July 2022

Zoë has worked at Port Stephens Council for nearly 25 years, providing strategic Senior and Executive leadership across the Corporate Services Group, including Human Resources, ICT, Corporate Reporting, Strategic Property and Business Improvement.

With a number of post graduate qualifications including a Master of Business Leadership, Zoë is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds 2 Board positions.

With a focus on building capability and capacity amongst our people, in alignment with the future direction of the organisation, Zoë is passionate about providing strategic leadership to improve the services we deliver to our customers.



**Development Services Group
Manager Steven Peart**

Appointed 2020

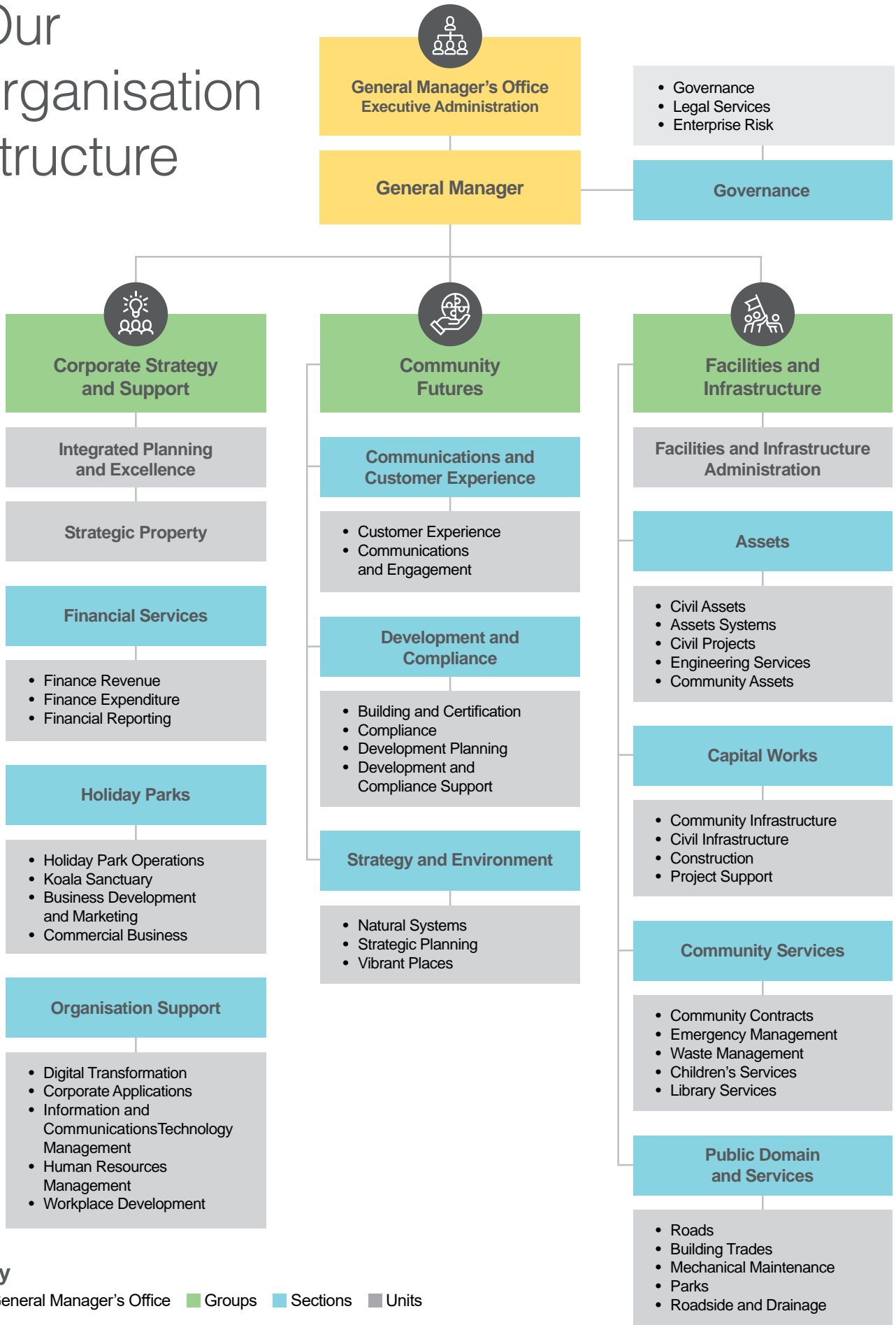
Steven joined Port Stephens Council as Strategy and Environment Section Manager in 2018.

He was appointed Acting Development Services Group Manager in 2020 and after a competitive recruitment process, was appointed permanently to the role in May 2021.

Over the past 13 years, Steven has held senior leadership positions in local government, environmental and engineering consulting firms, and major mining companies.

Steven is focused on building a team culture of innovation and excellence to create the best outcomes for our customers while respecting our broader community and the environment.

Our organisation structure



Key

- General Manager's Office
- Groups
- Sections
- Units

Our employees

We're committed to ensuring our workforce has the skills and experience to deliver valued services to our community. Our Workforce Plan outlines how we'll achieve our community's vision while our Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025 sets out our commitment to our Employer Value Proposition, which allows us to attract, engage and retain our employees.

Our Employer Value Proposition has a people first approach and promotes employee

health, fosters their wellbeing and supports their lifestyle. It's important that our Council's workforce reflects the community we serve.

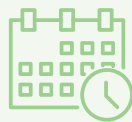
As at 30 June 2023, we employed:

3 GROUP MANAGERS **11** SECTION MANAGERS
 2 MALE, 1 FEMALE 7 MALE, 4 FEMALE

581 EQUIVALENT FULL-TIME POSITIONS IN OUR STRUCTURE (618 EMPLOYEES)

51% ARE FEMALE **49%** ARE MALE

Almost 3 quarters of our workforce are employed on a full-time basis.



72.5%
FULL-TIME

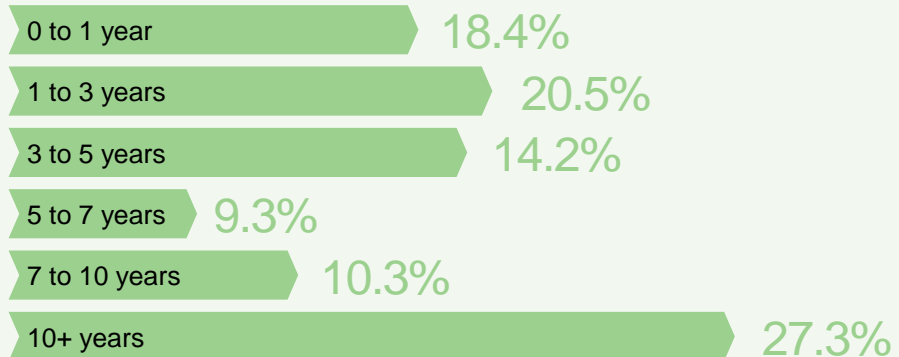


16%
PART-TIME

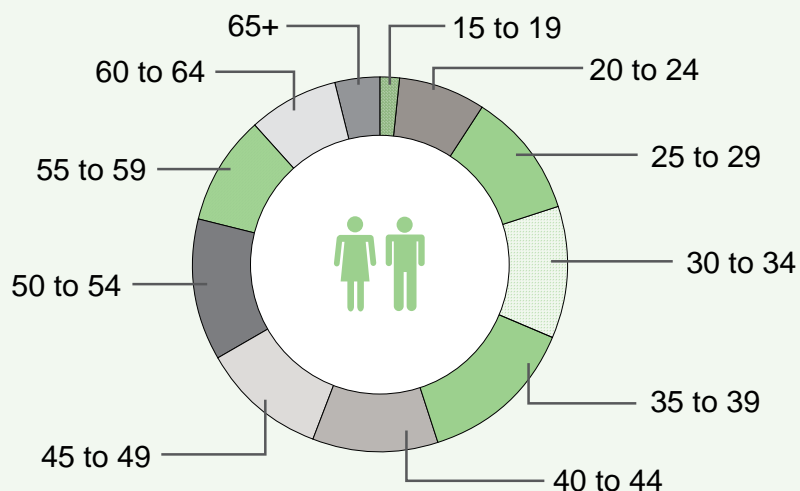


11.5%
CASUAL

46.9% of employees have been with Port Stephens Council for 5 or more years.



Our workforce is made up of people of all ages – from 15 to over 65. We've worked hard to attract younger employees over recent years.



Equity, diversity and inclusion

We're committed to creating a workplace that values diversity and is fair, equitable and inclusive for all employees. Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee highlights for 2022 to 2023:

- We have almost a full complement of EDI representatives covering most teams and locations across Council.
- We partnered with other Local Government Areas to promote Pride month, which held events in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie areas.
- We promoted Harmony Week to employees in celebration of inclusiveness, respect and belonging for everyone. We asked our staff to share a story, photo, recipe or anything else relevant to explain what Harmony Day means to them via Social Pinpoint.
- We celebrated NAIDOC Week with employees and our community, recognising the valuable contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make.
- Celebrated International Women's Day by supporting an event for scholarship applicants. These scholarships support our Council's efforts to create a community where women are safe, healthy, equally represented and valued for their contribution to society.

Work health and safety

We're committed to providing a safe workplace that ensures the wellbeing of our employees, their families and our community.

Safety observations

Our Safety Observation Program aims to proactively prevent workplace injuries by positively reinforcing safe behaviour and providing constructive feedback. To deliver a consistent view of safe work practices, all managers target at least 2 safety observations per month. This year, we conducted 1,476 Safety Observations that identified 286 Actions to enhance worker safety.

Employee consultation

Our Health and Safety Committee (HSC) and Health and Safety Representatives (HSR's) have an important role in consulting with employees on health and safety matters. The committee consists of 12 employees – half appointed by management and half appointed by employees – and met 6 times during this financial year to provide oversight on safe work practices and initiatives at Council.

Workers compensation

Our Workers Compensation Premium continues to improve as a result of improved safety performances in recent years. The number of workers compensation claims decreased 30% this financial year. We remain focused on workforce injury prevention and the wellbeing of our workers, delivered through various initiatives and our award-winning PSCare employee wellness programs.

Our injury profile

WHS risk events (operational incidents and near misses) increased 4%, with the following key movements in causes observed:

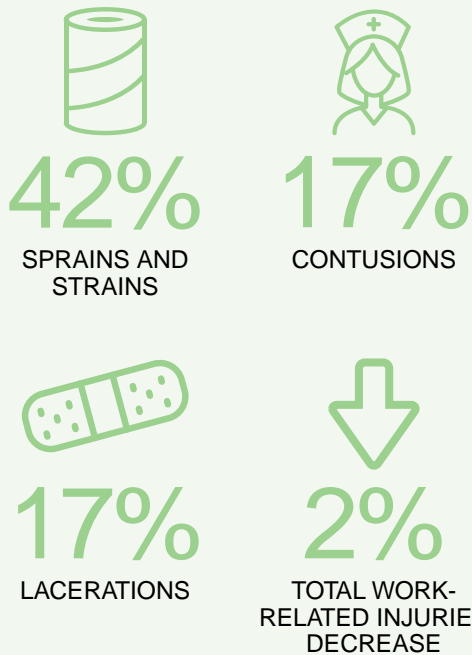
- Human error increased by 18%.
- Aggressive behaviour by members of the public decreased by 25%.
- Technology and process failures decreased by 44%.
- Accidents caused by third parties (involving Council staff) increased by 100%.

Total work-related injuries increased 2%, with the main injury types observed as:

- Sprains and strains (43%)
- Contusions (16%)
- Lacerations (16%)

Lost time injury hours (for workers injured in the year) has decreased 73%, noting a general reduction in the severity of new injuries.

Incidents – 2022 to 2023



Safety observations



Our volunteers

Our volunteers give their time and energy to make Port Stephens a better place. Without them, many of our services and programs couldn't exist. They contribute to:

- Keeping our parks, reserves and cemeteries pristine
- Improving our natural bushland areas
- Participating in our sports councils and cultural committees
- Participating in our halls, libraries, Koala Sanctuary and Visitor Information Centre

There's a volunteer opportunity for everyone at Port Stephens Council. We regularly encourage new volunteers to join us at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/volunteer

Supporting our volunteers

We know that giving back is just as beneficial for our volunteers as it is for our community. Volunteering gives people a sense of purpose, a strong social network and the chance to contribute to our community. Our volunteers also have access to a comprehensive learning and development program to improve their skills and knowledge. We're currently reviewing how we can provide a better model of supporting our volunteers.

Our Performance

Section 4

This section includes an overview of each of our Delivery Program Focus Areas.

47 | Our planning process

48 | Our focus areas

50 | Our community

72 | Our place

96 | Our environment

112 | Our Council



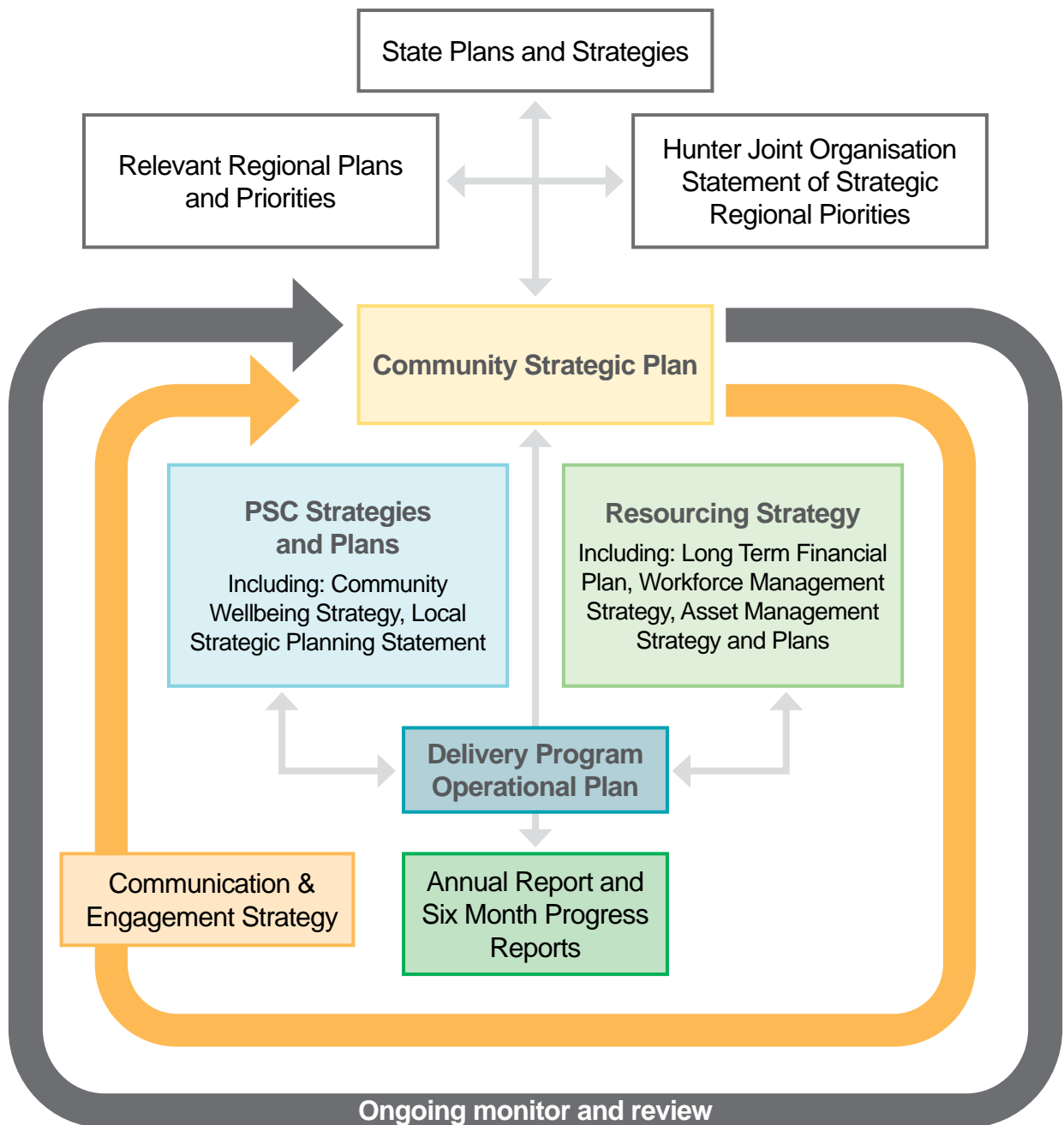
Our planning process

We use the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. It comprises:

- **Community Strategic Plan** – our community’s long-term vision.
- **Council’s Delivery Program** – our Council’s objectives for the elected term to help achieve the community’s vision.
- **Operational Plan** – yearly actions to implement the Delivery Program.



Learn more about our integrated planning process at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/integrated-plans



Overview: our focus areas

The Port Stephens Council **Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032** outlines our 4 main focus areas. Each goal is a key direction in our **Delivery Program 2022 to 2026**.



Our community

An accessible and welcoming community respecting diversity, heritage and culture

C1 Community wellbeing

Improve wellbeing for our diverse community supported by services and facilities

C2 Recognised traditions and lifestyles

Our community supports the richness of its heritage and culture



Our place

A liveable and connected place supporting community wellbeing and local economic growth

P1 Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment

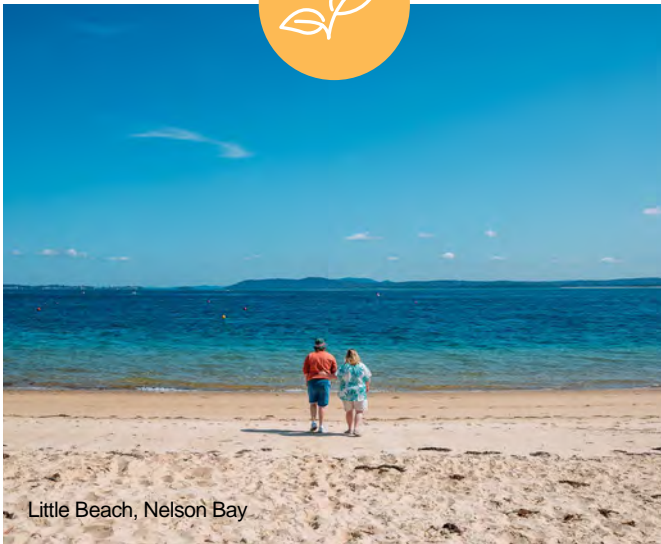
Our community has an adaptable, sustainable and diverse economy

P2 Infrastructure and facilities

Our community's infrastructure and facilities are safe, convenient, reliable and environmentally sustainable

P3 Thriving and safe place to live

Our community supports a healthy, happy and safe place



Our environment

Port Stephen's environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced

E1 Ecosystem function

Our community has healthy and dynamic environmental systems that support biodiversity

E2 Environmental sustainability

Our community uses resources sustainably, efficiently and equitably

E3 Environmental resilience

Our community is resilient to environmental risks, natural hazards and climate change

Our Council

Port Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way

L1 Governance

Our Council's leadership is based on trust and values of Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Safety (RITES)

L2 Financial Management

Our Council is financially sustainable to meet community needs

L3 Communication and engagement

Our Council is committed to enabling an engaged and informed community

Our community

An accessible and welcoming
community respecting diversity,
heritage and culture



Goal 1: Community wellbeing

Improved wellbeing for our diverse community
supported by services and facilities

Community wellbeing combines with disability action

We're developing a Port Stephens
Wellbeing Strategy to help create a more
inclusive and healthy community.

We've completed 2 phases of community
and stakeholder engagement and through
our research, we've learned that wellbeing
means different things to different people. It
ranges from fundamental basic needs such as
access to food, water and shelter through to
the ability to get from A to B, time with family
and friends and universal access to facilities.

As the closest level of government connected
to our community, we play a key role in
planning, advocating, partnering and delivering
projects and services that have a lasting
impact on the wellbeing of our community.

Our Strategy represents our commitment to
making Port Stephens a place where wellbeing
is prioritised and people can lead happy, healthy
and connected lives. It also incorporates our
Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), so there is
a strong focus on universal access and inclusion.

Next steps

The draft Strategy will be reported to Council
and placed on public exhibition for final review.



Keep up to date here [portstephens.
nsw.gov.au/wellbeing-strategy](https://portstephens.nsw.gov.au/wellbeing-strategy)

Access for all at Little Beach

Little Beach is one of our most popular destinations, attracting visitors from near and far, that's why we're so excited about the improvements made here over the last 12 months.

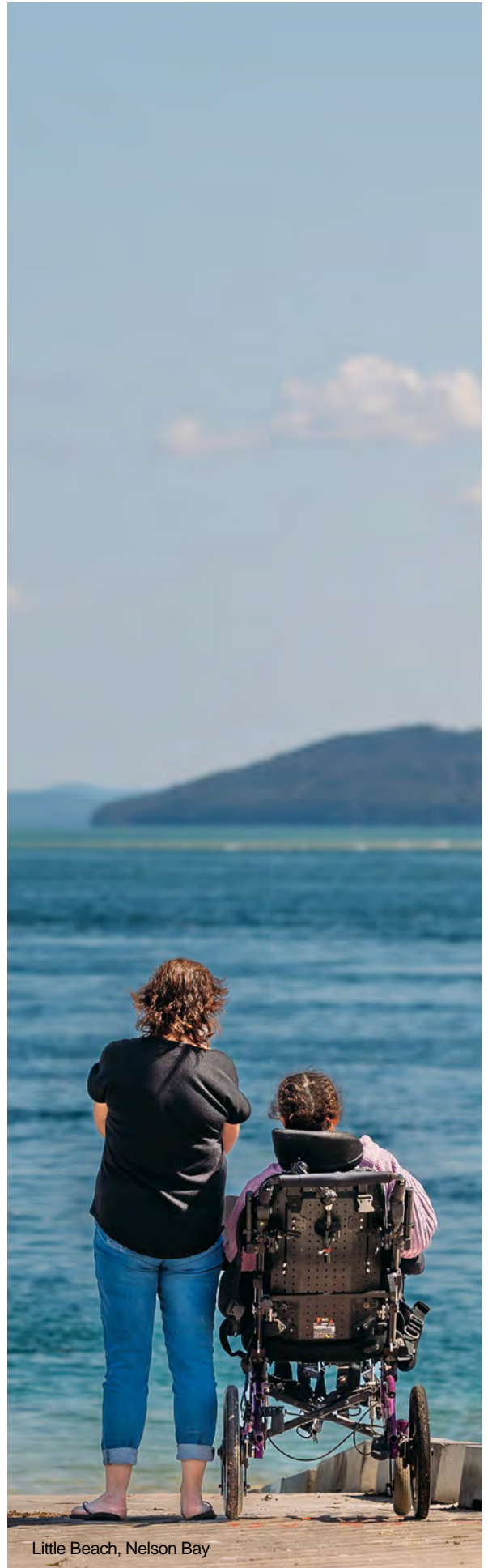
We're trying to make Little Beach a special precinct that is inclusive and easily accessed by all. To help deliver this, we secured grants to complete a suite of upgrades including:

- an inclusive play space with new play equipment, a water fountain, improved paths and bench seating
- a beach wheelchair access ramp and storage for two beach wheelchairs
- new 'Changing places' amenities with a ceiling hoist, adult sized changing table, privacy screen and additional circulation space to meet the needs of people with complex disabilities and their carers.

The nearby Halifax Holiday Park has also embraced this approach by providing accessible cabins with dedicated wheelchair access, manoeuvring space and accessible bathrooms.



Learn more and keep up to date at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/little-beach-upgrades



Little Beach, Nelson Bay



Karuah Konnect bus service

Karuah Konnect on demand

Collaboration is key to delivering many of our services and our Karuah Konnect project is a great example of just that. With \$93,560 funding secured from the NSW Government, we were able to trial an on-demand community bus service for Karuah utilising the Karuah RSL courtesy bus.

During the trial, the on-demand service carried:



267

PASSENGERS,
COMPLETED 413 TRIPS AND
COVERED 1,325 KILOMETRES.

Due to the smaller population of Karuah, a regular transport service isn't available. The grant from Transport for NSW allowed us to fill this service gap until the population of Karuah grows and a regular service can be implemented.

We know this is important to our community, and we're proud to support the delivery of the Karuah Konnect service to support improved movement, creating connected communities.

The initiative aligns with the Karuah Place Plan, designed to improve liveability, increase wellbeing and deliver economic growth to create more vibrant places for people to connect, discover and enjoy with their community.



Learn more about the Karuah Place Plan at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/karuah-place-plan

Homelessness Stakeholder Advocacy Group

Following a Council resolution earlier this year, the Homelessness Stakeholder Advocacy Group (HSAG) was created to provide a forum for discussion and collaboration on solutions to support homelessness and housing affordability.

Core members include the Member for Port Stephens and Member for Paterson, NSW Police, NSW Department of Communities and Justice, key community sector organisations, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and community members.

The HSAG is helping all stakeholders better understand the broader needs of individuals, facilitate connections to social, health and community services, explore increased opportunities for affordable and social housing supply, develop policy frameworks and improve advocacy at all tiers of government.

While Local Government isn't best placed to act in the role of direct service providers, we're well placed to bring stakeholders together to collaborate towards solutions that are more likely to see real results in our community.



Learn more about housing in Port Stephens at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/local-housing-strategy

Events to promote connection

We continued to deliver a diverse cultural program to showcase creativity and diversity across Port Stephens and enable community to connect with one and another. Guided by Our Incredible Place Strategy, these programs are delivered either directly by us, by business or community organisations through our funding programs or through our advocacy for delivery by key partners.

