

PENRITH

HOW WE DID IN 2019-20 IN DELIVERING SERVICES, ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

SUMMARY

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

penrith.city

OUR MISSION

WE WILL...

- >> Deliver the services, facilities and infrastructure that our community needs
- >> Maintain our long term financial sustainability
- >> Work with our community and partners to achieve more than we can alone
- >> Provide an excellent customer experience to everyone who contacts us
- >> Value and engage our staff

OUR VALUES

In addition to our Code of Conduct, Council has adopted Values to guide our behaviour in the workplace and how we relate to our work colleagues, our customers, our communities, and our stakeholders.

Our Values and Behaviours are:

- >> We show respect
- >> We are accountable
- >> We encourage innovation

As an organisation, we strive to reflect these in our day to day work, making our workplace more enjoyable and productive.



OUR CUSTOMER PROMISE

We put customers at the heart of everything we do. When we work with you and each other we will...

BE PROACTIVE

We will be friendly, professional and show initiative.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

We will offer clear, consistent and accurate information and services, which are easy for everyone to access.

BUILD RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

We value relationships and diversity. We will respect your individual situation.

LISTEN AND RESPOND

We will listen to you and seek to understand your needs. We will be honest, accountable and follow through, so you know what to expect and when.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MAYOR

This annual report looks back on a year of challenges and uncertainty and tells a story of how Penrith City Council worked through these challenges to create certainty for our community. I have never been prouder to be Mayor of our City than I am right now.

No one could have envisaged the series of events that would unfold, nor how Council would respond to them. But, in the face of natural disasters and a global pandemic, we have continued to engage with and serve our community and realise our vision for the future.

Despite what was to come, this financial