Our events have started incorporating an inclusive tent, a safe space designed to accommodate and celebrate various identities, abilities, and backgrounds. It's an important step

towards creating an event that is truly welcoming and inclusive. The space may have sensory, vision, mobility and communication aids and supports and is a safe space to retreat to making the event accessible to a wider range of people.

These initiatives are helping to make our place incredible for everyone and complement the support we provide through Community Event Development fund, the Strategic Arts Committee and activations and events like the Yacaaba art walk, Terrace reflections and Australia Day.



Learn more about the Our Incredible Place Strategy at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/arts-culture-heritage

Seniors Festival

Our annual Seniors Festival was a great opportunity to get together, celebrate the wisdom and experience that comes with age, and meet new people.

During February we held a series of events and activities, including:

- launching a Senior's Events Guide
- free art classes in Raymond Terrace, Nelson Bay and Lemon Tree Passage
- a Seniors Festival Concert featuring a cabaret performance and a free 2 course lunch at the Nelson Bay Bowling Club
- hosting the Rite to the Finish course, compassionately covering aspects of end of life, with topics ranging from organ donation to funeral planning.



Learn more about how we support our seniors at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/seniors



Raymond Terrace community connections

We partnered with Wahroonga Aboriginal Corporation to deliver the Raymond Terrace Community Connect day. The event included service providers from health, community groups, local business and services for people at risk and vulnerable.

The event offered a one-stop-shop of human and community services for everyone in the community to access.

From assistance and advice with legal matters, birth certificates, employment and education to health screenings and support for social and emotional wellbeing – we brought all the best services together in one spot for our people to access.

We complemented this event with a Raymond Terrace Youth Engagement Program – a collaboration between our Vibrant Places team PCYC, NSW Police, Wahroonga Aboriginal Corporation and Up&Up to deliver youth activities during winter. Youth workers and service providers were there to get to know local young people with positive engagement and support.



Youth channels for better conversations

We support our local youth by creating opportunities to get together with local community groups and agencies, and to also have a say in decisions that affect them to make Port Stephens a great place for young people.

We engage with our youth in multiple ways including through targeted youth engagement, events, social media and meetings. During this period we revised our youth communications approach to improve reach amongst young audiences. These were all part of our Youth Strategy which provided insights into the priorities and values of young people across our community.

Port Stephens Youth Instagram is an account for young people aged 12 to 25 to learn about fun local events, places

to hang, youth services, scholarships, employment opportunities and training.

We used this to encourage participation in a bumper line up of free events for Youth Week 2023, to help connect young people, build skills, and inspire the next generation of community leaders. This included 3 outdoor cinemas in Medowie, Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay attended by over 400 community members.

The Snak N Rap events, as part of the It's On! program continued to be popular with youth mentoring, music and art events at Seaham Skate Park, Anna Bay Skate Park, Salt Ash Pump Track and Mallabula Skate Park.

We recruited for new Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) members via an online and school campaign as well as promoted youth involvement in events/advocacy at Tomaree and Hunter River Student Representative Councils.



Learn more about how we support our young people at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/young-people

Back to the books... and all the other great things at your local library

We're pleased to report that our loan and visitation numbers continue to rise and attendance at programs, activities and events is almost at pre-Covid levels.

Plenty of work happened behind the scenes to ensure our libraries are keeping pace with what our visitors expect and strengthening relationships across branches.

Initiatives included:

- introducing a new Library Management System with Newcastle Libraries
- developing a 'Seasonal Program of Events'
- starting a staff rotation program, and
- establishing working groups for library led initiatives.

Our libraries also celebrated Children's Book Week 2022. The theme was 'Dreaming with eyes open' with Tomaree Library showcasing displays and holding nine special story time sessions for approximately 260 children. The sessions highlighted some amazing Australian authors and illustrators, and the children were entertained by the puppet shows, bubbles, tigers, shoes and songs!

Raymond Terrace Library also hosted 10 groups of primary school children from St Brigids and Raymond Terrace Primary School from kindy to year 2. Staff ran interactive sessions for 280 children using puppets, masks, games and delivering presentations with animated graphics.

Our programs weren't just for kids, we also celebrated Adult Learners Week 2022 with a terrific program of activities and events including Tech Connect sessions, Brain Training for Adults, Virtual Reality Armchair Travel, a watercolour workshop, Knitting Knatters and movie screenings.

The inaugural Port Stephens Library Literary Picnic was held. The event included a 3 day program of author talks and creative writing workshops. Presenters included Janette Paul (aka Jaye Ford), Paula Morrow, Kaz Delaney and Todd Alexander.

Our Mobile Library received a facelift with a fresh new look inside and out including new exterior artwork, updated computers, improvements to joinery, new lighting, carpet and furniture. The project was funded through a library infrastructure grant from the State Library of NSW.

Lastly, we launched a 'Grab and Go collection' with multiple copies of new and popular titles available for immediate loan. Customers are now able to avoid reservation cues and take items straight from the shelves to borrow.

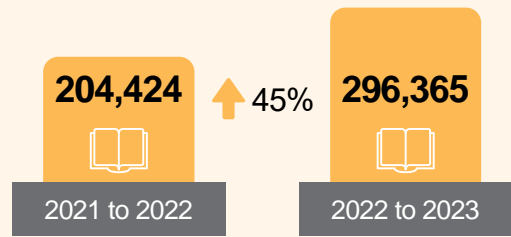


Learn more about our libraries at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/libraries

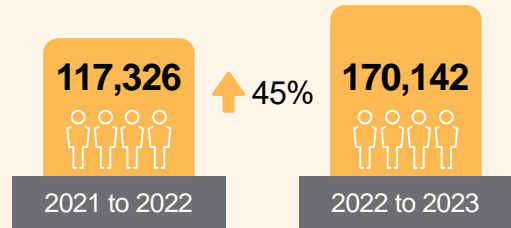


Raymond Terrace Library

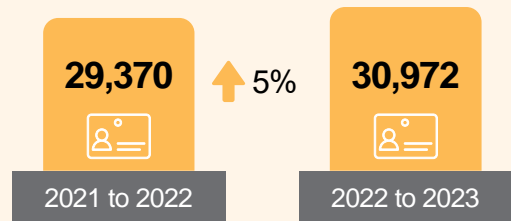
Loaned items



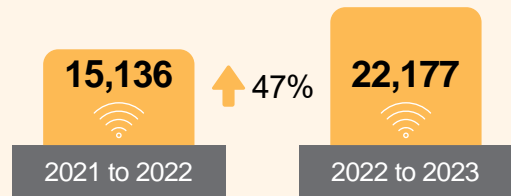
People visited



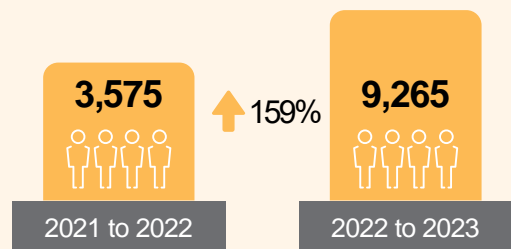
Total library members



Used the internet and wifi (Raymond Terrace and Tomaree libraries)



Attendance at programs activities and events





Mobile Library refresh and refurb

The Port Stephens Mobile Library Service, nearly 15 years old, has undergone a revitalisation funded by a Library Infrastructure grant from the State Library of NSW.

This grant has extended the Mobile Library's lifespan, enabling it to continue its valuable role in the community. As part of its refresh, the truck has updated computers, new carpet, lighting and furniture as well as improved joinery. The highlight of the project, however, is the incredible artwork designed and painted by Hunter artist, Jordan Lucky that represents the diversity of the ecosystems across Port Stephens.

The Mobile Library is an essential part of Port Stephens Library Service and plays a vital role in the community by supporting the information, education and recreational needs of our LGA.

The Mobile Library visits members of the community living in remote areas within the LGA, providing borrowers with a collection of over 10,000 resources, facilitating access to technology with 2 public computers on board, Wi-Fi, scanning, printing, and photocopying services, as well as offering tech-help programs for seniors.



Link to read more portstephens.nsw.gov.au/mobile-library

Goal 2: Recognised traditions and lifestyles

Our community supports the richness of its heritage and culture

Yabang Gumba-Gu

We're working on better outcomes for Aboriginal people as we walk along Yabang Gumba-Gu – the road to tomorrow.

This is the name of the unique agreement our Council signed with the local Worimi and Karuah Land Councils during NAIDOC Week in July 2018.

It's now a living roadmap that outlines one-off and ongoing actions to achieve our shared vision for the future of Port Stephens. This year we've worked with our Aboriginal community to achieve several important actions including:

- convening the Aboriginal Strategic Committee and jointly hosting the annual dinner at the Murrook Cultural Centre
- NAIDOC Week activities
- relaunching the Aboriginal project fund in August 2022, first established in 2002
- a workshop with Worimi LALC to discuss dual naming of landmarks, places and spaces in Port Stephens

Celebrations for 2022 NAIDOC Week centred around the theme Get up! Stand up! Show up! - calling for systematic change and reforms

by continuing to show up. For the first time, a flag raising ceremony, cultural activities and native plant giveaways were part of the activities across the Port Stephens LGA.

Six local community groups also shared in \$29,712 via our Aboriginal Projects Grants to empower the Aboriginal community.

The successful projects ranged from connecting children to country, the creation of digital resources and keeping culture alive through song, dance, art and products.

Worimi Knowledge holders Aboriginal Corporation: Cultural Fishing Ground | \$3,000

Advocating for the Worimi people of Port Stephens to access their cultural fishing grounds, resulting in positive outcomes for the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal community.

Seaham Pre-school: Connecting to Culture | \$3,712

Learning sessions with Murrook Culture Centre to increase children, families and educators' knowledge and understanding of Worimi culture. The sessions will share with dance, language, art, song, traditions, food, culture and history.

Anna Bay Public School: Supportive safe space for Aboriginal students | \$6,000

Create a safe space in partnership with Aboriginal students and families where children can connect with culture and feel their cultural identity is supported. The space will create a welcoming environment for community and their cultural group to meet with cultural educators.



NAIDOC Week 2022

Midnight Dreaming Studio: Midnight Dreaming Creative Showcase | \$6,000

This project will help the Aboriginal Community through providing digital cultural resources to keep culture alive and strong through song lines, stories, dance, art and products.

Capital Chemist Raymond Terrace: Aboriginal artwork for shop entrance | \$6,000

Capital Chemist Raymond Terrace are working in partnership with Wahroonga Aboriginal Corporation and Awabakal Medical Service to deliver a health program where visiting Allied Health services utilise the chemist's consulting rooms free of charge. This project will fund the creation of Aboriginal artwork at the entrance to create a safe and welcoming cultural space for Aboriginal clients.

Salamander Childcare Centre: Wayapa Program | \$5,000

The project proposes to engage the services of Sarah Corrigan from Rainbow Crow Cultural Collective to run weekly sessions with multiple groups of children at the centre. The Wayapa Program focusses on wellbeing and connecting children to Country through movement, stories and walks.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal-projects-fund

Birubi cultural works

With the world's largest moving sand dunes, an incredible surf break and thousands of years of Aboriginal heritage – Birubi Point is truly a special place.

Our love for Birubi can sometimes be overwhelming and this can result in congested roads, traffic jams and reduced access. Last year we reported on our long term solution of creating the Birubi Point Aboriginal Place Tourism Transport Interchange.

The interchange will provide better access to the incredible Worimi Conservation Lands and sand dunes and ultimately improve the experience of locals and visitors and protect the cultural significance of this place.

A sand management plan has been incorporated into the design. This will improve the physical protection of culturally significant and sensitive heritage material in addition to minimising the ongoing maintenance associated with windblown sand.

We're working in partnership with Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), Worimi Conservation Lands Board of Management, Crown Lands and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

This is possible thanks to funding from the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund, the NSW Government's investment and Council investment.



To stay up to date with the progress of the interchange visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/birubi-information-centre

Walks of art: Yacaaba and Terrace Reflections

We've had another successful year of walls of art. Terrace Reflections and Yacaaba Walk of Art are ongoing place activation initiatives that support artists to display artwork in an outdoor environment for the whole community to enjoy and experience in Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay.

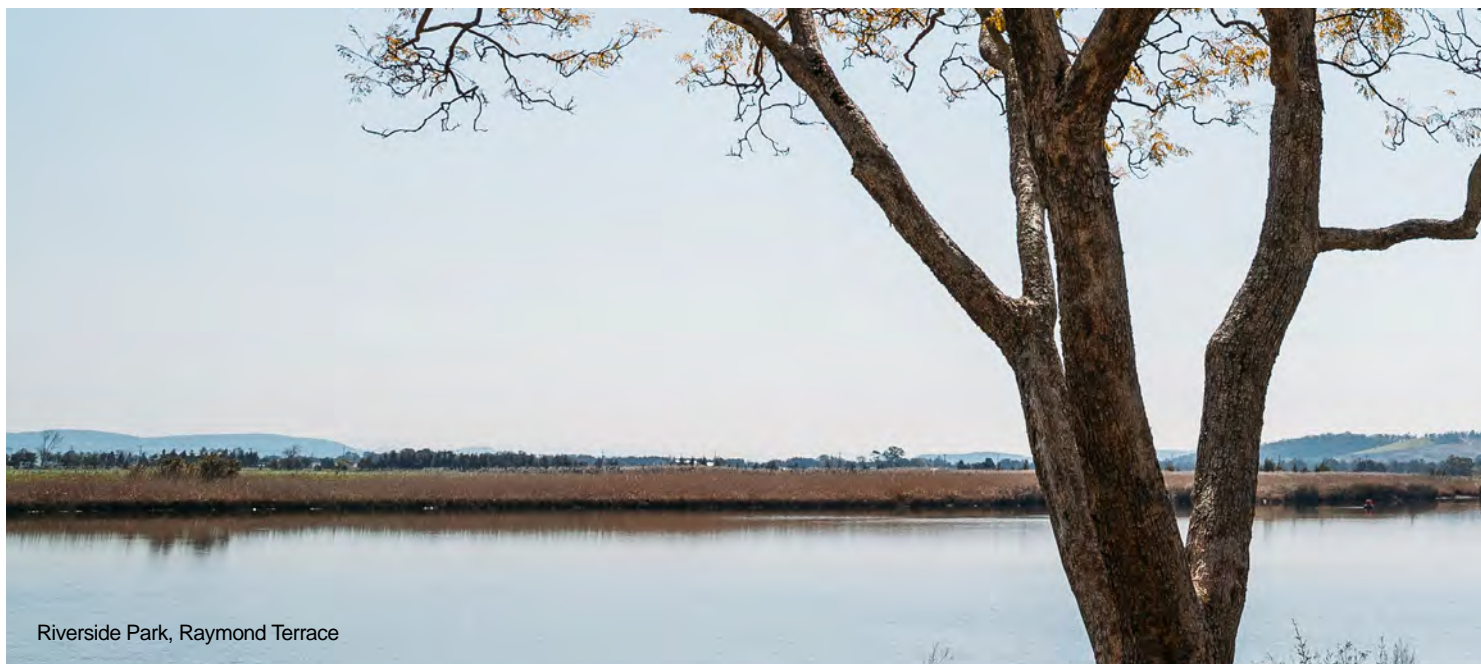
The program aims to:

- inspire the community's imagination, allowing them to engage with arts and culture beyond the confines of a museum or gallery
- enhance the built environment and create a vibrant gateway to the main streets of both areas
- reinforce the unique identity and history of both areas
- provide a highly visible platform for creative expression and development

Works from 4 local artists were delivered.



Visitor Information Centre, Nelson Bay



Riverside Park, Raymond Terrace

Anna Webster's *Belonging and Place* artworks, installed at Yacaaba Street, are semi-abstract landscapes to express not only the beauty of the Port Stephens environment but also how Anna feels about Port Stephens and her sense of place in this society and the environment.

Renaë Lamb's art exhibition was installed as part of the Terrace Reflections program. The story of each artwork is told through the local Worimi Gathang language. These artworks are also now being used as designs for our banner flags in Raymond Terrace William Street.

Michael Brind's art exhibition was featured in Christmas 2022 at both Yacaaba Street Nelson Bay and Terrace Reflections. The artwork featured a celebration of the native fauna of Port Stephens as a tongue in cheek look at the everyday animals as they prepare for the festive season.

Angela Van Dam's art exhibition, installed at Yacaaba Street centre around how Angelea feels about living in 'The Bay'. It's her perspective of what she sees, and she also considers what she thinks the local wildlife might see when they see us. Angelea says the works are of 'local life through my eyes.'

Next steps

We've created vibrant laneways with murals around the Nelson Bay CBD and plan on linking them together, creating the Nelson Bay Art Walk. The Walk celebrates the vibrancy and colour of the spectacular murals and artworks dotted around Nelson Bay and showcases the skills and talents of the local Port Stephens artists who created them. There are 14 artworks included in the Art Walk.

This is part of Our Incredible Place Strategy to use public space to showcase innovative, temporary and permanent art which promotes our local identity.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/artwalk

Finding your way in Raymond Terrace

Raymond Terrace Public Domain Plan is guiding a program of works aimed at improving the streets and public areas in Raymond Terrace.

We received funding through the NSW Government's Streets as Shared Spaces Program and as part of the program we're working with local aboriginal artists and students to bring vibrancy and colour to



existing furniture, walls and other underutilised spaces, implementing pavement art designs within the William Street precinct and installing new wayfinding signage – all with the aim of linking key sites across the town.

Read more about these improvements in Our Place on page 73.

Advisory groups established for heritage, environment and engagement

By listening to our community and providing genuine opportunities for engagement, we'll create a greater sense of community ownership and ultimately, improve the delivery of Council services that are aligned to community needs. During the last year, we've established 3 new advisory groups to provide community representation for consultation, advice and advocacy across three key areas:

- heritage
- environment
- communications and engagement

The advisory groups will work with both Council and staff to share knowledge, build a common understanding, identify opportunities for community-based projects and promote

the importance of the environment, heritage, communications and engagement.

Each group is made up of representatives who are selected through an expression of interest and assessment process.

Next steps

Each group will meet for the first time in the later part of 2023 and will then continue to meet 4 times per year. These advisory groups are a step in the right direction for the community and Council to find ways to work together to protect our amazing assets for future generation.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/committees

Australia Day festivities celebrate community

With events across 4 locations across the local government area, Port Stephens celebrated its biggest Australia Day yet, with citizenship ceremonies, live music, markets, marching bands, pool parties and fireworks. The theme was Reflect. Respect. Celebrate. which encouraged locals to reflect on our history, respect the stories of others, and celebrate Port Stephens, our achievements and our people.



Australia Day 2023

We welcomed our region's 83 newest Australians as part of an Australian Day citizenship ceremony and we thanked local groups and individuals for their service and generosity through our 2022 Port Stephens Annual Awards.

Each of our Annual Award recipients stand out as shining lights, whether it's through donating their time to community programs, championing local sports, or raising environmental awareness.

The 2022 Port Stephens Annual Award recipients are:

Freeman of Port Stephens – Darrell Dawson

Darrell has been prominent in protecting native wildlife and habitat for the benefit of the Port Stephens community. Through his involvement in numerous committees, he's been instrumental in the development of some of the most iconic environmental features of Port Stephens. This includes the protection of the Tomaree National Park and working towards protecting the waters of Port Stephens from pollution and large scale

commercial aquaculture development. He was also instrumental in the protection of the Mambo Wetlands and large areas of local Koala habitat.

Citizen of the Year – Brooke Roach

Brooke has dedicated his life to creating a better future for everyone in the local community, with a particular focus on young Aboriginal people.

Brooke works as the Aboriginal Liaison Officer at Hunter River High School and has volunteered his time to lead the Raymond Terrace Magpies Rugby League Football Club as its President, co-coach the premiership-winning C-Grade Men's team, worked with community organisations, and introduced sports and the associated discipline to many people's lives. Brooke is an advocate for better access to services for Aboriginal people across our whole community and continues to inspire.

Young Citizen of the Year – Emma Newcombe

Emma is an outstanding student, contributing positively to the local community through a wide range of activities and volunteer work. Emma has been a driving force in the development of the Café Alesco, becoming an integral part of its operation and management. Alesco aims to reduce barriers to accessing education, so students can engage and participate in education to the best of their abilities, whilst gently challenging their potential.

Port Stephens Medals

The Port Stephens Medal is awarded to individuals, organisations or groups for distinguished service to the community.

Heather Buckingham

For the last 30 years, Heather Buckingham has played a major role at the St John's Parish Pantry. Heather is a continual force, collecting donations and volunteering every week to provide food and kindness to needy families. For most of her 30 years with the pantry, Heather has coordinated Christmas Hampers for families who can't afford to buy gifts.

Robert Bull

Robert Bull was a founding member of the Raymond Terrace Men's shed in 2010 and has been president of the shed nine times. He's now an active and lifetime member in Raymond Terrace and a member of Australian Men's Shed Association. As initiator of the Raymond Terrace men's shed band, works closely with the Raymond Terrace RSL in planning Anzac Day ceremonies and instigated the men's shed contributions at the Back to King Street Heritage Festival. He's also a major contributor in providing meals at a local cafe for members of the community in need.

Sportsperson of the Year — Jodi Cassar

Jodi has been an active role model for netball in Port Stephens for over three decades now and is the current President of Port Stephens Netball Association. Jodi spends many hours of her time ensuring that grassroots participation in the game of netball is provided for girls and

boys, young and old across our community.

Accessibility and inclusion is an important role of the game that Jodi promotes with all programs offered under Netball NSW, being offered at Port Stephens Netball Association including the Inclusive Netball Uniforms policy introduced by Netball Australia and the growth in boys and mens pathways.

Cultural Endeavour — Gabrielle Carrick

For the last two years, Gabrielle Carrick has been the graphic designer for all Tomaree Museum Association (TMA) exhibitions and artistic presentations. Gabrielle leads the design exhibition team for TMA pop up museums, such as D'albora Nelson Bay, Port Stephens Art Competition and the exhibition at the Nelson Bay Visitor Information Centre.

Gabrielle has volunteered her time and used her considerable expertise gained through a lifetime of work in this area to produce very professional results for the TMA and the Port Stephens Community.

Environmental Award — Casey Freeman

Casey is a passionate Koala carer, volunteering with the Koala rescue team at Port Stephens Koala Hospital. With her work, she actively contributes to the Conservation of the Port Stephens Koala population.

Casey along with her daughters, has developed, manufactured and installed Koala signage across the LGA to help drive Koala awareness. These signs were recognised and supported across the LGA.



For more information about the Port Stephens Annual Awards, visit portstephens.nsw.gov.au/annual-awards



Our community FEATURE STORY



Mayoral Academic Scholarships – supporting our students

For the fourteenth year in a row, local students have the opportunity to win a \$2,000 scholarship. This great opportunity is thanks to a long standing partnership between Port Stephens Council, local businesses and our local schools.

This year, 17 local businesses joined forces, contributing \$40,000 altogether, creating a total of 20 scholarships to help students with their studies. When a local business offers a scholarship, it makes a big difference to a young student. It could cover costs like textbooks, a laptop, or living expenses. This support goes a long way in helping students follow their dreams and keep learning.

Each winning student is allocated a scholarship from a sponsor who will continue to mentor and offer work placement, helping the student build professional connections and a future career here in Port Stephens.

In the past 13 years, more than 150 students received scholarships worth over \$300,000. Local businesses are committed to investing in our future leaders because they understand how important it is for the long term. This partnership between the council, local businesses and schools is truly making a positive impact on students' lives and our future workforce.



Learn more at [portstephens.nsw.gov.au/
mayoral-academic-scholarships](https://portstephens.nsw.gov.au/mayoral-academic-scholarships)

International Women's Day Scholarships

For the past 6 years through our International Women's Day scholarship program, we've encouraged local women to achieve an important goal, whether it's related to the arts, culture, environment, business, community, health or sport.

This year there were 4 scholarships awarded, with the fourth scholarship sponsored by the Rotary Club of Salamander Bay. The scholarships, worth \$1,000 each, are a way of recognising the important contribution women make to our community. The recipients were:

Tara Kirby-Campbell

Tara owns a music education company for students in Newcastle and Port Stephens with the goal of making music accessible to all, regardless of monetary or other barriers. After struggling with a disability herself as a young person, Tara ensures that barriers of chronic health, disability, sexuality and finance are seen as learning opportunities, rather than a struggle. Tara currently offers three scholarships to students who show great potential and will award an additional three scholarships to encourage young women, particularly those who have autism and ADHD to pursue music lessons, not only as a lifelong skill, but also for therapeutic measures.

Menindee Simon

Menindee plans on using her scholarship to start the first Women's Aboriginal basketball team in Karuah. She hopes that the women who play will be role models for their kids, showing them it's ok to have a go. There's already a team of eight ready to play and with this scholarship, they'll be able to subsidise the cost of registration, game fees and uniforms and access transport to get to and from the training facilities.

Morgan Martin

Morgan wants to support young woman to find their first job through a program called Resume Recuperation. Using this scholarship, Morgan will launch the program, and run low cost workshops

to assist young women find their first job and navigate their career pathway. From resume writing to career planning, how to search for a job and interview skills training, Morgan will hire a venue, advertise and prepare the materials for the workshops and will also offer each participant a follow-up service with 1 free 15 minute individual coaching session post-interview.

Simone Jolly

Simone is an audiologist and her business, Jolly Good Hearing, provided mobile hearing testing service for children in Port Stephens and the Hunter Regions to try and help reduce the long waiting lists for hearing tests for children. With this scholarship, Simone will expand her services to offer a mobile earwax removal service to the ageing population in both nursing homes and private residences. The aim is to reduce GPs workloads, provide faster results, and allow the opportunity for ear pathologies to be detected quicker.



Learn more about our International Women's Day Scholarships, including past winners at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/international-womens-day-scholarship

Beautiful beaches bring the crowds

Port Stephens is home to some of the best beaches, foreshores and reserves in the country. In the last year, our beaches attracted more than 790,000 visitors with people returning in droves, especially during the December school holiday period, as families and beachgoers made the most of the ideal weather.

Keeping swimmers safe is a priority and we were pleased to keep working with Surf Life Saving Services with the tender awarded for beach patrols for a period of five years.



Learn more about our beaches at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/beaches-and-foreshores

Karuah by Night

Karuah transformed into an immersive night time experience of neon lights and a laser light show on the water in April thanks to funding from the NSW Government.

Neon installations of marine life came to life in a kaleidoscope of colour along the foreshore, in addition to special cultural elements including a language tree. The evening culminated with a spectacular light show over the water, incorporating laser lights, smoke and special effects. The event featured live music, food trucks and children's entertainment providing a fresh perspective on Karuah for locals and visitors alike.

The event was the first of its kind for Karuah and fulfilled some of the actions outlined in the Karuah Place Plan, such as advocating for local events, and showcasing Karuah's heritage.

Grant funding for events

We secured funding to deliver major events across Port Stephens. These events are directly linked to actions within the My Incredible Place Strategy, Karuah Place Plan and are aimed at improving the liveability and wellbeing of residents across Port Stephens.



\$311,000 from Reconnecting Regional NSW and \$100,000 from Multicultural NSW.

The 3 events are Karuah By Night, Illuminate Raymond Terrace, and Night at the Beach, which will be held in September 2023 at Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay.

Thriving with our kids

Like many employers, we've been experiencing staff shortages, and for our childcare services this meant challenges in meeting our educator to children ratios. Our staff from Family Day Care and administration stepped in to work in Outside School Hours Care to meet the needs of families. Our administration team were valiant in their efforts to meet the high demand of entering enrolments for 2023 at the same time as managing bookings for vacation care.

The hard work paid off with Family Day Care and Clarence Town, Raymond Terrace and Shoal Bay OOSH achieving their assessment and rating evaluations with all services meeting national quality standards.

Additionally, Family Day Care teamed up with our Waste Services team to host a sustainability conference for 26 educators and our mobile preschool contracted Murrook to implement an indigenous cultural experience program for the children.






Learn more about Thrive Kids at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/thrive-kids












Karuah by Night 2023

Our community performance

Aspirational measures

	On track Target achieved or on track to be achieved
	Monitor < 5% off the target
	Off track > 5% off the target

C1 | Community wellbeing

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
C1.1.1.1 Identify and plan for the needs of youth and the ageing population and provide support to community agencies to deliver services for vulnerable people and families	Actions completed in the Family & Community Services Delivery Schedule	≥ 95%	100%	
	Number of actions completed in the ageing strategy	Refer to below comment		
	Comment: The Ageing Strategy was until 2019, with the previous Ageing Strategy actions now to be included in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and the Community Wellbeing Strategy (CWS) to be considered by Council			
	Develop and adopt CWS by 30 June 2023	New	70%	
Comment: Community engagement complete by August 2023 with Wellbeing Strategy to be adopted in 2024				
C1.1.2.1 Identify and plan for an inclusive and access friendly community	Actions completed in the DIAP	Number completed	23	
	Adopt revised DIAP by June 2023	New	70%	
	Comment: Currently being reviewed and developed as an appendix to the Community Wellbeing Strategy. Refer C1.1.1.1.			
C1.2.1.1 Deliver early education and care for children	Customer satisfaction with Thrive Kids	≥ 90%	N/A	
	Comment: Children Services Survey conducted in September 2023, result was 95.3%			
	Annual accreditation	Compliant	Compliant	
C1.3.1.1 Initiate and manage contracts with recreational, leisure and community services	Community satisfaction score with Council swimming pools	≥ 90%	Not comparable*	
	Maintain a score above NSW 3 year average in the Royal Life Safety Assessment Audit	> 3 year average	88%	

*Community Satisfaction Survey conducted in September 2023, rating scale changed.

C2 | Recognised traditions and lifestyles

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
C2.1.1.1 Support initiatives and projects to promote Aboriginal culture and protect Aboriginal places	Number of actions implemented and services delivered in accordance with the Yabang Gumba-Gu Agreement	Number completed	9 of 16	⊖
	Comment: On review of the agreement, it's identified that more extensive actions are required to ensure we're adequately meeting the agreements purpose			
C2.2.1.1 Support local, cultural and civic events that highlight and foster the creative and diverse nature of our community	Number of meetings held for the Aboriginal Place Advisory Panel	New	2	✓
	Number of community-run events supported and managed by Council	New	15 (used the community event grant funded events)	✓
	Number of actions completed in Our Incredible Place Strategy	>90%	34 of 47 (72%)	✗
Comment: Proposed aspirational target was not achieved in part due to lack of artist availability and funding opportunities not being available to complete projects. It's envisaged that the unfinished projects will be completed within 2023/2024 period				
C2.3.1.1 Provide support for the preservation of Port Stephens heritage	Number of DA referrals to heritage consultant	New	3 referrals	✓
	Number of non-DA enquiries to heritage consultant	New	1 enquiry	✓
C2.4.1.1 Deliver public library services, programs and resources	Library user satisfaction score	>90%	94%	✓
	Customer satisfaction with outreach and homebound services	New	80%	✓
	Number of visits to Library branches	>230,000	170,142	✗
	Internet and Wi-Fi usage at Raymond Terrace and Tomaree Library branches	>45,000	22,177	✗
	Comment: Usage has continued to rise, but is not quite at pre-COVID levels			
	Increase in Community Satisfaction with Library programs, activities and events	New	N/A*	✓
	Attendance at programs, activities and events	>8,300	9,265	✓
	Use of library resources (collection items borrowed)	>300,000	296,365	⊖

*Specific question not included in the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey.

Our place

A liveable and connected place supporting community wellbeing and local economic growth



Goal 1: Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment

Our community has an adaptable, sustainable and diverse economy

Sailing into the Port Stephens economy

Events and activations are a really important part of what makes Port Stephens a great place to live – they showcase our natural environment, attract visitors outside of our peak holiday periods, support business, and most importantly, they create social connection and pride in our place.

Following a challenging few years of lockdowns and natural disasters, events are returning to Port Stephens. This year, in April and May, we welcomed back one of the biggest events on our calendar – Sail Port Stephens. It was wonderful to see friends old and new, back on the beautiful waters of Port Stephens once again.

We began our partnership with Sail Port Stephens back in 2007, being witness to the growth into one of the best regattas on the Australian sailing calendar. This year, we welcomed back over 1,000 people from around the world for a festival over 3 weekends of sailing.

Each year, Sail Port Stephens leaves a very valued and positive impact on our local economy, injecting more than \$2 million into the local economy.

From hotels and marinas to local cafes, restaurants and boutiques – our community is grateful for the boost this amazing event provides.

It's all happening in Raymond Terrace!

Road improvements, upgrades to the town centre, events and activations have come to life after several years of planning.

In 2020, we asked the community about their vision for Raymond Terrace. This led to the Raymond Terrace Public Domain Plan – a plan for how we'll improve public space in Raymond Terrace over the next 20 years.

The 3 biggest priorities of the Raymond Terrace community are healthy streets, lively spaces and unique experiences, particularly in William Street, Adelaide Street and the river foreshore.

This year, we've rolled out a program of works to create better places and spaces. We've been reinvigorating the William Street Precinct by installing new shade structures, decking with seating, planter boxes and pavement stamping to highlight the William Street crossing area.

Thanks to funding from the NSW Government Streets as Shared Spaces program, we were able to extend this program of works, working with local Aboriginal artists and students to bring vibrancy and colour to existing furniture, walls and other underutilised spaces, implementing pavement art designs within the William Street precinct and installing new wayfinding signage – all with the aim of linking key sites across the town.

We created the Community Corner at the old Fire Station site at the corner of William and Sturgeon Street, featuring a court area, special seating, art installations and fresh new landscaping and planting.

We've acknowledged and celebrated the historical importance of the Marriage Trees and King Street area, improving the vibrancy of the site with improved signage, temporary seating, lighting and a play feature. We'll also be using this space for community events and activations.

Finally, to encourage social cohesion and to celebrate our reinvigorated spaces we've held a range of community events and activations like the Raymond Terrace Festival.



Learn more about our plans for Raymond Terrace at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/raymond-terrace-strategy



King Street, Raymond Terrace

Photo by Destination NSW –
Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary



Strong support for Koala Sanctuary

We're proud to be home to koalas and we're working hard to protect them for future generations. We opened the Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary in 2020 in partnership with Port Stephens Koala Hospital and the NSW Government with a focus on koala conservation. This innovative facility includes a hospital for sick, injured, or orphaned Koalas and it's also a tourism and accommodation destination, giving us the opportunity to educate our community about the conservation of koalas.

With travel restrictions easing in the last year, we've focused on building on our foundations, welcoming local, interstate and international day visitors. We also enjoyed our highest accommodation occupancy in January 2023.

It's really important to us that we're offering a destination that's considered 'world class', promoting both the importance of koala conservation, while providing a unique and special experience of Port Stephens to those that visit us.

We're proud to say that over the last year, we've achieved an incredible customer satisfaction standard with an average Net Promoter Score of above 90%. Scores above 70% are considered world-class so we're delighted the Sanctuary achieved this result.

To continue to raise awareness and welcome more visitors to the Sanctuary, we've started broadening our relationships with key industry stakeholders in the international market and have welcomed decision makers and influencers from India, Hong Kong, the UK and China.

Next steps

In the next 6 months, we have the opportunity to establish and develop relationships with travel agents and tourism operators across Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Southern India at the Tourism Australia's Meeting Place events held in Singapore and India.



Learn more about the Koala Sanctuary at portstephenskoalas Sanctuary.com.au

Events contribute to making great places

Community events are an important factor in contributing to the Port Stephens cultural identity. They reflect our values and a sense of place and they provide a platform for our community to connect and come together.

Our Community Event Development Fund supports events that create a social outcome for the Port Stephens community – that bring people together to celebrate, learn, share experiences and grow new opportunities.

Our focus is on not only funding the events but also providing strategic support to help community events grow, become self-funding and sustainable.

Over the last year, we've supported a total of 15 events, including:

- Tillifest 2022
- Elders Olympics
- Woodville Community Family Fun Night
- Twilight Cinema, Lemon Tree Passage
- Whale Season Launch
- Medowie Arts and Craft Show
- Emergency Services Sailing Regatta
- PSFM 40th Birthday event
- Human Whale Community event
- Bullarama at Hinton Pub
- Carols by the Bay
- Karuah Oyster and Timber Festival (postponed)
- Medowie Christmas Carols
- Seaham Carols

By providing funding, logistical and promotional support for these events, we're working towards the delivery of Our Incredible Place Strategy.

It's our blueprint for how to work in partnership with business and residents to celebrate our unique identity, increase investment in our communities and deliver more economic opportunities for our people.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/arts-culture-heritage

Doing Business After Hours

Our community is passionate about developing a liveable and vibrant place that supports local economic growth. We're leading an integrated approach to this, focusing on creating results that help make Port Stephens a better place to live, work and play.

By building relationships and growing trust with the community, business and government we can create an environment that supports business growth, injects vibrancy into our communities and drives tourism.

This year, we launched Raymond Terrace Business After Hours – a free after hours business networking opportunity where the hosting business showcases their business, services, and facilities to their local business community peers.

Businesses also receive updates about developments in and around Raymond Terrace and have the opportunity to discuss local concerns with our staff.

So far, we've held 2 successful Business After Hours events in Raymond Terrace at Atwea College and Capital Chemist, where the businesses have enjoyed making connections in a casual and relaxed atmosphere.

We look forward to meeting with our local businesses again in 2024.

A centre for locals and visitors – the new VIC events program

Right in the middle of Nelson Bay, you'll find the Visitor Information Centre (VIC), your go-to place for everything about Port Stephens. Now that COVID restrictions have eased, we're back to the strong foundations of helping tourists find great places to stay and exciting things to do and giving locals info about events and activities. While the foundation of the VIC has always been to assist tourists, we understand that our local community is equally important.

In the last year, we've transformed the VIC into more than just an information centre. With 2 new stunning murals painted by local Worimi artist Jason Russel, we've created a dedicated space for hosting events, activities, and local exhibitions. Our aim is to build the VIC's profile as a place where locals can seek information and also engage with their community.

We've introduced school holiday activities and activations within the VIC, which have been a hit with visitors and locals alike. Additionally, our April Anzac Day exhibition had significant interest and participation from the community.

We're committed to enhancing awareness and the value of the VIC for both our visitors and the local community. We want Nelson Bay residents to see the VIC as more than just a tourist information centre but a space for learning, enjoyment, and community engagement.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/visitor-information-centre



Visitor Information Centre, Nelson Bay





Our place

FEATURE ARTICLE



Bringing events back to life

Events and activations are a really important part of what makes Port Stephens a great place to live – they showcase our natural environment, attract visitors outside of our peak holiday periods, support business, and most importantly, they create social connection and pride in our place. Over the last year, we delivered 86 events and activations across the LGA with the support of external funding.

Through the It's On program, we've been working to build vibrancy and connections in our community – our streets aren't just movement corridors, but more a stage for festivals, street art, busking or pop-up dining, while our parks are used for live site events like pop up cinemas, bootcamps, yoga and Zumba.

We'll continue to apply for grants and funding to support these programs and together, with business and community, we'll continue to strengthen events and activations across our place, enabling us all to experience the long term benefits they have to offer.



Find out what events are happening near you at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/events

Goal 2: Infrastructure and facilities

Our community's infrastructure and facilities are safe, convenient, reliable and environmentally sustainable

Potholes and road maintenance education – lots of roads, blackspot projects

We know that the repair and maintenance of our roads is one of the biggest priorities for our community and the damage to our roads during the weather of both March 2021 and July 2022 impacted residents, business and visitors alike. Our road maintenance journey has seen its fair share of challenges and achievements.

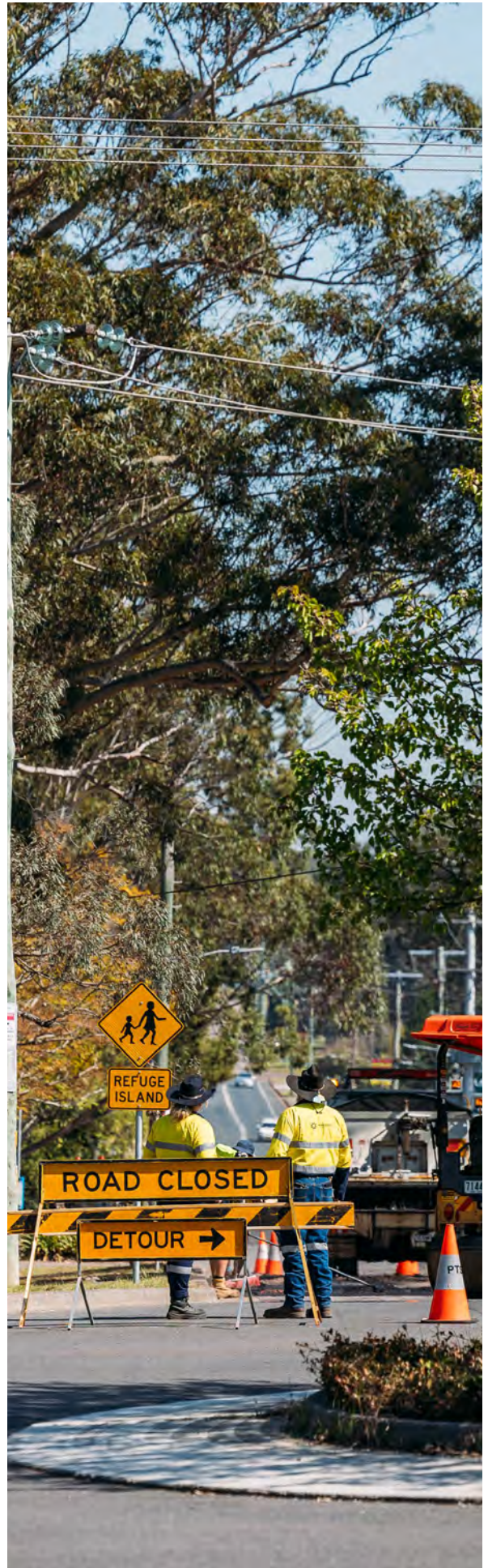
Despite limited resources, we've been strategic in our approach, carefully prioritising projects and actively seeking additional funding for our roads. This approach ensures that we can make the most of what we have and deliver the best results for our community.

Thanks to a number of dry spells, our dedicated teams have managed to catch up on road maintenance, making pothole and road repairs a top priority, filling over 59,000 potholes over the last year.

During this time, we've also taken a step towards community education. We believe that knowledge is power, so we've released a series of educational videos. These videos answer some of the frequently asked questions and help our community understand how we build and maintain roads while effectively managing those pesky potholes.

We've secured a substantial commitment of \$10 million for local road repairs. Our plan is to deliver this over the next two financial years, which means more improvements are on the horizon.

Our advocacy for roads funding is also starting to bear fruit. Recent funding announcements have given us additional resources to tackle the extensive road pavement failures across our local government area.



Avenue of the Allies

Avenue of the Allies is historically significant as Tanilba's gateway to the waterfront and it's a well-used residential road and school bus route that connects Tanilba to the surrounding communities. The unique gateways at either end of the Avenue were built in the 1930's with different types of rock and artefacts from the HMAS Sydney.

With funding secured from the NSW Government's Fixing Local Roads program and Federal Government funding from Local Road Community Infrastructure Grant and Roads to Recovery, we will be widening and reconstructing the road between Poiulus Parade and King Albert Avenue as well as:

- completing drainage works including kerb and gutter from Poiulus Parade to King Albert
- reshaping roadside swale drains to maximize stormwater infiltration into the natural ground
- formalising intersections with kerb returns
- adjusting the shared path at intersections to tie into the new kerbs

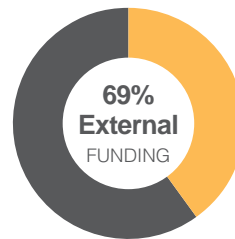
- reconstructing driveways will be reconstructed with a concrete v-drain allowing water to drain across each driveway and
- installing electrical conduits for future lighting at both of the gates.

This is a much-needed improvement for the Tilligerry Peninsula and the Avenue of the Allies project has been part of the capital works 10 year work plan.

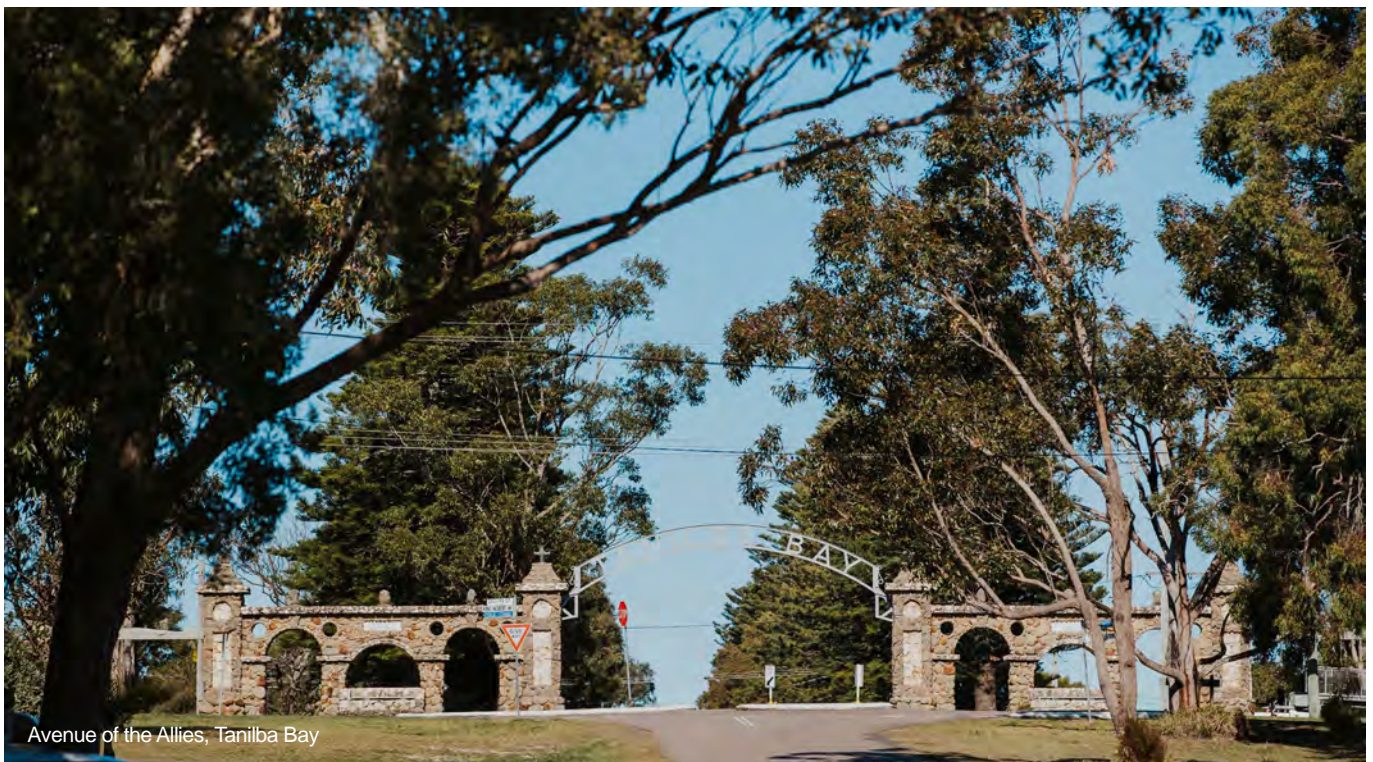
This Fixing Local Roads funding, combined with previous funding we've received through the Australian Government Roads to Recovery Program, means we can deliver this project as planned.



Keep up to date with the project at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/avenue-of-the-allies



NSW Government's Fixing Local Roads program and Federal Government funding from Local Road Community Infrastructure Grant and Roads to Recovery



Avenue of the Allies, Tanilba Bay

Looking after what's important to our community

We were successful in securing \$9.7 million in grant funding for infrastructure and facilities, meaning that we've been able to deliver essential upgrades to our buildings, amenities, sports grounds, fences, roads, bin enclosures and all the other infrastructure that is often seen but not heard of – unless it's damaged.

While some grant funding is coming to an end due to its association with a post-COVID infrastructure stimulus, we continue to find new grants with similar infrastructure outcomes. This means that an expanded capital works program is likely to continue.

With better weather conditions we have made good progress on our backlog of works associated with natural disasters and wet weather over the year.

Key road projects that have been completed include:

- Intersection improvements at Gan Gan Road and Nelson Bay Road
- Traffic calming at Ferodale Road and Brocklesby Road
- Pavement reconstruction at Tanilba Road, Mallabula
- Widening of Swan Bay Road (Seg 50-60)
- Pavement rehabilitation at Clarencetown Road (Wattle Creek Bridge to Langlands Road and Mooghin Road to Dixon Street)
- Road rehabilitation at Six Mile Road (Seg 10-20) road rehabilitation

Making places for people

The foundation of any public space is prioritising people and that means making our most popular areas easy to navigate for pedestrians. Part of our public domain planning includes identifying high pedestrian activity areas (HPAA). These are areas of high pedestrian activity, near shopping strips, railway stations, bus interchanges, beach-sides and services such as medical centres. The

maximum speed limit is 40km/h at all times.

The different road environment helps to alert drivers to the lower speed limit and makes them aware of the presence of pedestrians moving about or near the road. This creates a safer road environment for all road users, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and children.

Raymond Terrace is a regional centre within the Hunter Region. Substantial growth of the surrounding area has seen expansion of the town centre for goods, services and traffic.

The original high pedestrian activity area (HPAA) created in 1995 covered one block of Raymond Terrace town centre, adjacent to the Pacific Highway prior to bypassing the town centre in 1998. Crashes are occurring at the perimeter of the existing zone and expansion has been highlighted in the strategic plan for a reduced speed limit to improve pedestrian connectivity and safety.

With our focus on enhancing liveability and commercial activity in the town centre with the completion of the Raymond Terrace Public Domain Plan, connectivity and safety concerns were highlighted along with a desire to revitalise the historical river sections of town to link with more developed commercial areas.

The existing HPAA in Raymond Terrace town centre has been extended to include the following streets, which are being investigated and designed:

- William Street (extension of existing)
- Port Stephens Street (extension of existing)
- Glenelg Street (extension of existing)
- Jacaranda Avenue
- Bourke Street
- King Street
- Hunter Street (partial)

Works involve improving deflection on roundabout approaches to slow vehicles down and extending the existing 40KPH.

Next Steps: HPAA works in Nelson Bay also from July 2023

Nelson Bay CBD is the main commercial centre for eastern Port Stephens LGA and a thriving place for visitors and locals. We want to make the area a place for people where it's easy to move around on foot, with mobility aids or by bike.

There has also been a history of crashes in the Nelson Bay CBD involving pedestrians and vehicles so we need to address this issue by reducing vehicle speeds and improving pedestrian crossing facilities.

The existing HPAA in the Nelson Bay town centre has been extended to include the following streets:

- Magnus Street – from existing 10K shared zone to Donald Street
- Yacaaba Street – from existing 10K shared zone to Tomaree Street
- Stockton Street – from existing 10K shared zone to Dowling Street
- Layman Street
- Church Street – Government Street to Layman Street
- Government Road – Church Street to Layman Street
- Donald Street
- Tomaree Street

Award winning amenities

Amenities buildings aren't usually associated with award winning design but the new amenities building and kiosk at Stuart Park, Hinton is an exception.

The project, which included the 'retirement' of the existing public amenities, sports change room and associated 'temporary' kiosk with a more modern facility, won the Small Project Architecture Commendation at the 2023 Newcastle Architecture Awards.

The project included building new change room facilities, progressive unisex shared bathrooms, a standalone kiosk and associated storage, first aid and referees change rooms, and an accessible public toilet.

Aside from meeting the needs of an expanding user base in Hinton Rugby, Cricket and Tennis Clubs, the upgrade also considered the site's natural and historic values, and its "backyard" setting have been maintained – a key criteria of the brief.

The Stuart Park amenities and kiosk was a culmination of extensive heritage planning, a rigorous design process and engagement with the community and sporting clubs to make sure the design options met the needs of all the users, and it paid off. It's become the pride of the community and was a designated safe spot during the extreme weather events in June 2022.

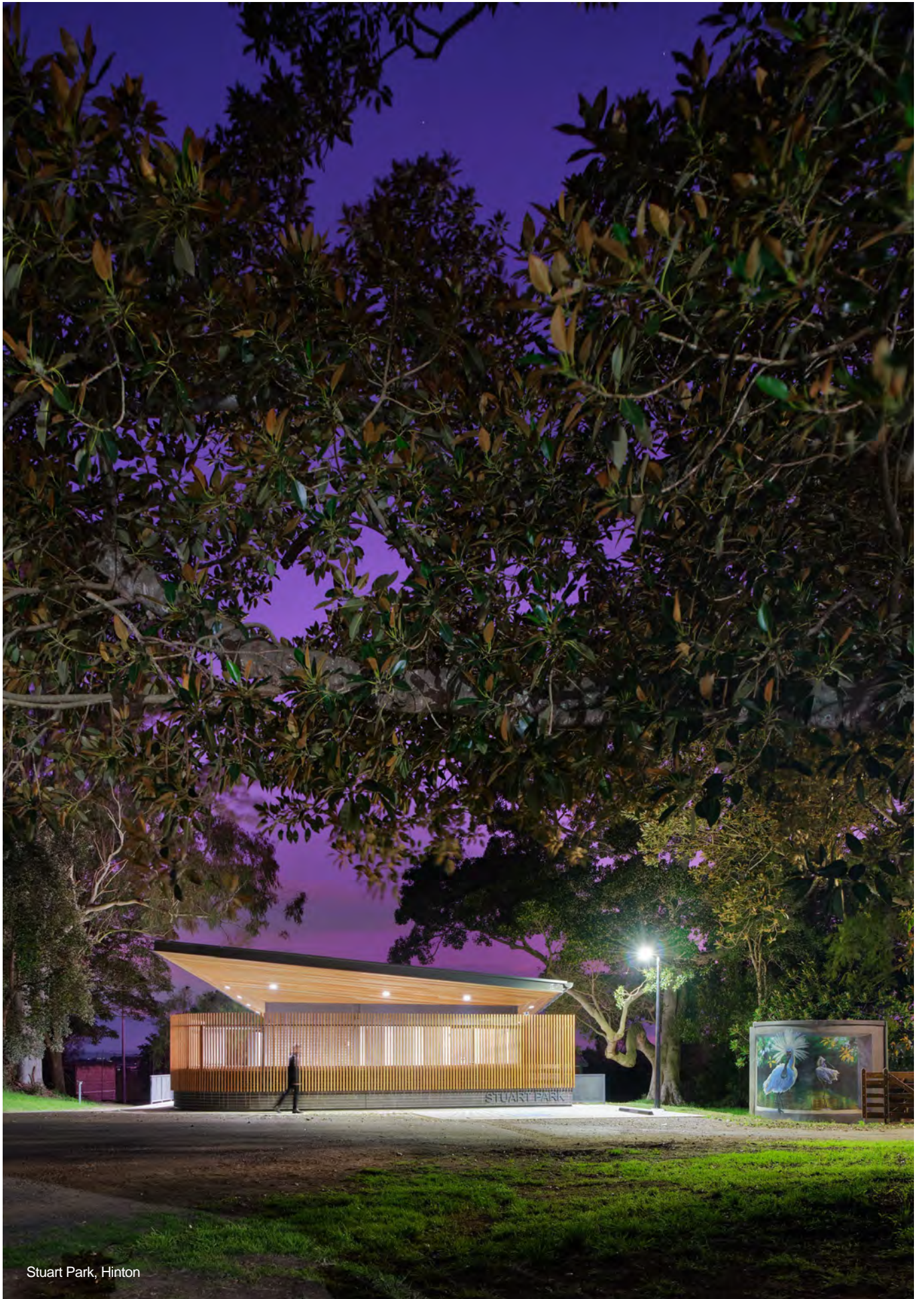
The Architectural Team presented much needed modern features and inclusions for the new facility, along with robust materials that could withstand the frequent use of sporting teams and school groups, reducing maintenance demands and increasing resilience to damage/graffiti.

The scale and relationships of the buildings were carefully considered throughout the design phase with input from the local community with the new facilities accommodating multiple user groups.

Notable architectural features of the building include the distinctive dual pitched roof forms, thermally treated timber soffits and ceiling linings, the exposure of structural steel sections within the façade of the buildings to articulate and soften the elongated forms, patterned brickwork, perforated mesh doors and screening elements used to reduce vandalism and improve ventilation and the use of softer materials such as locally sourced spotted gum.



Learn more about Stuart Park at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/stuart-park



Stuart Park, Hinton

Goal 3: Thriving and safe place to live

Our community supports a healthy, happy and safe place

Housing plans to meet needs of a growing community

As jobs, town centres and economies evolve and our population changes, we're committed to a balanced approach to planning.

Following the adoption of the Port Stephens Local Strategic Planning Statement in 2020, which sets out the vision for land use in Port Stephens over the next 20 years and identifies the special character and values of our area that we should preserve and how we'll manage change, we have moved our focus to preparing the plans and strategies we need to support housing supply. We are:

- amending the Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP) which guides planning decisions for our local government area by providing a framework for the way land can be used
- amending the Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan
- distributing the Housing Opportunities in Raymond Terrace brochure

- finalising planning agreements to deliver community infrastructure
- developing a housing supply plan
- improving our geographic information system to align with other government systems.

We also secured grant funding for master planning work in partnership with NSW Land and Housing Corporation in Raymond Terrace.

Next steps

The next 6 months are set to be equally as busy as we review our land holdings that might be suitable for housing. This includes an LEP Amendment to reclassify community land to operational for housing purposes.

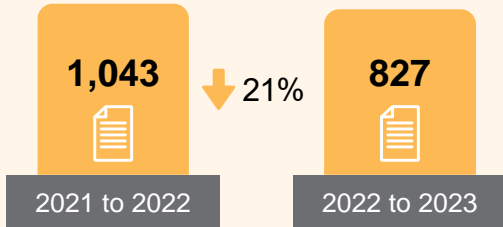
We'll be updating the Local Housing Strategy, which will be informed by a range of related strategic planning work for example including for example the detailed Housing Supply Plan work that is substantially progressed.



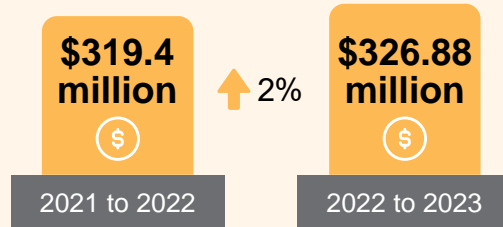
Development and planning highlights

We still achieved a fast turnaround time averaging 22 days thanks to process improvements

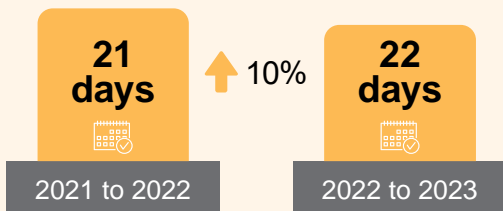
Development applications (DAs) determined



Value of development approved



Net median determination time (days)



ONLY 37 DAs
ON THE 100-DAY LIST
was achieved by processing larger scale developments more efficiently

This was under the Premier's target of

40 DAYS

334 CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATES ISSUED



Building certification market share

42.7%

with a turnaround time (net median) of under

4 DAYS





Planning for our place

We're planning for the future of our places in a way that makes it easy for you to understand and get involved. Place plans start with our community – your values and priorities for your place. This is the foundation and together, we identify the unique local character of a place and the ways our community can shape, enhance or protect these aspects.

A place plan is guided by strategic documents – we put a local filter on all of our existing strategies to make one easy-to-read, action-oriented plan. It also includes analysis of potential opportunities for a place in line with the community's vision.

Every place is unique and so is every place plan. A place plan may include events and activities, projects and works, actions for community, land use changes and more. A place plan is an easy-to-read plan for the future of a place – it outlines the community's vision for their place and actions to achieve that vision.

We're rolling a program out to develop Place Plans and Place Strategies for key areas. Here's where it's up to:

1. Karuah and surrounds (adopted March 2022)
2. Hinterland (underway)
3. Medowie and surrounds (adopted April 2023)
4. Shoal Bay (underway)
5. Fullerton Cove and surrounds Place Strategy (underway)
6. Nelson Bay East Place Strategy (underway)
7. Tilligerry (underway)

Other centres may be subject to future Place Plans. We'll keep you up to date as the program progresses.

Highlight project: Karuah Place Plan

Karuah is moving forward with new housing developments, bringing an increasing number of young families to the town. Future planning is focused on driving social wellbeing, creating a more connected town centre, better accessibility to the waterfront and improved community facilities for all to enjoy.

Actions continue to be implemented after the plan was adopted in March 2022.

Highlights so far have been:

1. Main Street Beautification
2. Karuah Bridge Mural
3. Town entry signage and Google map references
4. Karuah by Night event
5. Aliceton Reserve upgrades

Highlight project: Medowie Place Plan

Medowie provides a wide range of local community and sporting facilities and is within close proximity to key employment areas like Williamstown, Raymond Terrace and Newcastle. Referred to as the Place of Tall Trees, the open space and bushland setting define the identity of the place.

The Medowie Place Plan was adopted in April 2023. We've started working with the community to implement actions including:

1. The creation of Town Teams model
2. Establishing a Park Run
3. National Tree Planting Day
4. National Ride 2 School Day celebrations

In May 2023, Port Stephens Council joined forces with the Town Teams Movement, a non-profit company that enables local communities and governments to connect, organise and act to regenerate the fabric of their neighbourhoods and to create better places.

Port Stephens Council was the first Council in NSW to actively promote the Town Teams approach, and we're proud to be working with the local community to create vibrant places that support social wellbeing and enhance liveability.

A series of Town Team launch events were held at Medowie throughout May, with over 65 people attending the information sessions to discuss their ideas for community projects. Casual meetings are currently being held in the community to progress some of these ideas.

We're committed to developing plans that create genuine outcomes for our community – we don't want documents that sit on a shelf – we want plans that deliver outcomes, help us access funding and most importantly, improve the wellbeing and liveability of all our communities.

Next steps

Hinterland, Shoal Bay and Tilligerry Place Plans are being developed and scheduled for adoption during the 2023 to 2024 financial year.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/place-plans



Our place

FEATURE ARTICLE



Building stronger emergency management plans

When things don't go as planned, it can be difficult to know where to turn. At our organisation, we believe it is our responsibility to support our emergency services and connect our community with the help they need when they need it the most.

Over the past year, we've worked hard to strengthen our resilience by reviewing and updating some key emergency management plans.

Following the July 2022 floods, we developed and implemented the Port Stephens Post Event Recovery Plan. This plan focuses on the National Principles for Disaster Recovery, including the social, build, economic, and natural environments.

Using what we've learned from past disasters and emergencies, we also reviewed and updated our Port Stephens Local Emergency Management Plan. We used our knowledge to build a strong plan that outlines the roles and responsibilities of emergency services and supporting organisations before, during, and after an emergency.

Looking ahead to 2023, we plan to continue our work in supporting the wider community and local emergency services. This includes further emergency preparation and awareness activities, as well as the development of the Pre-Event Emergency Recovery Plan.

We're committed to being there for our community when they need us the most, and we'll continue to work hard to ensure that we're prepared for any emergency or disaster that might come our way.



Learn more about what to do in an emergency at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/emergency

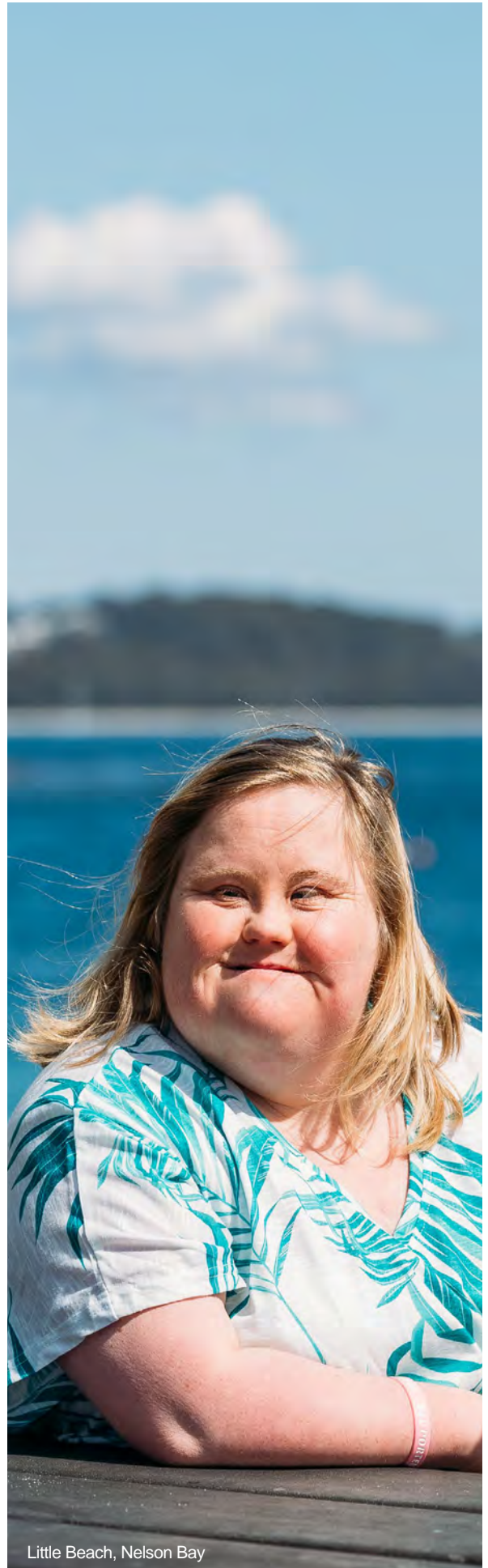
Supporting our community to make a positive impact

We understand that some projects are best delivered by our community, that's why we provide financial assistance to our community to support a diverse range of services and projects that directly benefit the local people. Each year, our Councillors receive an allowance of \$2,000.

During this period, over \$67,000 was dispersed from Mayoral and Ward Funds. These funds help support community programs and initiatives that have a positive impact on Port Stephens and that do not meet the criteria for other funding streams.

This year, 26 groups benefited from Mayoral funds including organisations such as Wahroonga Aboriginal Corporation, Raymond Terrace Historical Society, Salamander Bay Child Care Centre, Port Stephens Family & Neighbourhood Services, Anna Bay Public School, Riding for the Disabled and Nelson Bay Junior Cricket Club.

The same number received Ward Funds/ Rapid Response including Meals on Wheels, Nelson Bay Football Club, RT RSL Sub branch, Rivergum Parents as Grandparents Group.



Little Beach, Nelson Bay

Out on the range

Our team of rangers have extensive knowledge and expertise. Their understanding of various legislation and Council policies means they can enforce and educate across a broad spectrum of activities. This includes overgrown vegetation, asbestos, illegal dumping, erosion and sediment control, weight-limited roads, abandoned vehicles, backyard burning, and companion animals. The key activities they focused on during this year included:

Restricted, Dangerous and Menacing Dogs

Ranger's conducted inspections of all known dogs subject to an Order within our LGA. This was done to ensure compliance with the requirements of owning a dog subject to an Order. A number of warnings and infringements were issued to those who didn't comply.

School Safety

Rangers undertook 2 rounds of visits to each school across our LGA to educate and provide a positive interaction between rangers, staff, parents and carers to help ensure safe and legal parking practices.

Construction Site Compliance

Rangers conducted high visibility proactive patrols and inspections of construction sites across Port Stephens to provide an education opportunity for builders and contractors and to investigate any breaches of the conditions of consent.

Illegal Camping

Due to the increase in customer requests in relation to illegal camping, Rangers conducted late afternoon and early morning targeted patrols focusing on known hotspot areas for illegal camping. Rangers took an educative approach, talking to visitors/holiday makers about making use of appropriate accommodation and moving on those who were illegally camping.

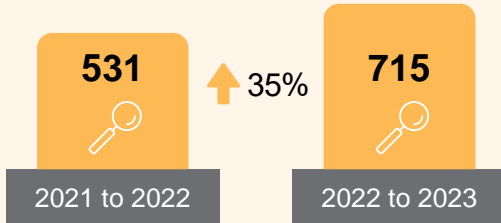
Disability Parking Enforcement

Ranger's focused on parking enforcement in relation to the mobility parking scheme to ensure disabled parking spaces are available to those who need them and aren't being abused by those who don't.



Environmental health stats

Primary food shop inspections



20 PRIMARY FOOD SHOP IMPROVEMENT NOTICES

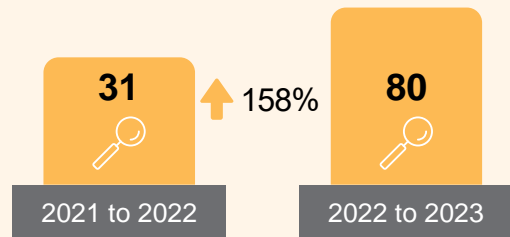
UP FROM 17 IN 2021-2022

165

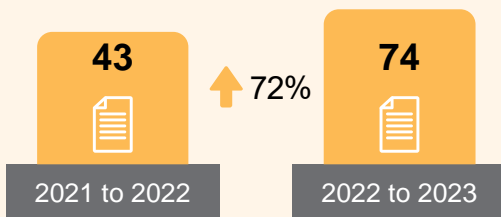
PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL INSPECTIONS



Primary food shop reinspections



Primary food shop warning letters






3 PRIMARY FOOD SHOP PENALTY NOTICES

↓ 50%



Our place performance

Aspirational measures

-  **On track**
Target achieved or on track to be achieved
-  **Monitor**
< 5% off the target
-  **Off track**
> 5% off the target

P1 | Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investments

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
P1.1.1.1 Support sustainable business and provide funding support to business initiatives that create economic benefit	Number of active businesses in Port Stephens	Increase	415 increase (total 5,802)	
	Business satisfaction survey score – Port Stephens is a good place to conduct business	Increase	N/A	
	Comment: Business Health Check undertaken every 2 years			
	Number of articles of business collateral	New	11 Your Business newsletters	
	Number of enquiries through business concierge service	New	Ongoing	
	Quarterly meeting of Economic Development Advisory Panel (EDAP)	New	N/A	
	Comment: The EDAP is no longer an advisory committee of Council			
	Undertake a land audit of Council owned land in collaboration with Assets and Strategic Property	New	Complete	
	Number of actions delivered in the Economic Development Strategy	New	46 actions. 33 ongoing, 5 complete and 9 not started	
	Facilitating monthly meetings and information sharing sessions with businesses and business associations across the LGA, with agenda items strategically aligned to current and relevant initiatives and priorities	New	Ongoing	
Create and report on the distribution of a range of marketing collateral to businesses and business associations monthly	New	9		
Develop and maintain a current and exhaustive list of key stakeholders at all businesses across the Local Government Area	New	Ongoing		
P1.1.2.1 Manage the Nelson Bay Visitor Information Centre	Maintain the number of tour and accommodation bookings on behalf of operators	Maintain	5,106	
Comment: Challenges experienced between the different booking systems used by Council and tourist operators when systems are upgraded creating incompatibilities and impacting the number of the bookings taken				

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
P1.1.2.2 Provide strategic and financial support to Destination Port Stephens	Financial support for Destination Port Stephens	Funding as per the financial agreement	N/A	✔
	Visitor expenditure per annum	Increase	\$283.7M	✔
	Number of actions completed by Destination Port Stephens from the financial agreement	New	Ongoing	✔
	Develop a business events marketing campaign to grow low and shoulder visitation	New	Ongoing	✔
P1.1.3.1 Attract and facilitate major events that deliver economic benefit	Number of new tourism experiences	Increase	Ongoing	✔
	Economic benefit from major events (\$7.2M in 2021 to 2022)	Increase	\$7.1M	⊖
	Comment: The figure shown is the economic value of events sponsored through our Major Event Sponsorship only			
	Number of event applications processed	New	245	✔
	Number of unique new events	New	3	✔
	Value of sponsorship income	New	\$311K	✔

P2 | Infrastructure and facilities

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
P2.1.1.1 Provide, manage and maintain community assets	Progress completion of civil, community and corporate asset program inspection	>90%	82.5%	✘
	Comment: 86% of scheduled Civil Assets inspections were completed and 79% of scheduled Community Assets inspections were completed. While inspections were slightly below the target, higher risk assets have been prioritised and inspections are forecasted to be within target for the next period			
P2.1.2.1 Provide asset and engineering services	Engineering development, flooding and drainage development application referrals are completed to the agreed service standards	>90%	93.5%	✔
	Comment: 98% of all flooding and drainage engineering development application referrals were assessed within the agreed service standards. 89% of all engineering development application referrals were assessed within the agreed service standards			
P2.1.3.1 Implement Council's adopted annual capital works program	Projects completed on time and within budget	>95%	100%	✔
	Maintain average Transport for NSW contractor performance grading	Good	Good	✔

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
P2.1.4.1 Maintain Council's civil and community infrastructure	High priority road defects fixed on time	100%	95%	⊖
	Comment: Externally funded, heavy patching defects will be completed in the first half of 2023-2024 financial year			
	High priority roadside drainage and maintenance defects fixed on time	100%	80%	⊗
	Comment: Defects have increased due to austerity measures and capital project workload as we needed to prioritise road repairs			
	High priority open spaces and foreshore maintenance defects fixed on time	100%	95%	⊖
	High priority actions for Building Trades fixed within the required time frame	100%	95%	⊖
	Mechanical services carried out in line with the manufacturer's specifications	New	100%	⊕

P3 | Thriving and safe place to live

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
P3.1.1.1 Develop, implement and monitor land use plans and strategies	Number of actions completed in LSPS	13 of 28 actions	15 actions completed	⊕
	Number of actions completed in LHS	8 of 23 actions	13 actions completed	⊕
	No overdue planning certificates (certificates issued within 7 days)	None overdue	3% overdue	⊖
	Number of actions completed in Town Centre Strategies Medowie (M), Nelson Bay (NB), Raymond Terrace & Heatherbrae (RTH)	>Baseline	M 11 of 20 NB 28 of 27 RTH 23 of 35	⊕
	Number of planning proposals assessed within DPE timeframes	100% compliant	All planning proposals have been assessed in accordance with DPE timeframes	⊕
	Number of LIC referrals completed within the agreed timeframe	New	80	⊕
	Number of LIC funding requests processed	New	28	⊕
P3.2.1.1 Provide development services	Median net determination time for Development Applications	<40 days	22	⊕
	Maintain certification market share	44% (2021-2022)	43%	⊖
	Increase the number of premises added to the fire safety program	Annual increase	62	⊕

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
P3.2.1.2 Provide compliance and ranger services	Development compliance customer requests closed as a proportion of number received	≥ 95%	100%	✔
	Ranger customer requests closed as a proportion of the number received	≥ 95%	99%	✔
P3.2.1.3 Provide environmental health services	Environmental health customer requests closed as a proportion of the number received	>95%	100%	✔
P3.3.1.1 Support and monitor the delivery of Place Plans across centres and coordinate place management and activation	Adoption of plans: Hinterland – December 2022 Shoal Bay – June 2023 Medowie – June 2023	Adoption	70% complete	✘
	Comment: Medowie adopted. Hinterland to be considered by Council in November 2023; Shoal Bay scheduled to be exhibited in early 2024. Additional time was required to ensure we adequately engaged with the community			
	Implement Place Plan actions	New	Ongoing. Refer to page 86	✔
P3.3.2.1 Provide financial assistance for the community	Provide an annual community financial assistance program	Program continued	Refer to page 89	✔
P3.4.1.1 Deliver emergency management services, programs and resources	Contractor's performance against the agreed program	100%	100%	✔
	Completion of annual objectives identified in the Emergency Management Strategic Objectives	100%	100%	✔

Our environment

Port Stephens' environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced



Goal 1: Ecosystem function

Our community has healthy and dynamic environmental systems that support biodiversity conservation

Steering koala protection in the right direction

Our community understands the value of the natural environment – our economy, our residents and our place are all deeply connected to our local environment. We're proud to be home to one of the last remaining koala populations on the east coast of Australia and we're working hard to protect them for future generations.

In 2002, the Port Stephens Council Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM) was approved by the Department of Planning. It helps manage community development and the conservation of Koalas in Port Stephens, but given it was developed over 20 years ago, it's due for a refresh. Unfortunately, due to restrictions in legislation, we're unable to revise it at this time.

To make sure we're doing everything we can to protect our koala population in ways that are up to date and relevant, we've developed a CKPoM Interim 2023 Action Plan with actions well underway.

Completed actions include:

- The development of educational koala factsheets
- Creation of a dedicated koala webpage to host the most up to date information
- Advocacy to state and federal ministers for motion in koala legislation progress



The CKPoM Steering Committee is made up of a number of representatives and organisations across the LGA who have an interest in or manage Koalas and their habitat. This committee oversees the implementation of the action plan, focusing on koala protection, enhancing their environment and education within the community over the next 12 months.

Next steps

A CKPoM 2024 Action Plan will be developed and implemented in collaboration with the Steering Committee.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/koalas

Mapping for the future of koalas

In order to better protect our koala population, it is important to understand their movements and feeding habits, as well as where their habitat is located. This is where vegetation mapping comes in – it's a process that maps out different types of plants, vegetation classes, and formations across Port Stephens.

This process involves visiting the location in person to confirm and document the present species. Once we've conducted our visits across the LGA and the data has been finalised, a Geographic Information System (GIS) map will be produced. This will then feed into an updated Koala habitat map, in preparation for a new Koala Plan of Management (KPoM) after NSW State legislative updates are complete.

We're undertaking the mapping in stages, thanks to funding we've secured through external grants, with Stage 1 complete at the Tomaree Peninsula, funded through the State Flag Grant 2022.

Next steps

Stage 2 will be completed through the Federal Koala Conservation and Protection Community Grant 2022, which will cover the central part of the LGA. This grant will also allow us to conduct population density surveys, analyse the koalas' diet, and engage in bush regeneration efforts. All of these measures will help protect the Port Stephens Koala population and their habitat.

We'll continue to investigate funding opportunities to complete Stage 3 to map the western portion of the LGA.

Keeping Port Stephens Drive koala safe

Port Stephens Drive is one of the most dangerous and has been identified as a blackspot under the NSW Koala Program. During a 10 year period in 2010-2020, a total of 89 Koalas fatalities were reported along this stretch of road.

Thanks to funding from the NSW Koala Program, we're delivering the Port Stephens Drive Koala Road Strike project, aiming to reduce the number of Koala deaths and injuries in this area.

The works involve the installation of 3.7km of koala-proof fencing, an underpass and koala grids. Koala-proof fencing helps direct Koalas away from the road and funnels them towards safe crossing points such as an underpass. The underpass provides a safe connectivity point for Koalas to move through habitats at Salamander Bay without having to cross the busy road. Additionally, Koala grids, similar to cattle grids, will be fixed where the fencing intersects roads. They're a deterrent to Koalas as their legs can slip through the gaps made by the grids. Finally, to allow Koalas that mistakenly end up near the roadside to escape, several one-way Koala escape poles will be installed along the fence line allowing them back over the fence safely into their habitat.

The project is bringing together a range of stakeholders and specialists including Port Stephens Council, the Port Stephens Koala Hospital, Koala Coalition, Transport for NSW and the NSW Koala Program to deliver an important project for conserving our local Port Stephens Koala population.

This project is expected to be delivered by October 2023, prior to the heights of the 2023 Koala breeding season.



Learn more about the project at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/koala-strike-project

Restoring our environment one weed at a time

Our beautiful and unique region deserves to be preserved and enjoyed by everyone. That's why we put in the effort to keep our environment safe and weed-free. We take on the responsibility of managing weeds and pests on our land, including investigating, educating, controlling, inspecting, and enforcing compliance when necessary.

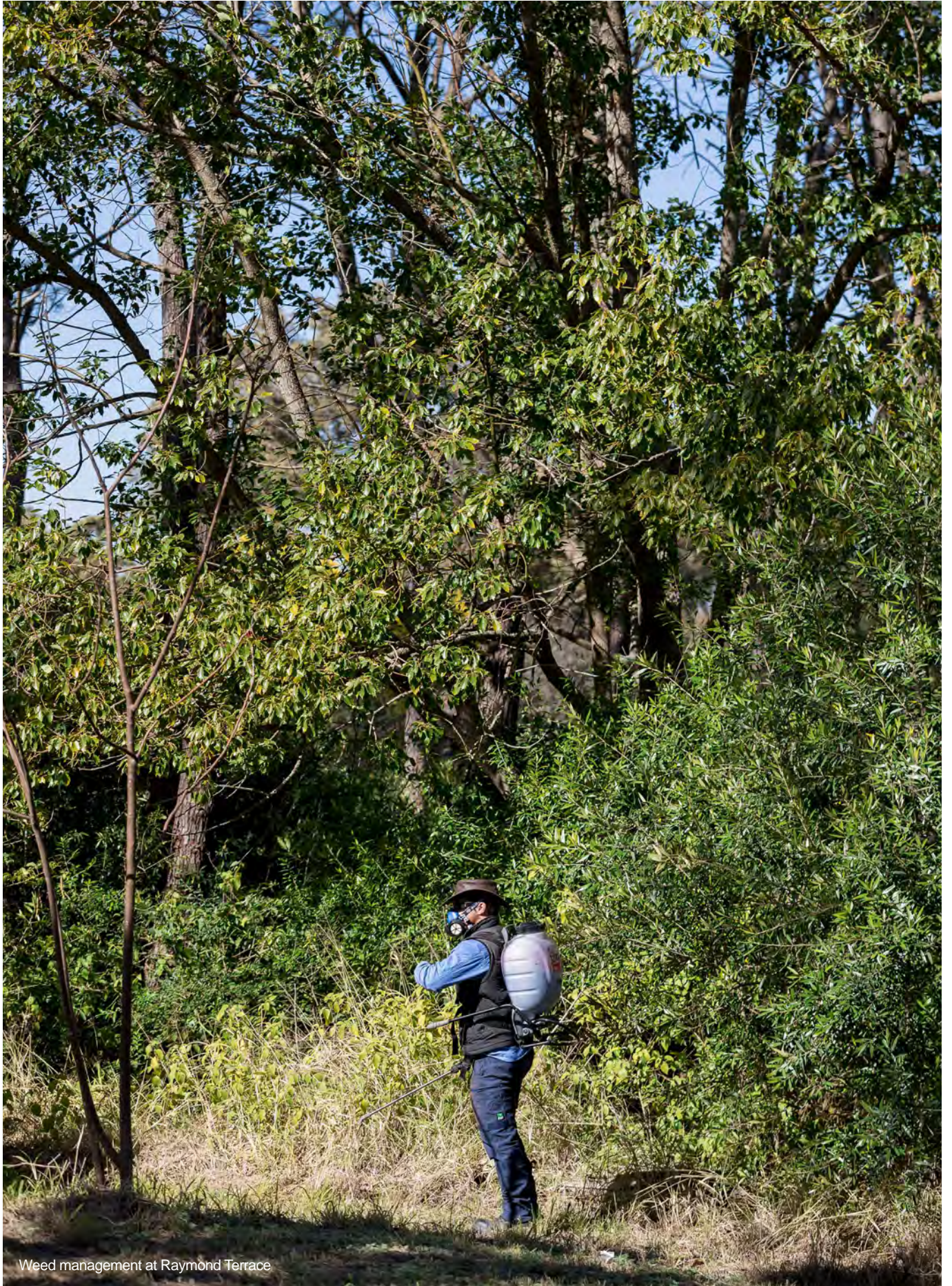
Thanks to a \$150,000 grant from the Crown Reserve Improvement Fund, we've been able to make great progress this year. Our efforts have focused on tackling priority weeds, feral pests, and promoting biosecurity compliance.

We conducted over 1,060 inspections for biosecurity compliance and issued 43 enforcement actions for breaches of the Biosecurity Act. We also treated 411 sites to control priority weeds.

We remain committed to environmental education and restoration programs to continue addressing priority weeds, feral pests, and Biosecurity compliance. Our goal is to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all to enjoy.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/weeds



Weed management at Raymond Terrace



Culturally informed cool burn at Mallabulla

Community, culture and kinship come together in cool burns

We know the importance of the history and heritage of our land in Port Stephens and the ties our First Nations people have to the environment and the land.

We're supporting an Aboriginal-led working group to develop a 'Culturally informed Cool Burn' fire management strategy.

A culturally informed cool burn involves lighting low fires in small areas on foot, with matches or, traditionally with fire sticks.

The focus is on improving koala habitat, re-establishing appropriate fire regimes and reducing the risk and impact of wildfires. Ultimately, they help with long term bush fire fuel reduction to support communities and ecosystems.

In June, the first in a series of burns was undertaken at Mallabulla in partnership with Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council, Firesticks Alliance and Hunter Local Land Services.

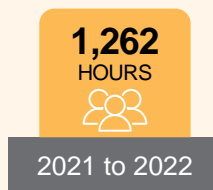
Hectares regenerated



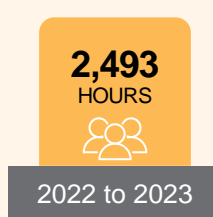
↑ 160%



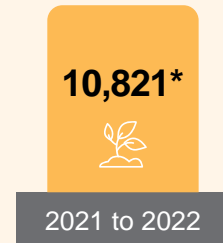
Number of times volunteers regenerated bushland



↑ 98%



Trees planted with the help of volunteers



↓ 48%



*In 2021 to 2022 we received a Mambo Wetlands grant for rehabilitation, allowing for more tree planting.

The projects aim to address key issues affecting the areas in 3 ways:

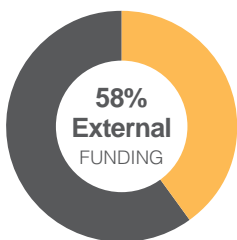
- Restores ecological kinship and care for Country while improving the core health of the site, significantly reducing the risk of wildfire and supporting a diverse flora community.
- Removes invasive weeds, such as lantana, to help reduce potential movement barriers for native fauna and encourages a diverse range of native plants to return to the sites.
- Community workshops to educate and engage the community.

Next steps

- The projects will run over a 3 year period and will deliver:
- 6 culturally informed Cool Burns within Anna Bay and Mallabula
- 6 community education workshops teaching community about culturally informed cool burns
- 3 community education workshops detailing the importance of the Anna Bay Koala Hub
- Over 700 hours of regenerative weed control.



Learn more about other methods of bushfire management at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/bushfire-management



NSW Government Environmental Trust funding program

Goal 2: Environmental sustainability

Our community uses resources sustainably, efficiently and equitably

Keeping track of all things waste

We know our community want us to use green alternatives wherever possible. One way we've done this is to introduce the Port Stephens Waste app. Not only have we made it easier than ever to keep track of all things waste, but we'll also be able to reduce the number of paper waste calendars we print – contributing towards our carbon neutrality goals.

The new app is a one-stop-shop for residents to access information about bin days, kerbside collections, problem waste drop off days, and service impacts. The best part is, the app can be personalised according to location, with the waste calendar and reminders for bin day.

With this app, we can communicate more efficiently and provide clarity to our community, especially during severe weather events that may impact waste services.

As we look to launch our new garden organics waste service in the new financial year, the app will be an excellent tool to inform residents about the roll out of the new green bins across the LGA.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/household-waste

Educating for a greener future

Council facilitates several waste education programs to support the current waste collection service and other waste initiatives within the community including. Whether it's partnering with education companies or heading out on our own, we've developed flyers, run workshops, visited schools and community groups and participated in events across the LGA.

Education and behaviour change workshops

- Less Mess
- reusable nappies
- composting and recycling
- rethinking your wardrobe

Community group talks

- Sunny field disability group
- Nelson Bay Gardening Club
- Tomaree Probus
- Tanilba Bay Community
- Recycling 101 Presentation during recycle week at Raymond Terrace and Tomaree Library
- EcoNetwork Movie Screening Event at Latitude 1 for Sustainable Futures Festival
- Business Breakfast presentation at Medowie
- Murrook Fun day Event
- Soldiers Point Public School Fair
- Soldiers Point Fair

Schools and preschool education program

- 11 preschools with a truck visit for the waste and recycling talk
- Waste Audit with Tomaree High School
- Partnering with EnviroMentors and Keep Australia Beautiful to rollout presentations to 481 students from 7 schools over 5 days.

Next steps

We're hoping to expand our community education programs including the delivery of recycling, upcycling, repair, community farming, composting, and worm farming workshops.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/waste-strategy

Red bin waste
(tonnes)

27,707



2021 to 2022

↓ 7%

25,663



2022 to 2023

Recycling yellow
bin (tonnes)

5,965



2021 to 2022

↓ 1%

5,930



2022 to 2023

Green waste
drop off (tonnes)

2,545



2021 to 2022

↓ 37%

1,616



2022 to 2023

Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station, Salamander Bay





From polystyrene to picture frames

We're always considering new Circular Economy initiatives to reduce our impact on the environment. Circular economy looks at how we can reuse and regenerate materials or products, especially as a means of continuing production in a sustainable or environmentally friendly way.

This year, we're proud to initiate expanded polystyrene (EPS) recycling at the Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station. Due to its low weight, high volume nature, polystyrene has traditionally been a waste that's difficult to store and transport. Using an onsite shredder and densifier, the polystyrene's volume is reduced by 90%, enabling effective transportation and considerably reducing the landfill space.

The 100% recyclable block is then stored and stacked on a pallet to be shipped to our third party supplier to be remanufactured into new products such as picture frames, architraves and construction materials.

So far, we've accepted 200m³ of un-densified EPS bound for landfill and converted it into 500kg of reusable plastic.

This initiative directly links to our Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan, with the Circular Economy being one of 2 drivers of our Waste Management Strategy.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/waste-strategy



Our environment

FEATURE ARTICLE



Green light for green bins

The new garden organics waste collection service was endorsed, enabling and encouraging residents to separate their garden organics, to reduce the amount of general waste collected.

Up to 25% of the waste collected in general waste red bins, is actually green waste, so the new garden organics service will redirect green waste from landfill, to be processed into an environmentally sustainable compost product.

By separating and recycling our green waste we've been able to generate significant cost savings allowing us to provide this service. In June, we rolled out 32,000 green bins to all Port Stephens residents in preparation for the service to begin from 3 July 2023.

We'll be working with the community to educate people about what can and can't go in their new bin, with lots of information available on the website, at Council facilities, and on Council's Waste App.

Residents will be able to dispose of prunings, lawn and grass clippings, cut flowers, weeds, sticks, twigs, leaves, bark and branches no bigger than 10cm in diameter, in their new bin.

Plastic bags, plastic, bio plastic or compostable bin liners, paper, food scraps of any kind, household items, bricks, rocks or soil, pot plants or any kind of priority weeds, treated timber and building materials are not permitted in the new green bin.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/garden-organics

Goal 3: Environmental resilience

Our community is resilient to environmental risks, natural hazards and climate change

Caring for our coastline

The coast is one of our greatest assets. Our community values the coast for its environmental, social and economic benefits. But there are also many threats that have the potential to impact how we enjoy the coast both now and in the future.

A Coastal Management Program (CMP) sets the long-term strategy for managing our coast. It identifies risks to our coast and how to manage these now and into the future, so we can all continue to enjoy the benefits of the coast for years to come.

This year, thanks to \$200,000 in funding from the Department of Planning and Environment, we completed Stage 3 community engagement of the CMP process. We worked with our community to identify options for the management of our coastal areas in a way that supports the environmental, social and economic values that make Port Stephens a great place to live, work and play.

Next steps

The information collected from the drop-ins, workshops and the online mapping tool is now being reviewed and will be used to help draft the CMP which will be available for further comment in early 2024.



Learn more about the Coastal Management Program at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/cmp



Seaham Swamp Nature Reserve, Seaham





Our environment

FEATURE ARTICLE



Williams River, Seaham

Sustainably safeguarding our future

Our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint are ongoing as we develop a Carbon Neutral Action Plan, outlining the initiatives and changes needed to achieve our goal of being carbon neutral by 2025.

We've established key internal groups to explore a range of sustainability initiatives, strategies and actions including options to reduce energy usage and waste-to-landfill, as well as improving the efficiency of our fleet vehicles.

Although a change in regulations delayed the commencement of a hydrogen fuel cell trial on our trucks, we're excited about the rapid improvement in electric vehicle and battery technology, which provides huge potential for change to our fleet portfolio.

We're confident that the draft Carbon Neutral Action Plan will be completed by the end of 2023, with the final plan expected to be considered by Council in early 2024.

We're committed to working closely with our staff and suppliers to influence behavioural change, reduce energy demand, and ensure sustainable decision making.



Raymond Terrace flooding, March 2022

Futureproofing the risk of flooding

Over the last few years, we've unfortunately experienced flooding events across our LGA, including the storms of March 2021 and July 2022. Following this, we've been responding to and investigating lots of drainage and flooding related enquiries.

We continuously work on updating and improving our understanding of flood risk within the Port Stephens area using the NSW government's Floodplain Management Program.

This year, we've progressed with the Anna Bay and Tilligerry Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan and Lower Hunter Floodplain Cumulative Development Impact Study and Plan.

Drainage investigation and improvement projects have been completed at Boat Harbour, Hinton, Karuah, Medowie, Raymond Terrace, Williamtown, Anna Bay, Lemon Tree Passage, Nelson Bay and Tanilba Bay.

We're continuing to investigate catchment drainage issues at Salamander Bay and Little Beach, along with reviewing and updating the Shoal Bay drainage model.

Next steps




Our focus over the next year will be on the progression of the Anna Bay Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan, the Lower Hunter Floodplain Cumulative Development Impact Study and Plan and drainage improvement works in Nelson Bay.








Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/flood-safety

Our environment performance



Aspirational measures

	On track Target achieved or on track to be achieved
	Monitor < 5% off the target
	Off track > 5% off the target

E1 Ecosystem function

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
E1.1.1.1 Develop and monitor environmental policies, strategies and technical information	Biodiversity Strategy (stage 1 offset policy) by June 2023	Adoption	Commencement of Stage 1 Offset Policy	
	Revised Tree Management Framework by June 2023	Adoption	Commencement of Tree Management Framework	
Comment: Tree Management documentation review complete with actions for improvement underway				
E1.1.1.2 Provide environmental impact assessment services and a range of nature conservation, biosecurity and rehabilitation programs	Number of Environmental Impact Assessments conducted within agreed timeframes	100%	59% Environmental Planning Assessments were conducted within the agreed timeframes	
	Comment: Resourcing issues and additional environmental projects have impacted the timely delivery of Environmental Assessments			
	Scheduled actions completed in the natural asset management program	Completed	100%	
	Number of environmental education programs developed and implemented	Maintain	18	

E2 | Environmental sustainability

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
E2.1.1.1 Develop a Sustainability Strategy	Council's annual energy usage	Reduce	25% reduction in total energy usage	
	Strategy to address carbon neutrality by 30 June 2023	Adopted	Commencement of Carbon Neutral Action Plan	
Comment: Development of Carbon Neutral Action Plan is nearing completion and is expected to be finalised in 2024				

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
E2.2.1.1 Implement the Waste Management Strategy 2021 to 2031	Community satisfaction score for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> garbage collection access to waste depot / transfer stations 	>90%	Not comparable*	
	Participation in 'problem waste days'	Increase	47%	
	Waste diverted from landfill	≥ 40%	21%	
Comment: Although diversion from landfill is not where we would like it to be, these results should markedly improve with the introduction of the Green Bin				

*Community Satisfaction Survey conducted in September 2023, rating scale changed.

E3 | Environmental resilience

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
E3.1.1.1 Review and implement the Coastal Management Program (CMP) incorporating climate change risks	Progress of delivery for stage 3 of PSC CMP	New	Stage 3 is underway. Stage 3 community engagement complete, 3 internal workshops and 1 external stakeholder workshop	
	Progress of delivery for stage 2 of Hunter Estuary CMP	New	Stage 2 commenced. Working groups for each Stage 2 study nominated	
E3.1.1.2 Implement Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan encompassing mitigation and adaptation for Council and Community	Development and implementation of actions in the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan	26 of 35 actions	Delivery of actions from the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan continues across the organisation	

Our council

Port Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way



Goal 1: Governance

Our Council's leadership is based on trust and values of Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Safety (RITES)

Advocating for our future at the NSW election

A key role of our Council is championing the region and its residents, ensuring readiness to meet evolving community needs. This involves seeking financial backing and support from the NSW Government for various priority projects spanning healthcare, housing, transportation, and education.

As the New Year unfolded, Port Stephens geared up for growth, advocating for vital funding to bolster our community. In consultation with Councillors, the revised Community Advocacy Priorities were developed to target key issues for the upcoming NSW Government election.

Our voice carried weight as the NSW Government election approached in March 2023, resulting in a substantial \$10 million commitment earmarked for local road repair over the next 2 financial years. Other notable successes include securing nearly \$5 million in competitive grant funds and bolstering crucial services and projects. From road enhancements to better interconnecting regional cities, these initiatives contribute to a thriving community fabric.

The success of this year highlights the importance of working together, planning for the future, and staying committed to the wellbeing of our community. Our combined efforts are paving the way for a brighter future, where advocacy and dedication go hand in hand.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community-advocacy-priorities



Raymond Terrace Library

The nuts and bolts of our foundation

Port Stephens is taking a thoughtful path to plan for the future through what's called an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. We're continuing to focus on what our community wants over the next 10 years. This approach involves three important plans: the Community Strategic Plan, the Delivery Program, and the Operational Plan. These plans guide us from 2022 to 2032 and beyond.

The main idea behind the IP&R Framework is simple but important: we're not just thinking about what the Council wants. We're listening to what the community wants for the future. These plans help us understand the big picture, set goals, and figure out how to achieve them.

In the last year, we reviewed and shared our Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Resourcing Strategy, and Fees and Charges with the public. These documents are the nuts and bolts of what we do – the services we provide, and how we manage money.

We start this planning journey with the Community Strategic Plan. This plan shows what the community's priorities are, and it guides us on how to work with other parts of the government to

make it happen. This plan is like a map that helps everyone shape the future of Port Stephens.

The Delivery Program is the next step. It tells us what the Council will do over the next four years to help deliver on the Community Strategic Plan. This program breaks down the big goals into practical actions over four years. We check in on our progress every six months by reporting to our elected Council (for the community) on how things are going.

Then comes the Operational Plan, our annual action plan that explains how we'll do what's in the 4 year Delivery Program. It tells us what we're going to work on, who's responsible, and through our budget (contained in the Long Term Financial Plan) how much it will cost, and how we'll pay for it.

Port Stephens' Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework is like a home. The community's priorities are the home where we all want to be, and Council's plans and resources the nuts, bolts, bricks and mortar providing the crucial foundations. By working together to make a better home, we're building a future together – a home that grows and improves for many years to come.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/integrated-plans



Newcastle Airport, Williamstown

Spreading our wings – Airport upgrades

Newcastle Airport is set to soar with even more funding secured as part of the terminal expansion project.

The new terminal building and upgrade to the Newcastle Airport runway is a genuine game changer for our region – the ability to accommodate long range domestic and international flights will open Port Stephens and the Greater Hunter to the world.

The benefits of this project are far reaching; business will be boosted by year-round visitor markets and producers will have access to new freight routes and opportunities for trade and our growing manufacturing, renewable energy and aerospace industries will have a greater ability to attract skilled workers to the region.

With the improvements at Newcastle Airport, we should expect an influx of new business and investment – hotels and accommodation, transport options and retail stores will follow. Freight facilities will be required and of course, new jobs will be created providing exciting career opportunities for young people across Port Stephens.

Over the next two decades, the upgrade and expansion of the runway and new terminal will be expected to generate approximately \$12.7 billion in economic activity –

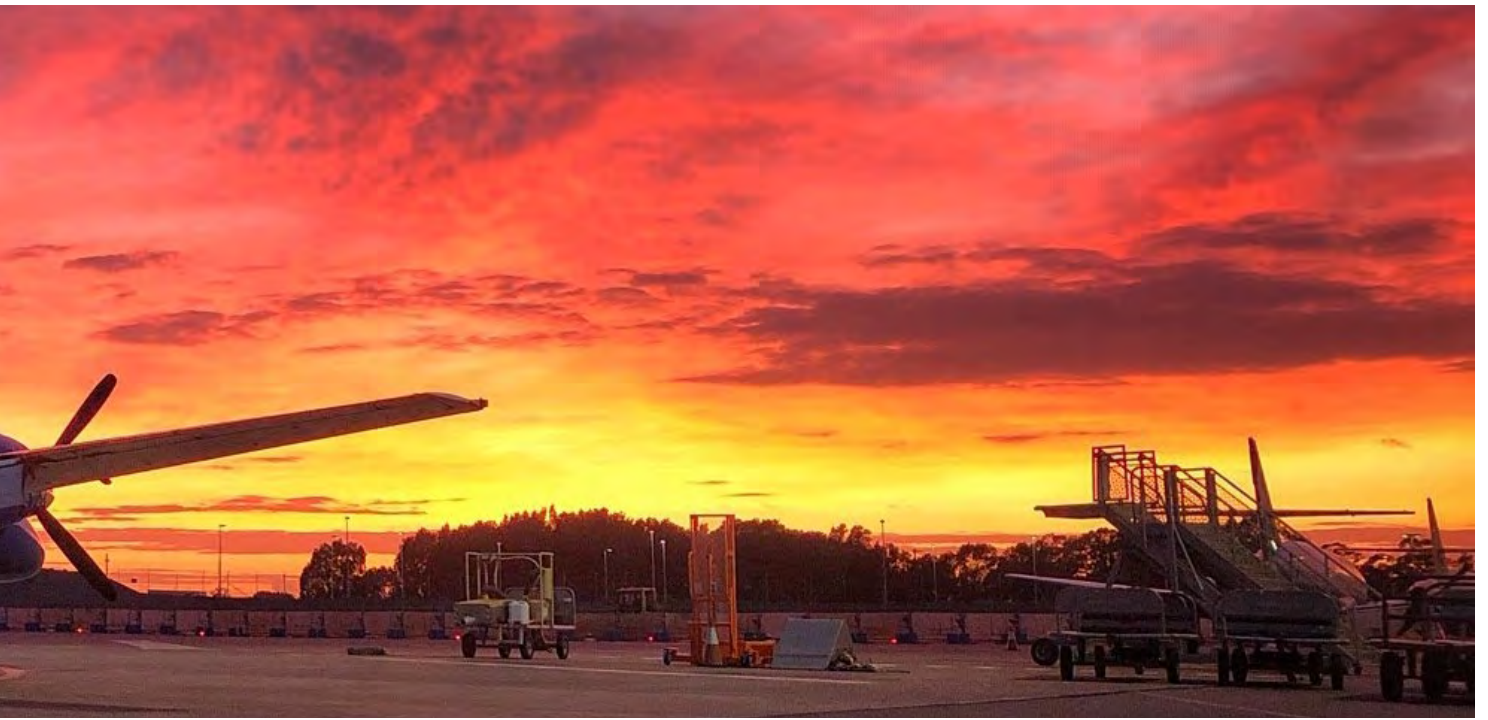


it will create over 500 jobs during construction and an extra 4,410 full-time jobs once complete.

As a Council, we're committed to ensuring Port Stephens is ready for this transformation. We're working on upgrading our road networks, improving the vibrancy of our town centres, and advocating to all levels of government for ongoing support.

We're also working closely with business to foster connections, supporting new training and educational opportunities.

By 2025, this project will be complete. We'll continue to work in partnership with Newcastle Airport, attending bi-monthly meetings with the Board of the Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd, jointly owned by Port Stephens and Newcastle Councils.



As a community, this is a project we should all be very proud of and one that will drive economic and social benefits for our place and our people for many decades to come.

Respect is everyone's role

Over the past year, incidents of aggression and abuse towards Council workers have been on the rise across the region, so in a joint effort, we partnered with 8 other Hunter Councils to develop the "Respect is Everyone's Role" campaign. The goal is to raise awareness and emphasise that everyone deserves respect and a safe work environment.

Customer aggression affects a diverse range of Council employees including customer service officers, lifeguards, road crews, rangers and parking inspectors.

It happens at worksites, in public spaces, and even via email and over the phone.

The 'Respect is Everyone's Role' campaign features 24 real Council staff members from across the Hunter. By showcasing the human side of this workforce and sharing their interests, hobbies, and passions, the campaign aims to remind everyone that aggression is not acceptable behaviour.

With over 5,400 Hunter Council employees who live, work, and socialise in local communities, these individuals are dedicated to meeting community needs and expectations through quality service while upholding organisational values and policies.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/respect-everyone

Refining the way we go about business – service reviews

Since 2011 we've been building on our strong foundation of reviewing all of our business and our services. The purpose of the Service Review Program is to ensure that our services reflect the local community needs and expectations, both in terms of quality and cost whilst ensuring sustainability.

The service reviews are completed over a 4 year program, allowing for every service package (60 service packages) to be reviewed once in 4 years. In 2017 we introduced an additional condensed Mid-point review, allowing for a review and check-in of all of our 60 service packages every 2 years.

The service review process establishes, through the use of fact and data, a common understanding of how services fit in to the big picture and a framework for sustainable decision making.

It assists us to better manage our scarce resources, while improving what we do and how we do it.

The process has evolved and improved over the years, with the 3 fundamental questions being:

1. What do we deliver?
2. What level of service is required?
3. How can we do it better?

We've made substantial savings in reviewing our services over the years and have reinvested those savings into delivering services for our community.

The benefits also include non-financial results too, such as improvements in: employee consultation, understanding of the process, understanding and delivery of service levels, cross organisation communication, integration with the internal service delivery teams such as HR and Finance, the business cases subjected to a full peer review prior to final

presentation to our Senior Leadership Team.

We've also provided significant benefits to the broader local government industry and other Councils through frequent advice and support.

After 12 years of this process, we've identified and improved inefficiencies in our services,

which has resulted in over \$7 million in savings (hard and reinvested efficiency savings).

We're now in our 5th round of service reviews and are trialling end to end reviews of our processes to look at how we can better identify improvements between the outputs and inputs of the full value stream as opposed to the discrete service package.

For the 2022 to 2023 financial year the following scheduled service reviews were undertaken.

- Office of General Manager (1)
- Governance (4)
- Office of Group Manager Facilities & Services (1)
- Community Services (5)
- End to End - Infrastructure Delivery (9 – still in progress)
- Financial Services

None of these resulted in a change to the level of service, however a number of efficiency savings were realised through digital transformation, realignment of the structure and process improvement.

A number of additional unscheduled service review, mid-point reviews and structural reviews were also unscheduled during this time.

As with other projects at Council, we're not fixed in our outlook for completing reviews simply according to an arbitrary date within the financial year. We're focused on delivering the right outcome, the best possible way for our community. Not all of our plans, projects and review programs fit neatly into the financial year with complexities and further investigations required.



Strong foundation for Community Satisfaction going forward

We're committed to delivering outcomes that improve the wellbeing and liveability of our community. Our Community Satisfaction Survey is an important part of delivering these outcomes and helps us to understand what's working well and what's not.

Over September and October 2023, we invited residents to complete the survey and have their say. We used social media, newspaper advertisements, flyers and our website to reach as many people as we could.

This year we simplified our approach, asking residents what they think of our core services, resetting the rating scale to a score out of 5.

Respondents rated their overall satisfaction with the performance of Council's services as a mean score of 2.94 out of 5. This translates to 45% satisfied, 42% dissatisfied and 13% neutral.

We've evaluated our results and heard from residents that out of our 20 core services surveyed, only 7 were below a neutral score of 3. The remaining 13 services were either neutral or above.

The highest score was Waste and Recycling with a mean score of 3.96 out of 5, which translates to 81% of respondents satisfied, 9% dissatisfied and 10% neutral. With the Garden Organics waste service being rolled out this year, we can understand why residents have shown a high satisfaction with these services.

We knew that roads was still the biggest area to work on with a mean score of 2.15 out of 5, equating to 21% satisfied, 72% dissatisfied and 7% neutral.

We've continued to listen to the community on this matter and successfully secured a commitment of \$10M for local road repairs that we're planning to deliver over the next 2 financial years.

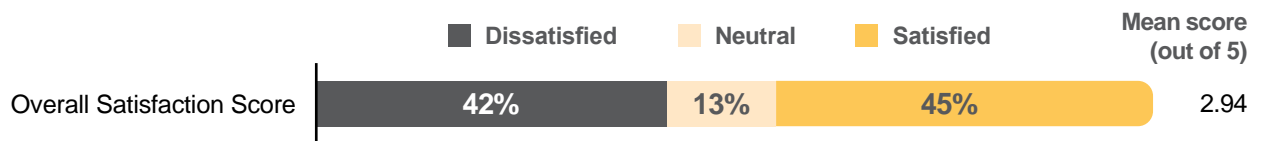
The results of the 2023 survey are important in setting internal benchmarks and foundations for measuring future Community Satisfaction and Council performance.

On the next page, we've provided a summary of the satisfaction ratings for Council's: overall performance, core services, user services and Councillors.

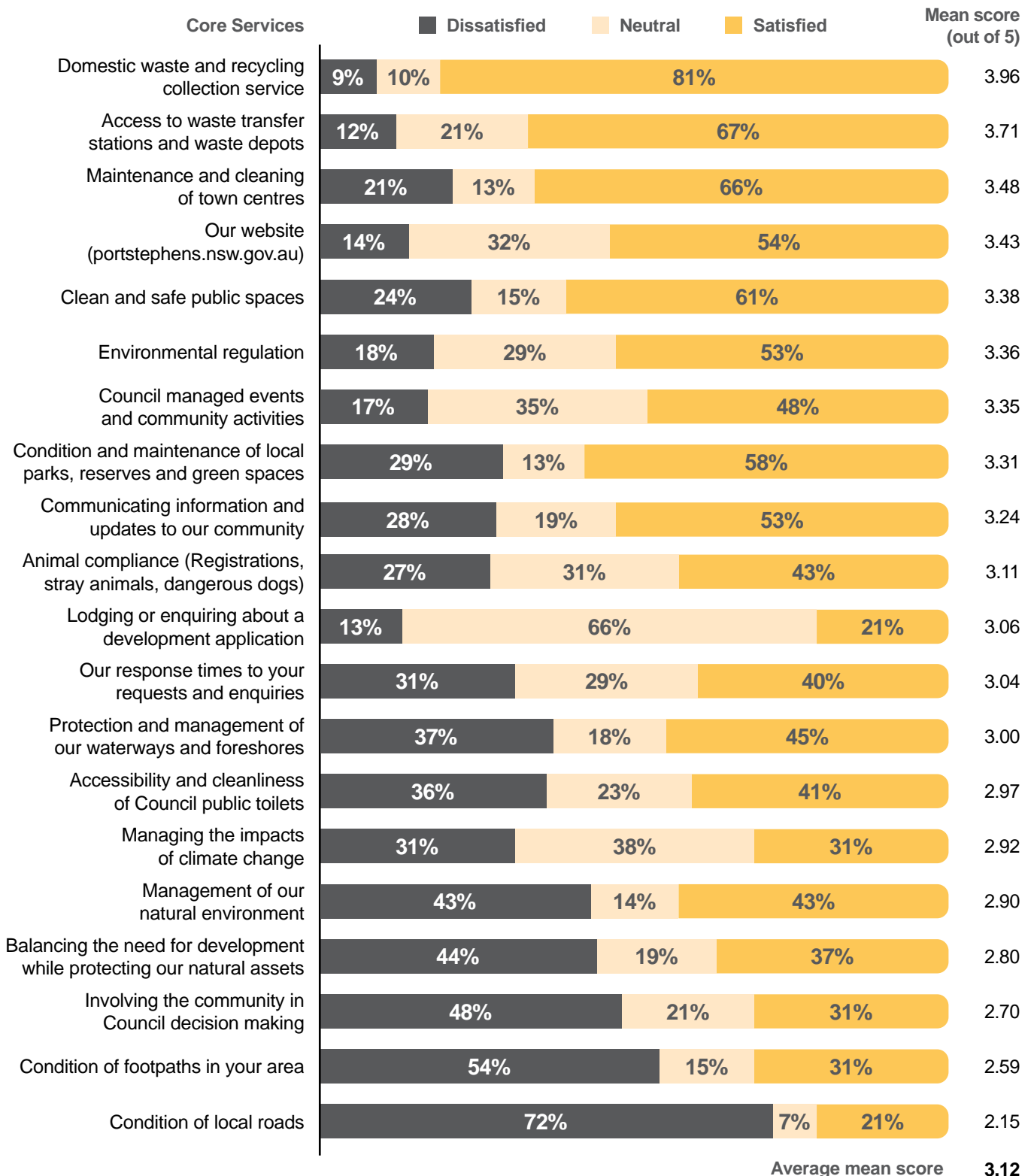


Learn more about our Community Satisfaction Survey at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/community-satisfaction-survey

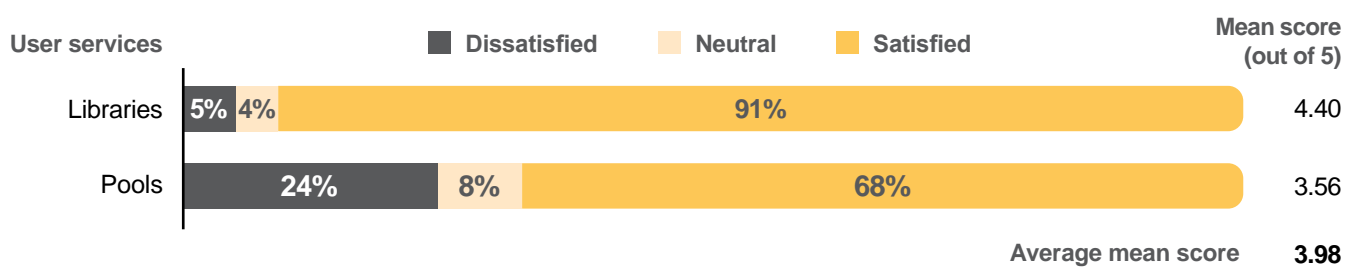
Summary of ratings for overall community satisfaction



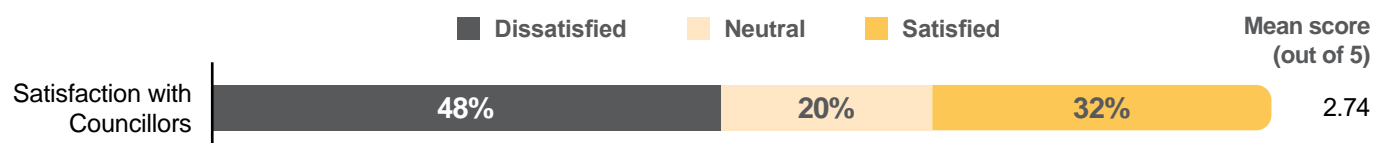
Summary of all ratings for Council's core services



Summary of all ratings for Council's user services



Summary of all ratings for Councillors



Raymond Terrace Library



Our Council

FEATURE ARTICLE



PSCare: Caring for our crew

As an organisation, we can only deliver and support our community if our employees are looked after, engaged and happy. This year, Port Stephens Council was recognised as a leader in local government for our staff wellbeing program PSCare.

Our people are at the heart of everything we do and there's a strong commitment across the organisation to providing a workplace that is highly valued by our employees.

The PSCare program is internally developed and centres around three pillars of health and wellbeing – mind, body and culture.

The last few years of pandemic disruption have taught us that if employers aren't providing a workplace that supports mental and physical wellness, then staff will start looking elsewhere.

By focusing on the wellbeing, our employees are staying put. Our employee engagement data shows an increase from 39% in 2011 to 83% in 2022 and our staff retention is strong with the average length of service sitting at just under eight years.

Programs like PSCare are a key part of our strategic approach to recruit, retain, develop and inspire our people.

In the last financial year, PSCare was recognised by:

- Winning the Wellbeing Category at the StateCover Awards 2023
- Winning the Best Health and Wellbeing for Large Organisation in the 2023 Hunter Safety Awards
- Winning at the Local Government Excellence Awards 2023

Goal 2: Financial Management

Our Council is financially sustainable to meet community needs

Funding our future

A key priority of Council in the last year has been on finding a balance between the needs of our community and Council's long term financial sustainability. We talked extensively with the community about the options of a Special Rate Variation and in November 2022, Council resolved to apply for a 9.5% increase per year for three years, with a cumulative impact of 31.29%.

On 15 June 2023, IPART announced that we were successful in our application for a Special Rate Variation, ensuring we can continue to deliver a broad range of important services to the Port Stephens community and of course, support the reduction of our expected budget shortfall. Over time, we'll be able to generate additional revenue to enhance a range of services the community, have identified as important – roads being the priority.

Community engagement was a key part of this process. This included a series of face to face community information and drop in sessions, surveys, a Facebook Q&A session and presentations and discussions with over 12 special interest groups.

The Special Rate Variation commenced on 1 July 2023 and will be a permanent increase that will be retained within the rate base.



Learn more at portstephens.nsw.gov.au/rate-rise-options

Next steps

We'll continue to report back to the community about how we're using the funds through our future Annual Reports. From the 2024 to 2025 financial year, the community will also see additional funding for the delivery of road repairs along with improvements to public spaces and the natural environment.

Leading the way in eInvoicing

Collaborating with the Australian Tax Office (ATO), we've helped to prepare for the launch of the first eInvoicing Regional Hub. As part of the hub, we'll be leading the country in efficiency, productivity and cyber security through awareness, adoption and use of the eInvoicing.

It'll also mean no more manual entry or risk of losing one of the 25,000 invoices we process each year!

As a business excellence organisation, we've been at the forefront of this initiative by participating in the pilot program prior to the regional launch. This process will spread across the country, as it has already done internationally, and as an organisation, we've done an excellent job positioning ourselves to fully embrace this change.

Next steps

The eInvoicing Hub will be launched in July 2023 thanks to the collaboration between the ATO and local business groups and is poised to position the Hunter region as a leader in efficiency, productivity, and cybersecurity through the promotion of eInvoicing.



Learn more at ato.gov.au/eInvoicing

Goal 3: Communication and engagement

Our Council is committed to enabling an engaged and informed community

Building on our communication and engagement blueprint

In December 2022, we embraced a fresh vision for communication and engagement with our community. The new Communication and Engagement Strategy is more than just a document; it's a roadmap to fostering trust, inclusivity, and meaningful involvement in decision-making processes.

At the heart of this strategy is the commitment to transparent and timely communication, as well as fostering genuine engagement that includes diverse voices. The ultimate goal is to keep the community well-informed and deeply connected. It's about putting the community front and centre in all that Port Stephens Council does.

This year, since the adoption of the Strategy we've:

- Developed a community engagement process, integrating this into the Project Management Framework used across Council.
- Increased opportunities for the community to engage with our leaders through quarterly Community Catch Ups.
- Ensured that our communications are diverse and accessible to everyone and direct people to our website as the single source of truth.
- Reviewed our templates and branding guidelines to ensure our documents are visually consistent, easy to read and accessible.

Next steps

Communication and Engagement Advisory Group

Excitingly, we've also established a Communications and Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG) to further enhance and strengthen the framework of the Communications and Engagement Strategy. With the group to meet in July 2023, they'll work with us to design communications and engagement programs for Council's projects and initiatives that have a significant social impact on the community. They'll work through the planning process with us, making sure we're meeting the principles and key objectives of our Community and Engagement Strategy. Most importantly, we're ensuring we have a diversity of voices participating in decision making for their place.

Forming a streamlined and seamless process

Since the initiation of the Online Forms Project in 2021, we've been continuously working to improve the way customers interact with us online. When it comes to customer service, we know that efficiency and effectiveness ensure a seamless experience for both our internal and external customers. We now have a total of 62 live online forms, each tailored to meet specific customer needs. These forms cover a wide range of services, from facility bookings at Tomaree Library and Community Centre Rooms to business registration and Vibrant Places event applications.

Our primary goal has always been to enhance the customer experience, and our recent improvements have certainly achieved that. We've worked on integrating the online forms with our internal customer request forms allowing us to capture and manage customer information more effectively, leading to quicker response times and personalised assistance. Customers can now receive more targeted support, ensuring that their needs are met promptly.

We've also introduced payment functionality into our forms, allowing customers to complete transactions online, and reducing the need for manual payments and paperwork.

Our journey to enhance online services is far from over. We remain committed to reviewing and improving our forms regularly. Customer feedback continues to be a valuable source of insight, helping us identify areas where we can further streamline processes and enhance the overall experience.

Our ongoing efforts are to provide top-notch service to our customers. We're excited about the positive impact these changes will have on the efficiency and satisfaction of both our internal and external customers.

Development application awareness increases

We want everyone in our community in Port Stephens to know about our programs and services. We know that not everyone uses social media or email, so we came up with a campaign to make sure more people hear about development applications (DAs).

With this campaign, we made it really easy for people to find DAs near their homes and businesses by offering an e-subscription service and re-instating ads in the Examiner and News of the Area newspapers.

Our goal was to be transparent and give everyone a chance to have a say in what's happening in our community.

The campaign ran from January 9 to June 30, 2023 thanks to funding by both the Council and the NSW Government's Faster Local Assessment Grant Program.

Next steps




A report will be provided to Council about the effectiveness of the campaign who will then make a decision about whether we continue to advertise the DAs lodged in our local papers.















King Street, Raymond Terrace

Our council performance

Aspirational measures

	On track Target achieved or on track to be achieved
	Monitor < 5% off the target
	Off track > 5% off the target



L1 | Governance

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
L1.1.1.1 Implement the Workforce Management Strategy	Employee Engagement Score of 75% or above	83% 2021	83%	
L1.2.1.1 Coordinate and deliver Councillor and executive support services	Maintain Elected Member's satisfaction with executive support services	100%	Councillor and Executive support services were conducted successfully in the last year	
L1.2.1.2 Conduct citizenship ceremonies	Citizens conferred	100%	150 citizens from 56 countries	
L1.2.1.3 Advocate for community priorities and work with other levels of government and stakeholders	Maintain participation in consultation/ advocacy activities with other levels of government or agencies	Maintain	Maintained	
	Maintain participation in NAPL/ GNAPL Board meetings	Maintain	Maintained	
L1.2.1.4 Develop shareholder value through an effective partnership with Newcastle Airport	Maintain Airport dividends received per dividends policy	Maintain	Maintained (nil received)	
	Airport traveller numbers per annum	Increase	1.09M	
L1.2.1.5 Work with Hunter Councils to enhance the Hunter Region	Maintain participation in Hunter Joint Organisation meetings	Yes	Yes	
L1.3.1.1 Deliver governance and legal services and enterprise risk management	Maintain Governance Health check score	≥ 95%	98%	
	Maintain Risk maturity score	≥ 80%	86%	
	Decrease in the rolling projected workers' compensation deposit premium (rounded)	Pay < base and <100%	Refer comment below	
	Comment: The measure for this metric is not considered an appropriate reflection of performance. A revised metric measure is being developed for future performance considerations			
L1.3.1.2 Coordinate and report on the internal audit process	Percentage of Audit-identified issues resolved within the expected timeframe	100%	100% of actions completed on time	





What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
L1.3.2.1 Undertake a community satisfaction survey	Undertake a community satisfaction survey	≥ 75%	Not comparable*	⊖
<p>Comment: The 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey was conducted in September/October 2023 following a revision of the baseline. The results cannot be compared against previous years – refer to page 117</p>				
L1.3.2.2 Implement the legislative requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework	Integrated Plans delivered on time	≥ 95%	93.5%	⊖
L1.3.3.1 Implement the annual service review program	Progress of the service review program, % completed on time	New	Refer page 116 for progress	⊕
L1.3.4.1 Implement annual actions of the Corporate Systems and Data Management Strategy	Maintain system uptime	99.99%	100%	⊕

L2 | Financial management

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
L2.1.1.1 Manage Council's financial resources in accordance with the Financial Services Work plan	Underlying financial surplus is better than the budget	Achieved	Achieved	⊕
	Maintain Unqualified Annual Financial Statements	Achieved	Achieved	⊕
L2.1.2.1 Manage the property portfolio in accordance with the Strategic Property work plan	Maintain yield on the commercial investment portfolio at or above the Australian All Property Index	8%	Current yield is 7.29%	⊕
	Maintain property vacancy rate below the Newcastle industry standards	6%	Vacancy rate of lettable properties at 0%	⊕
	All projects are delivered in accordance with Property Investment Strategy	New	Two major projects delivered in accordance with the Strategy	⊕
	Sites maintained in accordance with the biodiversity agreements	Compliant	Compliant	⊕

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
L2.1.3.1 Implement the annual actions of the Beachside Holiday Parks and Koala Sanctuary Operational Plan	Maintain Net Promoter Score (NPS) for Council's	Beachside Holiday Parks >70.1%	Beachside Holiday Parks 73.89%	
		Koala Sanctuary >75.2%	The Koala Sanctuary 91.75%	
	Progress of actions under the Beachside Holiday Parks and Koala Sanctuary Operational Plan	New	Budget - achieved Budget Targets	
			Capital work - implement capital program / On track and ongoing	
			Guest Experience results were excellent and exceeded targets	

L3 | Communication and engagement

What we said we'd do	How effective were we?	Target	2022 to 2023	
L3.1.1 Deliver the 4-year Customer Experience Roadmap and action plan	Use of online services	Increase	5,759	
	Number of phone calls received by Customer Service Desk	Reduction	38,571	
L3.2.1.1 Manage Council's communications and community engagement activities	Number of visits to the PSC website	Increase from 270K	244,220	
	Social media (Facebook) engagement	Increase from 331K	369,000	
Comment: Our website visits were higher last year due to significant weather events and COVID lockdowns, requiring people to seek information online.				



Statutory Statements

Section 5

The following information is required by such instruments as Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and other NSW government acts. The relevant section is highlighted beside each report.



Shoal Bay

Statutory information

Our Council is committed to open and transparent reporting. The information in this section is legislated and supplements the information provided elsewhere in the report.

Our general reporting requirements are set out in section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulations). To access copies of the Act and Regulations visit legislation.nsw.gov.au

Overview of reporting requirements

Below is an overview of reporting requirements that have been achieved, reported elsewhere, aren't required or the service wasn't provided.

Legislation	Achieved
Implementing the Delivery Program 2022 to 2026 – Section 428(1) the Act	Yes
Implementing the Community Strategic Plan 2018 to 2028 – Section 428(2) the Act	Not applicable for 2022 to 2023. Reported in Volume 2 of 2020-2021
Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines – Section 428(3) the Act including council's progress on the delivery of the service reviews council has committed to undertake, the results of those reviews and any changes made to levels of service.	Yes, refer page 47 and page 113
Audited financial reports - Section 428(4)(a) the Act	Yes – see Volume 2
Other information as the IP&R Guidelines or the regulations may require - Section 428(4)(b) the Act	Yes
Annual report copies – Section 428(5) the Act	Yes Copies will be made available on our website, at our libraries and provided to the Minister for Local Government's office.
Induction training and ongoing professional development of Mayor and Councillors - Section 186 the Regulations	Yes – read our report on page 38
Overseas travel undertaken by Mayor, Councillors and staff – Section 217(1)(a) the Regulations	No overseas travel undertaken during the financial year.
Private works resolutions – Section 217(1) (a4) the Regulations	No work carried out on private land requiring a resolution under section 67 of the Act.
Equal employment opportunities activities – Section 217(1)(a9) the Regulations	Yes – read our report on page 44
Coastal protection – Section 217(1)(e1) the Regulations	Council did not levy an annual charge for coastal protection services
Stormwater management services – Section 217(1)(e) the Regulations	Council did not levy an annual charge for stormwater management services as it received a special variation to its general income from 1997 to 1998 for stormwater management activities.
Special Variation to Rates Expenditure – Section 508(2) and 508A	Not levied in 2022-2023
Condition of Civil Assets	Yes – view special schedule 7 of Volume 2
Carers Recognition Act 2010	Did not provide service



Art Walk, Nelson Bay

Overview of reporting requirements continued

Legislation	Achieved
Environmental Upgrade Agreements – Section 54P(1)	Council did not levy any charges to repay advances under an environmental upgrade agreement
Disability Inclusion – Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Section 13(1)	Yes – read our report on page 70
Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998	Read our report on page 39

Rates and charges written off during 2022 to 2023

Section 132 the Regulations

Type	Amount	Type	Amount
Pensioner concessions	\$1,492,680	Uneconomical to recover	\$1,286
Postponed rates	\$3,525	Ratepayer's hardship (interest charges)	\$920
Small debts	\$1,334	Not legally recoverable	\$809
Conservation agreements	\$2,583	Total	\$1,503,137

Mayoral and Councillors' fees and provision of facilities

Section 217(1)(a1) the Regulations

A summary of the expenses incurred in performing the functions of Mayor and Councillors and associated allowances.

Our policy recognises the Mayor and Councillors, in performing their civic functions, are entitled to be provided with certain facilities and be reimbursed for certain expenses. The policy was adopted on 11 January 2022 and will be reviewed again in September 2024.

Allowances	Costs
Mayoral allowance	\$85,042
Councillor's fees and allowances	\$230,568
Councillor's superannuation	\$24,213
Councillor's expenses (see below)	\$46,159
Cost of catering	\$44,000
Cost of Mayoral vehicle	\$6,409
Total	\$436,391

Expenses	Costs
Mobile phone rental	\$0
Mobile phone calls	\$1,751
Landline phone rental	\$0
Landline phone calls	\$0
Fax rental	\$0
Fax calls	\$0
Internet	\$1,982
Intrastate travel	\$9,638
Intrastate out of pocket expenses	\$0
Interstate travel (out of NSW)	\$0
Interstate out of pocket expenses	\$0
Interstate accommodation (out of NSW)	\$0
Intrastate accommodation	\$3,851
Conferences	\$8,141
Training	\$0
Partners' expenses	\$70
Computers	\$8,666
Stationery	\$453
Awards and ceremonies	\$861
Child care expenses	\$2,243
Communications bundle	\$2,599
Councillor's uniforms	\$5
Professional development	\$5,899
Total	\$46,159

Contracts awarded greater than \$150,000

Section 217(1)(a2) the Regulations

Name of contractor	Contract details and purpose	Number	Contract value
Abuild Extensions & Kitchens	Mallabula Soccer Athletics Amenities Renovation	RFQ-017	\$259,753.00
Rhelm Pty Ltd	Coastal Management Program Stages 3 and 4	T051	\$261,740.00
Image Air Conditioning	Supply and Install of Swimming Pool Heat Pumps	T063	\$259,800.00
Collaborative Construction Solutions	King Park and Tomaree Sports Amenities Upgrades	T075	\$936,437.46
Surf Life Saving Services	Surf Lifesaving Services	T080	\$2,932,183.00
Scone Outdoors	Supply and Delivery of Four (4) x 72" Side Discharge Zero Turn Mower's #512, #518, #387, #503	RFQ085	\$193,169.48
MRW Building	Little Beach Amenities Replacement	T087	\$572,225.00
Rosmech Sales & Services Pty Ltd	Supply of Two (2) x Truck Mounted Twin Engine Street Sweepers	RFQ098	\$836,376.20
Boral Constructions	TfNSW Reseals	RFQ110	\$311,770.36
Drumderg Services Aust	Victoria Parade Footbridge Stage 2 Demolition	RFQ122	\$247,200.00
ANA Asphalt	TfNSW Asphalt and Heavy Patching	RFQ123	\$381,920.00
ANA Asphalt	PSC Reseal Asphalt Program	RFQ125	\$327,771.40
Newcastle Commercial Vehicles	Supply of Two (2) x Truck Cab Chassis to include attachment of AH Peters Tipping Body as per quote AHPQ5784-01	RFQ135	\$573,532.00
MBR Electrical	Brandon Park Upgrade - Field Lighting and Sports Court Lighting	RFQ136	\$194,225.90
Abuild Extensions & Kitchens	Brandon Park Seaham Accessible Amenities Addition	RFQ138	\$152,874.15
Accurate Asphalt & Road Repairs	PSC Insitu Stabilisation Patching	RFQ001	\$852,088.99
ANA Asphalt	Asphalt - Seaham and Hinton Road Intersection	RFQ003	\$303,264.53
Glascott Landscape & Civil Pty Ltd	Little Beach Foreshore Reserve Upgrade	T015	\$647,577.52
HiDrive Group	Supply of One (1) x Field Service Body to suit MY22 Hino 330 Series 817 4x4 Single Cab	RFQ024	\$160,627.85
Kobelco Construction Machinery Australia Pty Ltd	Supply and Delivery of 1 x 12-13T Excavator	RFQ027	\$377,132.60
Fencing Installers Australia	Port Stephens Drive - Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach - Fauna Fencing	T028	\$549,700.00
ANA Asphalt	PSC – Ferodale Road, Medowie, Kindlebark Road Medowie and Gan Gan Road - Nelson Bay Road Intersection – Asphalt Works	RFQ029	\$183,209.40
ANA Asphalt	PSC Recycled Asphalt Works	RFQ031	\$228,323.70

Name of contractor	Contract details and purpose	Number	Contract value
Baker Built Pty Ltd	Lemon Tree Passage Town Square Upgrade	T034	\$535,120.51
Byrne Pipe & Civil	Sturgeon St Raymond Terrace - Road Reconstruction	T035	\$1,019,906.23
Environmental Lighting Australia	Tomaree Sports Complex - Lighting Upgrade	RFQ037	\$205,964.00
Reino International Pty Ltd	Parking Meter Network and Guidance Monitoring System	T044	\$763,535.78
MRW Building	Halifax Holiday Park - Deck & Handrail Replacement	RFQ048	\$210,465.66
Fenworx t/a Newpave Asphalt	Government Road Nelson Bay - Asphalt	RFQ049	\$237,375.02
Bay Projects	Fingal Bay Holiday Park - 2 Bedroom Villa Kitchen Replacements	RFQ050	\$226,195.20
Fenworx t/a Newpave Asphalt	Adelaide Street Raymond Terrace - Asphalt	RFQ051	\$155,760.00
Bolte Civil Pty Ltd	Avenue of The Allies Tanilba Bay - Road Reconstruction	T052	\$2,867,626.67
Complete staff solutions	Labour hire and recruitment services	T053	\$940,702.68
Peoplefusion Pty Ltd			\$189,558.98
Ensign services (aust) Pty Ltd	Linen services - holiday park	T085	\$271,474.79
Whiteline road services (hunter)	Provision of line marking services	T02	\$156,989.43
Treeserve Pty Ltd	Tree services	T004	\$173,049.25
Active tree services Pty Ltd			\$341,015.58
Terrace painting services	Painting & graffiti removal services	T003	\$185,608.59
Valley civilab Pty Ltd	Geotechnical consultancy services	T001	\$379,909.09
Traffic logistics Pty Limited	Traffic control services	T020	\$700,942.28
Watchout training & traffic control			\$1,192,839.96
Icombined 360 services group Pty Ltd			\$159,832.47

Legal proceedings

Section 217(1)(a3) the Regulations

A summary of the amounts incurred in relation to legal proceedings taken by and or against Council from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Workers compensation and other employment matters, public liability and professional indemnity claims are not included. Our Council recovered \$172,103 in legal costs.

Legal matter	Details	Status	Cost
Land and Environment Court			
Kingshill Development No 1 and 2 Pty Ltd	Appeal against refusal by Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel to grant consent to residential subdivision concept development application.	Ongoing	\$64,950*
Ward & Ward	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for single dwelling.	Ongoing	\$32,592
Connect Global Limited	Appeal against Development Control Order requiring cessation of use of premises as a transitional group home.	Ongoing	\$ 9,387
Kinala Pty Ltd	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for 9 storey residential flat building.	Ongoing	\$70,289
Anna B Pty Ltd	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for an aircraft facility including helipad and dual occupancy dwelling. Proceedings discontinued by consent.	Completed	\$27,419
Clippers Anchorage Pty Ltd	Appeal against Council refusal to grant development consent for alterations and additions to marina.	Ongoing	\$13,214
Local Court			
Davis	Prosecution for alleged waste offences.	Ongoing	\$ 2,265
CA Pickette Pty Ltd	Fail to provide information/records in relation to waste. Defendant found guilty, fined and ordered to pay Council professional fees.	Completed	\$ 4,486
Michalczyk	Dog not under effective control, dog which rushes at/attacks. Defendant pleaded guilty, received conditional release without conviction and ordered to pay Council professional fees.	Completed	\$ 980
Williams	Fail to prevent dog from escaping, dog which rushes at/attacks. Defendant found not guilty, proceedings dismissed.	Completed	\$ 2,486
NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal			
"FHH"	Application concerning alleged privacy breach.	Completed	\$18,594
McEwan	Council costs application in relation to dismissed proceedings seeking revocation of orders. Costs awarded to Council.	Completed	\$17,940
McEwan	Appeal of Tribunal decision. Leave to appeal refused, appeal dismissed. Council application for costs dismissed.	Completed	\$18,281
Webb	Application for administrative review. Council decision affirmed by Tribunal. Costs awarded to Council.	Completed	\$30,980
Webb	Appeal of Tribunal decision. Leave to appeal refused, appeal dismissed. Council seeking costs in the matter.	Ongoing	\$17,471
Total			\$331,328

*These costs were paid by Department of Planning and Environment



Financial assistance

Section 217(1)(a5) the Regulations

Each year, our Council provides financial assistance to community and cultural groups in Port Stephens in accordance with section 356 of the Act.

Community grants

Category	Amount
Mayoral fund and special events grants	\$44,202
Mayoral academic scholarship grant*	\$44,711
Ward fund grants	\$23,094
Aboriginal project grants	\$29,712
Community support grants	\$56,250
Environmental projects grants	\$20,005
Total	\$217,974

*Thanks to sponsorships. Refer to page 66 to read more.

Council also provides funds as part of its sponsorship policy. These funds provide multiple benefits to Council and the community through promotion of tourism through to the activation of public space.

Category	Amount
Business growth	\$38,814
Major event sponsorship	\$155,868
My Incredible Place micro grants	\$4,500
Community event development sponsorship	\$38,372
Vibrant spaces sponsorship fund	\$41,000
Total	\$278,554

Hardship rate relief and rate donations

Our Council provided \$5,663 in hardship rate relief and rate donations under sections 601 and 356 of the Act in in 2022 to 2023 consisting of \$2,750 under the Rates Assistance Program and \$2,913 under the Waste Assistance Program of the Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy.

Waste services

Under our Financial Assistance for the Disposal of Waste in Port Stephens Policy, \$51,101 was provided to the following organisations:

Organisation	Amount
1st Anna Bay Cubs And Scouts	\$3,956
State Emergency Services – Port Stephens Unit	\$112
Clean4shore NSW	\$74
Hunter Horse Haven Inc.	\$598
Lemon Tree Passage Rural Fire Service	\$72
Medowie Assembly Of God Fellowship	\$1,405
Port Stephens Community Woodworkers	\$326
Port Stephens Koalas	\$6,179
Raymond Terrace Early Education Centre	\$1,076
Port Stephens Uniting Church - Salamander	\$ 477
Raymond Terrace Men's Shed	\$205
Rotary Club Of Raymond Terrace	\$388
RTM Op Shop - Adventist Community Services Op Shop	\$208
Salamander Bay Recycling	\$9,475
Salamander Men Shed	\$4,328
Salvation Army Hope Centre	\$1827
Salvation Army Port Stephens	\$130
Scope Home Access Hunter Region	\$907
St Vincent De Paul Anna Bay	\$4,824
St Vincent De Paul Raymond Terrace	\$697
St Vincent De Paul Society - Nelson Bay	\$11,506
State Emergency Services - Port Stephens Unit	\$808
Marine Rescue NSW Port Stephens Units	\$131
Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) – Raymond Terrace and Lower Hunter Centre	\$10
Total	\$51,101

External bodies exercising the functions delegated by Council

Section 217(1)(a6) the Regulations

There were no external bodies exercising the functions of our Council.

External bodies of which Council has controlling interests

Section 217(1)(a7) the Regulations

Our Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which we (whether alone or in conjunction with other councils) held a controlling interest during the reporting period.

Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd

Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd

Following the corporate restructure of the Newcastle Airport Ltd on 9 October 2013, there are 4 partners of the Newcastle Airport Partnership. City of Newcastle owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 1 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 1) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 2 (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 2). Port Stephens Council owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 3) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 4).

Following the incorporation of the Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd on 20 December 2018, there are 4 partners of the Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Partnership. City of Newcastle owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 1 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 1) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 2 (as trustee

for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 2).

Port Stephens Council owns Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 3) and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd (as trustee for Newcastle Airport Partnership Trust 4).

Port Stephens Council holds 100% interest in Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 3 Pty Ltd and Newcastle Airport Partnership Company 4 Pty Ltd.

External bodies in which Council has participated

Section 217(1)(a8) the Regulations

Our Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which we participated during that year. These include:

- **Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd (NAPL)**
- **Newcastle Airport Partnership (NAP)**
- **Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd (GNAPL)**
- **Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Partnership (GNAP)**

Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd operates the Newcastle Airport as agent for the Newcastle Airport Partnership. City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council hold the rights to their share of the assets and their share of the obligations in the partnership. Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd manages the development of Astra Aerolab on behalf of the Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Partnership. City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council hold the rights to their share of the assets and their share of the obligations in the partnership. Port Stephens Council has a 50% interest in NAPL, NAP, GNAPL and GNAP and the City of Newcastle has an interest in the remaining 50%.

Hunter Joint Organisation Group Entities

The Hunter Joint Organisation, and its group entities, are the hub for local government

collaboration, strengthening our communities by being the local voice on regional strategic issues in the Hunter and delivering tailored local government solutions. For over 60 years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing. Participating councils include: Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, MidCoast Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council.

There are 5 key entities that operate as part of the current enterprise offering:

Hunter Joint Organisation – a statutory body under the *Local Government Act 1993*, established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic priorities for the Hunter. The Hunter Joint Organisation's statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and the community.

Arrow Collaborative Service Limited - (and its wholly owned subsidiaries Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited and Arrow Collaborative Communications) – companies limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* and established to improve the quality and efficiency of local government services throughout the Hunter Region. These organisations offer tailored local government services through three divisions: Local Government Legal, GoodChat TV, and Regional Procurement; and the Hunter JO Policy and Programs Division (which delivers on the strategic priorities of the Hunter Joint Organisation, including the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environment Program, on behalf of both Hunter Joint Organisation member councils and Central Coast Council).

Hunter Councils Incorporated – an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation group.

Port Stephens Council has representation on each entity's board, and shares ownership and governance of the entities with the other nine councils of the Hunter Region.

NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme (Statewide)

Our Council is a member of the NSW Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme, known as Statewide. It started in 1993 as a joint venture forming a 'self-insurance mutual' covering public liability and professional indemnity insurance. Membership includes 117 member councils across NSW.

StateCover Mutual

Our Council is a member of StateCover Mutual. This body was established as a not-for-profit workers compensation insurer to partner with the NSW local government in the management of workplace risk.

StateCover Mutual provides an integrated injury prevention and injury management service model to minimise the overall cost of members' workplace risk.

Senior staff remuneration

Section 217(1) (b) and (c) the Regulations

Our Council's senior staff consists of the General Manager and 3 Group Managers. All senior staff are employed under standard contracts.

- General Manager \$365,000*
- Senior staff (excluding the General Manager) \$963,011.31*

*In accordance with the Total Remuneration Package (TRP) outlined in their senior staff contract.

Companion animals

Clause 217(1) (f) the Regulations

Companion Animals Act 1998, Companion Animals Regulation 2008.

Our Council provides an annual return to the Office of Local Government on activities to enforce and ensure compliance with

the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2018, including lodgement of pound data collection returns. We also report information on an incident-by-incident basis in relation to dog attacks.

Our Council provides the full suite of companion animal functions. This year, the Companion Animals Register has collected the following information:

- 223 reported dog attacks – 51 dog attack incident reports entered into the Companion Animals Register, which is 11 more than the previous year.
- 362 companion animals were impounded.

Of the companion animals impounded:

- 126 were either collected by their owner or returned to their owner before being transported to the pound.
- 200 were sold to new owners or released to rescue organisations.
- 54 were surrendered to the pound by the public.

Companion Animal management and activities

For the year 2022-2023, we spent \$237,437 related to companion animal management and activities (excluding Ranger salaries and vehicle costs). Of this, \$4981 was spent on Community education programs, Personal Protective Equipment, Tools and training.

- We conducted a restricted, dangerous and menacing dog project this year. We conducted 2 rounds of inspections (31 total) of all declared dangerous, restricted or menacing dogs listed in the LGA. This helps ensure owners are complying with all mandatory control requirements for owning an animal subject to an order. During this project, owners are also educated on how to reduce the number of dog attack incidents.
- Rangers attended Williamstown Defence Family Group day. The Rangers had a chance to talk to people who have just posted into the local area about the NSW Companion Animal rules and regulations and how they can update their owner details to their new

address. It was also a perfect opportunity to talk to kids about looking after their pets and what to do when they approach a dog in the street. - Promotional and educational items were distributed – 100 interactions.

Desexing Initiatives

We promote the services of Hunter Animal Watch and the National Desexing Network, which carry out subsidised desexing of animals in Port Stephens.

Alternatives to euthanasia

To reduce euthanasia rates, we do our best to return animals to their owners before taking them to the pound. We also promote the sale of suitable unclaimed cats and dogs from our pound online and through partnerships with registered rescue organisations.

Off-leash areas

We continue to promote, improve and enforce the rules in our off lead areas in Port Stephens.

Managing and Controlling Companion Animals

Council collected \$37,533 in registration fees and forwarded to the Office of Local Government. We received \$291 for the hire of cat traps and produced an income amount of \$81,978 from the percentage return for registration fees (in our LGA) from the Office of Local Government. This number also includes fees and charges received from impound activities. This was put towards Companion Animal Register administration, impound facility functions, tools and equipment and other initiatives undertaken over the reporting period.



Capital Expenditure Guidelines 2010

Section 12, Division of Local Government Department of Premier and Cabinet

A summary of capital works in progress as of 30 June 2023.

Name of project	Progress	Budget as at 30 June 2022 (excluding GST)	Previous Financial Years Expenditure (excluding GST)	Expenditure 2022 to 2023 (excluding GST)
Birubi Information Centre	In progress	\$1.5M	\$984K	\$227K
Depot	In progress	\$9.5M	\$3.077M	\$7.79M

Modern slavery

Section 428(4)(c) & (d) the Act

We don't tolerate any forms of modern slavery or human rights violations in our organisation or from any of our suppliers.

Our organisation strives to maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethical behaviour in our operations as set out in our Code of Conduct.

Suppliers and contractors of Council are required to follow the ethical principles in our Statement of Business Ethics Policy. They're required to demonstrate fair and safe working practices, treat workers with respect and dignity, and to act ethically. Any serious violations of our expectations will lead to us terminating the relationship.

We're not aware of any issues raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year that require action by Council.

We're committed to implementing and improving our systems and processes concerning modern slavery and won't be

complicit in any human rights violations. We're currently reviewing the detail of measures required in our Procurement Policy in order to implement this across the organisation.

Government Information (Public Access) (GIPA) Act 2009, Government Information (Public Access) (GIPA) Regulation 2018

Clause 8, Schedule 2

The GIPA Act 2009 has a number of mechanisms to access information – mandatory, proactive, informal and formal release.

This year, our Council processed 1622 informal access for information requests, removing the need to make a formal application in most cases.



The following is our annual report as required under section 125 of the GIPA Act:

Agencies must review their programs for the release of government information at least once every 12 months to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. Our program for the proactive release of information involves:

- reviewing all formal applications and informal requests to determine if the information sought should be released proactively in future
- aligning our Electronic Records Management systems categories to the GIPA Act and determining if any further records should be released proactively in future
- monitoring matters raised by employees and determining if the information should be released proactively in the future.

This year, we reviewed this program by ensuring there is an ongoing monitoring program of all applications/requests for information – formal, informal or other. The program also includes information from Council officers with respect to the information they are producing. As a result of this review, we have not added any additional information to the proactive release provision.

Review of proactive release program – section 8(a)

Details of the review carried out by the agency under section 7(3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of the review.

Reviews carried out by the agency	Information made publicly available by the agency
Yes	Yes

Review of Formal GIPA requests received over the past 12 months

A total of 27 GIPA Applications were reviewed in terms of what information was being requested and what information was considered for release. The flavour of the GIPA Applications reviewed included information subject to Copyright, concerned the business interests of third parties or significant personal information of third parties.

No 2 GIPA Applications sought the same information therefore no additional documents were released pursuant to this review. Any information considered within the public interest that was released, has been made known on Council’s disclosure log.

Review of Disclosure Log of own and neighbouring Council’s

A review of Council’s Disclosure log and that of other neighbouring Council’s revealed that information of particular interest in the Hunter Region involves specific projects or development applications which attracted a significant level of community interest.

Review of Council Website

All information other than information legislatively required to be published on Council’s website (such as Public exhibition) is a reflection of Council’s willingness to proactively release information of interest to the public. A review

of the website was undertaken which reflects that information and documents of particular interest are published on the website without the need for an application. One example of this is publishing specialist consultancy reports for various development applications over the past 12 months to permit greater transparency and encourage thorough review of proposed developments for the wider community. Council is not required to publish reports of this nature but do so, especially within the exhibition process, to encourage comment from the community from detailed review of documents.

Agency Information Access Maturity Assessment Survey

As part of Council’s continued commitment to promote and embed best practice data collection principles, a review of Information held, released and refused was undertaken using the IPC’s Agency Information Access Maturity Assessment Survey tool. This tool permits Council to understand the nature and effectiveness of our information access and open data practices.

The proactive release element of this matrix saw Council reach ‘Embedded excellence’ of Proactive release principles within the organisation. An area identified for improvement would be embedding the proactive release program principles more broadly within Council throughout the year by way of additional reviews (instead of once annually).

Review of EDRMS Classifications

Council uses classifications to categorise the information stored within the electronic management records system which in essence is reflective of all electronic data we hold (as prescribed by the State Records Act). The classifications which differ to those in the 2022 Review have been categorised accordingly.

No further information has been released subject to this review.

Number of access applications received – section 8(b)

The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications).

Total number of applications received
36

Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – section 8(c)

The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused either wholly or partly because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 of the Act (information for which there is a conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure).

Number of Applications Refused	Wholly	Partly	Total
	0	4	4
% of total	0%	100%	100%

Access application statistics – section 8(d) and schedule 2

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already held	Refuse to deal with an application	Refuse to confirm or deny whether the information is held	Application withdrawn	Total	Percentage of total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	8	14%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	9%
Members of the public (other)	2	6	4	7	4	1	0	18	42	75%
Total	4	9	5	8	5	1	0	24	56	
Percentage of total	7%	16%	9%	14%	9%	2%	0%	43%		

*More than one decision can be made in respect to a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome*

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with an application	Refuse to confirm or deny whether the information is held	Application withdrawn	Total	Percentage of total
Personal information applications**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	4	9	5	8	5	1	0	24	56	100%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	4	9	5	8	5	1	0	24	56	
Percentage of total	7%	16%	9%	14%	9%	2%	0%	43%		100%

*More than one decision can be made in respect to a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision.

**A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in section 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

Table C: Invalid Applications

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0	0%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	0	0%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure — matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0%
Cabinet information	0	0%
Executive Council information	0	0%
Contempt	0	0%
Legal professional privilege	4	80%
Excluded information	1	20%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0%
Transport safety	0	0%
Adoption	0	0%
Care and protection of children	0	0%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0%
Privilege generally – Sch 1 (5A)	0	0%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0%
Total	5	100%

*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application).

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure — matters listed in table to section 14 of the Act

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Responsible and effective government	2	0%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	10	0%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	14	0%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	26	100%

*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application).

Table F: Timeliness

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	Percentage of total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	42	98%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	1	2%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	43	100%

Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total	Percentage of total
Internal review	2	0	2	25%
Review by Information Commissioner*	3	0	3	38%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	2	0	2	25%
Review by NCAT	0	1	1	12%
Total	7	1	8	
Percentage of total	88%	12%	100	100%

*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data, in this case, indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	Number of applications for review	Percentage of total
Applications by access applicants	4	100%
Applications by persons to whom the information the subject of access application relates (section 54 of the Act)	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies

	Number of applications for review	Percentage of total
Agency-initiated transfers	0	0%
Applicant-initiated transfers	0	0%
Total	0	0%

Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994

Section 31

A summary of the number of disclosures received and to what the disclosures related, as reported to the NSW Ombudsman.

Statement	Number made by public officials performing their day to day functions	Number under a statutory or other legal obligation	All other public interest disclosures
Number of public officials who made public interest disclosures to your public authority	0	0	0
Number of public interest disclosures received by your public authority	0	0	0
Of public interest disclosures received, how many were primarily about:			
Corrupt conduct	0	0	0
Maladministration	0	0	0
Serious and substantial waste	0	0	0
Government information contravention	0	0	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0	0	0
Number of public interest disclosures (received since 1 Jan 2012) that have been finalised in this reporting period	0	0	0
Have you established an internal reporting policy?			Yes
Has the head of your public authority taken action to meet their staff awareness obligations?			Yes

Employees have been made aware through:

- employees undertaking that they have read and understood our internal reporting policy
- links on intranet and website
- training to new employees during induction
- training package for all employees, principal officers and management.



Little Beach

Code of Conduct

Section 11.1, Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW

Our Council is required to report complaints relating to the Mayor, Councillors and the General Manager in the year to September. In addition to this, we provide the below details for 2022 to 2023.

Model Code of Conduct statistics from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

a)	The total number of Code of Conduct complaints made about councillors and the General Manager under the Code of Conduct in the year	10
b)	The number of Code of Conduct complaints referred to a conduct reviewer during the reporting period	0
c)	The number of Code of Conduct complaints finalised by a conduct reviewer at the preliminary assessment stage during the reporting period and the outcome of those complaints	0
d)	The number of Code of Conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer during the reporting period	0
e)	Without identifying particular matters, the outcome of investigations completed under these procedures during the reporting period	N/A
f)	The number of matters reviewed by the Office during the reporting period and without identifying particular matters, the outcome of the reviews	0
g)	The total cost of dealing with Code of Conduct complaints made about councillors and the General Manager during the reporting period, including staff costs	\$29,900

Fisheries Management Act 1994

Our Council operates in accordance with and gives consideration to Fisheries Management Act related Threat and Recovery Abatement plans.

There are 2 ongoing Permits which have been active over the 2022-2023 financial year:

- Fisheries Permit and Marine Park Permit for infrastructure cleaning maintenance works within Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park- issued March 2022 for 3 years.
- Fisheries Permit and Marine Park Permit for Tomaree Foreshore sand removal and replenishment- issued January 2022 for 3 years.

The following fisheries permit was sought in the 2022-2023 financial year:

- Lemon Tree Passage Foreshore Shared Path (Henderson park to Rudd Reserve)-issued 30 January 2023.

Marine Estate Management Act 2014

The following marine park permit was sought in the 2022-2023 financial year:

- Lemon Tree Passage Foreshore Shared Path (Henderson park to Rudd Reserve)-issued 30 January 2023.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Section 7.5(5)

There was 1 planning agreement executed and in force during 2022 to 2023.

Swimming pool inspections

Swimming Pools Act 1992 section 22f(2), Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 section 18(b)(c)

Number of inspections of visitor accommodation	34
Number of inspections of premises with more than 2 dwellings	34
Number of inspections that resulted in the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance (section 22d)	194
Number of inspections that resulted in the issuance of a Certificate of Non-Compliance (under section 21 SP Reg)	109

Annual Reporting of Labour Statistics

Section 217 ((1) (d) (i)-(iv) the Regulations

Section 217 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) requires Council to publish labour force data in the annual reports. This is designed to allow greater scrutiny of councils' employment practices by their governing bodies, their communities, and key stakeholders such as the unions.

Increased transparency around councils' employment practices will promote better compliance with the Act and the Local Government (State) Award, encourage a more strategic approach to workforce planning and allow better-informed decision making by councils in relation to the management of their workforces.

The Secretary DPIE will fix the relevant day for reporting purposes after the end of each year.

For the financial year 2022-2023, our council is required to report the total number of persons who performed paid work on 23 November 2022*, including:

Number of persons directly employed by the council	
on a permanent full-time basis	413
on a permanent part-time basis	94
on a casual basis	14
under a fixed-term contract	29
Senior staff	4

- the number of persons employed by the council who are "senior staff" for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993: 4 (1 General Manager & 3 Group Managers)
- the number of persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person: 43 Labour hire/contractors/agency staff
- the number of persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee: 10 (apprentice, trainees & cadets directly employed through PSC).

*These figures differ to the figures on page 43 due to the date and reporting requirements.

Developer Contributions and Levies

Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EPA Reg)

Section 218(1), 218(A) (2) (a-g) the Regulations

Contributions Plan	Project number / ID	Project description	Location
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF17	King Park Sports Complex, Raymond Terrace – Implementation of Masterplan	All catchment areas
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF19	Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay - Upgrade to Oval 1	All catchment areas
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP2	Brandy Hill Drive, Brandy Hill – shared path from Clarence Town Road to Seaham Road	Raymond Terrace - Rural
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP2	Brandy Hill Drive, Brandy Hill – shared path from Clarence Town Road to Seaham Road	7.12
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF22	Henderson Park, Lemon Tree Passage – upgraded paths, landscaping, park furniture and BBQ	Central Growth Corridor
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF35	Little Beach, Nelson Bay – playground facilities upgrade	Tomaree
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	OSF56	Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace – playground upgrade, park facilities improvements and skate park improvements	All catchment areas
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	TCU3	Nelson Bay – Town centre upgrades	All catchment areas
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SRF16	Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay – sports pavilion B1	All catchment areas
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CAF1	Raymond Terrace Works Depot	Raymond Terrace
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CAF1	Raymond Terrace Works Depot	7.12
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CCF2	Library Resources	All catchment areas (except Fern Bay)
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	CCF2	Library Resources	7.12
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	FD21	Tomaree – construct and / or improve drainage and overland flow paths	Tomaree
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP2	Brandy Hill Drive, Brandy Hill – shared path from Clarence Town Road to Seaham Road	Raymond Terrace - Rural
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	SP2	Brandy Hill Drive, Brandy Hill – shared path from Clarence Town Road to Seaham Road	7.12
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	RW31	Ferodale Road, Medowie – Roundabout to 38 Ferodale Road	Central Growth Corridor
Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	MTT29	Ferodale Road – upgrade pedestrian refuge island west of Medowie Road	Central Growth Corridor

Section 218(A)(3)(a)(b)

Total value of all developer contributions received for financial year 2023 \$9,863,248

Total value of all developer contributions expended for financial year 2023 \$2,134,048

Note: No new borrowings have been expended for another purpose under the same or another Contributions Plan

	Purpose	Fy22/23 Actual Dev Cont Expenditure	Contribution expended to date	Project status	Percentage of costs funded by Developer Contributions
	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$ 87,363	\$87,363	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$150,000	\$150,000	Complete	36%
	Shared Paths	\$4,142	\$60,142	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	7.12	\$ 34,858	\$34,858	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$ 33,355	\$70,000	Complete	43%
	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$ 76,919	\$76,919	Complete	51%
	Public Open Space, Parks & Reserves	\$15,000	\$15,000	Complete	88%
	Town Centre Upgrades	\$225,000	\$225,000	Complete	83%
	Sports & Leisure Facilities	\$166,679	\$416,679	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	Civic Administration – Works Depot	\$222,753	\$1,089,220	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	7.12	\$572,606	\$1,252,274	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	Community & Cultural	\$187,500	\$745,698	Complete	100%
	7.12	\$62,500	\$745,698	Complete	100%
	Flood & Drainage Works	\$42,465	\$42,465	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	Shared Paths	96,426	\$96,426	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	7.12	\$45,482	\$45,482	Underway	Only relevant if project is complete
	Roadworks	\$101,000	\$101,000	Complete	53%
	Medowie Traffic and Transport	\$10,000	\$10,000	Complete	5%

Appendix

Section 6

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Raymond Terrace

Election of representatives on Council, committees, regional committees and groups

355C Committees and Regional Committees and Groups

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
1	Aboriginal Strategic Committee	To exchange information between the Aboriginal community and Council on issues affecting Aboriginal people. To promote mutual awareness and respect for the cultures of both Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal communities.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Francis Cr Kafer
2	Audit Committee	The Audit Committee is an advisory committee of Council comprising of two Councillor representatives and three independent external representatives. The objective of the Audit Committee is to enhance the corporate governance of Council through the provision of independent oversight, review and advice. The Committee will assist Council by providing independent assurance and assistance on the organisation's governance, risk, control and compliance frameworks.	Cr Anderson Cr Doohan Alternate Cr Dunkley (OLG guidelines preclude the Mayor from being a member of the Committee).
3	Hinton School of Arts Committee	To assist Council in the management of Hinton School of Arts.	Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer
4	Karuah Community Hall Committee	To assist Council in the management of Karuah Community Hall.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
5	Lemon Tree Passage Old School Centre Committee	To assist Council in the management of Lemon Tree Passage Old School Centre and surrounds.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
6	Medowie Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Cr Doohan Cr Wells
7	Nelson Bay Community Hall Committee	To assist Council in the management of Nelson Bay Community Hall.	Cr Anderson Cr Bailey
8	Port Stephens Australia Day Committee	To coordinate the annual celebration of Australia Day in Port Stephens in line with recommendations from the Australia Day Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Arnott Cr Doohan Cr Dunkley Cr Francis
9	Port Stephens Sister Cities Committee	To promote and have ongoing relationships between international communities providing opportunities for cultural exchange.	Mayor and all Councillors

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
10	Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Hall Management Committee	To assist Council in the management of the Raymond Terrace Senior Citizens Hall.	Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer
11	Salt Ash Community Hall	To assist Council in the management of Salt Ash Community Hall.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
12	Salt Ash Sports Ground Committee	To assist Council in the management, maintenance and improvements to Salt Ash Sports Ground.	Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
13	Seaham Park & Wetlands Committee	To assist Council in the management, maintenance and improvements to the park and wetlands.	Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer
14	Strategic Arts Committee	To provide input into Port Stephens Council's strategic policies, plans and programs relating to culture and the arts.	Mayor Palmer Cr Francis Cr Kafer Cr Tucker
15	Tanilba Bay Foreshore Hall Committee	To assist Council in the management of Tanilba Bay Foreshore Hall.	Cr Tucker Cr Wells
16	Tilligerry Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Doohan Cr Tucker Cr Wells
17	Tomaree Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Bailey Cr Dunkley
18	West Ward Sports Council	To facilitate communication between the sporting community and Council. To ensure the existing and future needs of sports participants and administrators are brought to the attention of Council.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Cr Francis Cr Kafer

Regional Committees and Groups

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
19	AGL Newcastle Gas Storage Facility Community Dialogue Group	The purpose of a Community Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.	Mayor Palmer
20	Birubi Point Cultural Heritage Advisory Panel	To advise Port Stephens Council on the management plan required to protect the Worimi cultural and spiritual heritage and enhance the environment of the Birubi Point Crown Reserve and Birubi Point Aboriginal Place.	Cr Wells
21	Brandy Hill Quarry Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of a Community Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.	Cr Arnott Alternate Cr Kafer
22	Cabbage Tree Road Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of the committee is to provide an advisory forum of community representatives to meet requirements of the development consent.	Cr Kafer Alternate Cr Arnott
23	Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management Implementation Committee	Responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Port Stephens Council Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management.	Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Kafer
24	Communication and Engagement Advisory Panel	The purpose is the delivery of transparent communications and meaningful community engagement. To provide information, advice and guidance on development and delivery of Council communications and engagement programs to ensure a diversity of voices participates in decision making for their place.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Wells Cr Kafer
25	Community Funding Program	To make recommendations to Council on applications received through the Grants process.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Cr Doohan Cr Dunkley Alternate Cr Anderson for East Ward Cr Wells for Central Ward (1 Councillor from each Ward).
26	Environment Advisory Panel	To provide community representation for consultation, advice and advocacy on environmental matters in Port Stephens.	Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Francis

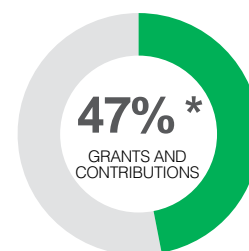
Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
27	General Manager Performance Review Panel	To conduct evaluation of the performance of the General Manager.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Cr Anderson (Nominated by the Council, plus a Councillor nominated at the time by the General Manager).
28	Heritage Advisory Panel	To provide community representation for consultation, advice and advocacy of heritage matters in Port Stephens.	Cr Wells Alternate Cr Kafer
29	Hunter Joint Organisation	The Hunter Joint Organisation is a collaborative body that brings together the 10 councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, the organisation's statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.	Mayor Palmer
30	Local Government Community Safety & Crime Prevention Network NSW Note: This is a Committee of the Port Stephens Local Area Command. Membership is by invitation from the Local Area Commander. Council's delegate is the Mayor.	To provide a forum for local community members, service providers, businesses and the police to discuss issues and appropriate strategies relating to crime and community safety. **Attendees will be by invitation only, one representative will be invited by the Police from each peak body/organisation e.g. Hunter Water / Housing NSW). Council will hold two positions, one will be Community Engagement Officer, and the other will be the Mayor or his representative if unable to attend.	Mayor Palmer
31	Customer and Community Advisory Group (CCAG)	This committee is an advisory committee to Hunter Water Corporation.	Cr Francis Alternate Cr Kafer
32	Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel	To consider development applications referred to the Panel under the legislation for development applications for the Port Stephens Local Government area. The Panel comprises of 3 State members and 2 Councillors. The term is for 3 years for each Panel member.	Mayor Palmer Cr Arnott Alternates Cr Anderson Cr Tucker Civil Assets Section Manager Strategy & Environment Section Manager
33	Local Traffic Committee	This is a Service NSW based committee which allows Council to have delegated authority to install or remove regulatory sign posting on public roads.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Kafer
34	Lower Hunter Bushfire Management Committee	The committee is a legislative requirement and is to discuss direction across local government areas and across agencies in regard to bushfire management.	Cr Arnott

Ref	Committee name	Purpose of Committee	Delegates
35	Cr Kafer	The Group is managed by Hunter Local Land Services (HLLS). The purpose is to provide an opportunity the HLLS to engage with stakeholders on a range matters, including strategic direction and programs.	Cr Francis
36	Marine Parks Advisory Panel Ministerial Appointment	Community Consultative Committee regarding the proposed Marine Park in Port Stephens.	Cr Anderson
37	NSW Public Libraries Association (Central East Zone)	The purpose of the Association is to champion the public library cause, strengthen the public library network, advocate effectively, foster cooperation and collaboration, build trust and support, initiate partnerships and share relevant information.	Cr Wells
38	Port Stephens Economic Development Advisory Panel	Act as a communication and advisory mechanism to Council on relevant Economic Development issues. Oversee the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.	Mayor Palmer Cr Anderson Cr Doohan Cr Dunkley Cr Francis Cr Tucker
39	Port Stephens Floodplain Advisory Panel	To provide advice on flood/floodplain management studies/plans.	Cr Francis Alternate Cr Arnott
40	Port Stephens Local Health Committee	To provide leadership in the community to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure health services meet local community health needs • Promote health services and initiatives • Enhance the health of the community. 	Cr Anderson Alternate Cr Tucker
41	Port Stephens/ Myall Lakes Estuary and Coastal Zone Management Committee	This Committee includes representatives from Great Lakes Council and is responsible for long term planning for the estuary and the coastline.	Cr Bailey Alternate Cr Anderson
42	RFS District Liaison Committee	To review the progress of the service level agreement between Port Stephens Council and NSW Rural Fire Service in the local government area.	Cr Arnott Alternate Mayor Palmer
43	Salt Ash Sand Project Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of a Community Consultative Committee is to provide a forum for discussion between a proponent and representatives of the community, stakeholder groups and the local council on issues directly relating to a specific State significant project.	Cr Doohan Alternate Cr Wells
44	Stone Ridge Community Consultative Committee	The purpose of the committee is to provide an advisory forum of community representatives to meet requirements of the development consent.	Cr Francis Alternate Cr Arnott
45	Williamstown Consultative Committee Forum	To provide a forum for the residents of Williamstown area to discuss relevant issues with Federal, State and Local Government elected members and agencies.	Mayor Palmer (General Manager)
46	Worimi Conservation Lands Board of Management Ministerial Appointment	To oversee the management of the lands owned by the Aboriginal owners and leased back to the NSW Government.	Cr Bailey Alternate Cr Arnott

Capital works projects

Capital works project expenditure in 2022 to 2023.

*Grant funds contributed to this project



Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
Aquatic Structure	Little Beach, Nelson Bay - Jetty*	31,593
Bridges	Notts Creek Bridge, Glen Oak*	15,225
Buildings	Raymond Terrace - Depot Upgrade	7,790,008
Buildings	Boyd Oval - Amenities Building	5,935
Buildings	Tomaree Sports Complex - Amenities	166,679
Buildings	Stuart Park, Hinton - Amenities	185,961
Buildings	Little Beach, Nelson Bay - Amenities Replacement *	177,731
Buildings	Mallabulla Amenities Upgrade and Sewer Connection*	203,886
Buildings	King Park Sports Complex Seating and Building Upgrades*	376,823
Buildings	Tomaree Library and Community Centre Fire Indicator Panel Upgrade	59,901
Buildings	Fern Bay Community Centre Fire Indicator Panel Upgrade	9,721
Buildings	Administration Building Lift Upgrade	32,317
Buildings	Soldiers Point RFS Roofing Upgrade*	16,166
Buildings	Community Assets Upgrade	512,233
Buildings	Lakeside Aquatic Centre Playground Upgrade*	140,787
Buildings	Yulong Oval Amenities Upgrade*	142,001
Buildings	Tomaree And Tilligerry Aquatic Centre Heat Upgrade	285,812
Buildings	Salamander Waste Transfer Amenities Upgrade	123,811
Buildings	Tomaree Matchfield Upgrades - Elizabeth Waring*	366,793
Buildings	Raymond Terrace Activity Van Roof Replacement	42,067
Buildings	Little Beach, changing places amenities*	67,825
Carparks	Birubi Point Interchange*	226,769
Carparks	Shoal Bay Carpark Upgrade	100,761
Commercial Investment	Commercial investment and land	52,676
Drainage	Drainage KIP Upgrades	9,349

Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
Drainage	Sturgeon Street Drainage Upgrades	345,577
Drainage	Nelson Bay Drainage Works*	789,587
Drainage	John Parade Lemon Tree Passage Drainage Upgrades	32,850
Drainage	Bourke Street Flood Pump*	8,242
Drainage	Canomii Close Nelson Bay New Drainage Infrastructure	42,465
Fleet	Fleet Replacement*	2,092,891
Holiday Parks	Holiday Park Improvements	705,392
ICT	Information Technology Improvements	192,067
Libraries	Library resources	253,564
Libraries	Mobile Library Upgrade*	54,407
Natural Disaster	Tomago Pontoon Flood Repairs*	16,543
Natural Disaster	Soldiers Point Revetment Wall*	28,057
Natural Disaster	Little Beach Retaining Wall*	16,025
Natural Disaster	Teramby Road Land Slip 1*	64,882
Natural Disaster	Marine Drive Land Slip*	193,359
Natural Disaster	Henning Road*	14,535
Natural Disaster	Six Mile Road Culvert*	16,263
Natural Disaster	Old Punt Road*	18,338
Natural Disaster	High Street Guardrail Replacement*	11,753
Natural Disaster	Teramby Road Land Slip 2*	27,948
Natural Disaster	Foreshore Drive Corlette*	31,632
Open Space	Spencer Park, Soldiers Point Upgrades*	83,193
Open Space	Kittyhawk Park Playground Upgrade	109,910
Open Space	Henderson Park Shade Sail	33,355
Open Space	Birubi Sand Dune Stabilisation	19,838
Open Space	Williamtown Tennis Court fence replacement	15,000
Open Space	Salamander Sports Complex Upgrades Upgrade*	255,068
Open Space	Brandon Park Upgrades Upgrade*	564,963
Open Space	King Park Sports Complex Replace Fencing and Upgrade	93,267
Open Space	Henderson Park Extend existing irrigation	10,000
Open Space	Conroy Park BBQ replacement	20,000

Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
Open Space	Aliceton Reserve Playground *	33,450
Open Space	Foster Park Shelters Replacement*	26,130
Open Space	Longworth Park Bbq's Replacement	6,418
Open Space	Little Beach Inclusive Playspace*	151,859
Open Space	Anzac Park Raymond Terrace Redevelopment*	220,023
Open Space	Tomaree Sports Complex Playground	10,022
Open Space	Boomerang Park Basketball Hoops	16,960
Open Space	Little Beach, Park furniture and BBQs*	45,032
Open Space	Bill Strong Oval Surface Renovations*	45,500
Open Space	Little Beach - Replace fish cleaning tables*	9,500
Open Space	Lionel Morton Oval Driveway Washouts Repair*	11,917
Open Space	Nelson Bay Tennis Upgrades*	272,601
Open Space	Tomaree Sport Complex field lighting*	6,733
Pathways	Lemon Tree Passage Pathway Missing Link	398,818
Pathways	Nelson Bay Road, Fern Bay Pathway	13,120
Pathways	Brandy Hill Shared Pathway Construction	180,908
Pathways	Highway Underpass Raymond Terrace Pathway	162,714
Pathways	Medowie Pathway - Ferodale to Silverwattle	130,590
Pathways	Lemon Tree Passage Pathway*	7,116
Pathways	Fly Point to Halifax Pathway*	8,414
Pathways	Lemon Tree Passage Town Centre Upgrades*	20,276
Pathways	King Park Sports Complex Pathway Upgrades*	423,691
Roads	Newline Road*	1,466,713
Roads	Mustons Road, Karuah culvert replacement and road widening	120,417
Roads	William Street, Raymond Terrace*	648,810
Roads	James Road, Medowie	49,971
Roads	Duns Creek Road	32,889
Roads	Riverflat Realignment Road	38,393
Roads	Kula Road	55,988
Roads	Tanilba Road Mallabula*	1,480,161
Roads	Port Stephens Drive Koala Blackspot*	683,538

Classification	Job description	Cost (\$)
Roads	Gravel Road Resheeting - East Seaham Road	47,189
Roads	Swan Bay Road	840,984
Roads	Clarencetown Road Wattle Creek Bridge to Langlands Road*	1,441,074
Roads	Clarencetown Road Mooghin Road to Dixon Street *	1,892,566
Roads	Seaham Road and Hinton Road Intersection *	1,054,092
Roads	Nelson Bay Town Centre High Pedestrian Activity *	390,248
Roads	Six Mile Road*	1,093,148
Roads	Gan Gan Road*	1,592,918
Roads	School Zone Infrastructure Projects*	118,487
Roads	Lavis Lane	25,229
Roads	Retaining Wall Soldiers Point Road	77,062
Roads	Ferodale Road (Roundabout to Peppertree), Medowie	189,883
Roads	Avenue Of The Allies Tanilba Bay Upgrade*	326,043
Roads	Kindlebark Drive Medowie	72,905
Roads	Italia Road Balickera	117,827
Roads	Medowie Road Seg 350*	359,633
Roads	Sturgeon Street Raymond Terrace*	397,754
Roads	Marsh Road Floodgate	15,338
Roads	Clarencetown Road - Seg 120-130*	119,809
Roads	Bucketts Way, Twelve Mile Creek*	114,492
Roads	Lemon Tree Passage Road Oyster Cove *	124,143
Roads	East Seaham Road, East Seaham*	154,570
Roads	Adelaide Street, Raymond Terrace*	441,813
Roads	Ferodale Road (Brockelsby Road), Medowie*	423,000
Roads	Port Stephens Street Raymond Terrace *	286,304
Roads	Government Road Nelson Bay *	520,354
Roads Reseal	Reseal Program*	2,203,712
Waste	Domestic Waste Fleet Upgrades	20,000
Waste	EPS Recycling Machine Upgrade	29,500
Total		38,572,550



Sunset Cinema, Raymond Terrace

Glossary of terms

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Advocacy: The act of speaking or arguing in favour of something like a cause or idea.

Biodiversity: The variety of all living things including plants, animals and microorganisms, their genes and the ecosystems of which they are a part.

Capital works: Major projects undertaken to either renew, upgrade or construct assets owned by Port Stephens Council.

CMP: Coastal Management Program.

Community Strategic Plan (CSP): A strategic document with a minimum 10-year outlook, which outlines our community's long term vision and priorities.

COVID-19: The disease caused by a new coronavirus.

Customer First: An organisational framework which puts our customers (ratepayers, community and colleagues) at the heart of everything we do.

DA: Development application.

Delivery Program: A document with a minimum 4-year outlook, which outlines our Council's objectives in achieving the Community Strategic Plan.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP): A plan outlining the actions we'll take to remove barriers for people with disability.

Financial year: The financial year we are reporting on in this report is from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Gathang: The language of the Worimi people of Port Stephens.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R): A framework used by NSW councils to report on progress in meeting the community's vision and objectives. It incorporates the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan,

Long Term Financial Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan and Workforce Plan.

IPART: Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

LGA: Local government area.

Long Term Financial Plan: A plan for how we'll fund the objectives and strategies in the Community Strategic Plan.

NCAT: NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

OLG: Office of Local Government NSW.

OOSH: Out of School Hours Care including vacation care.

Operational Plan: An annual action plan for how we'll implement the Delivery Program plus budgets, fees and charges.

Risk management: A discipline for developing appropriate procedures to reduce the possibility of adverse effects.

RMS: Roads and Maritime Services.

Special Activation Precinct (SAP): Dedicated area in a regional location identified by the NSW Government to become a thriving business hub.

Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP): A 10-year framework for managing our Council's assets so appropriate services are effectively delivered to the community.

TfNSW: Transport for NSW.

Worimi: Our Council acknowledges the Worimi people as the traditional owners of the Port Stephens local government area.

Workforce Plan: A plan to ensure we have the right people and skills to deliver the objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.

YAAP: Youth Advisory Action Panel.

Yabang Gumba-Gu: Meaning 'road to tomorrow', this is an agreement and 3-year action plan our Council has signed with the local Worimi and Karuah Aboriginal Land Councils.

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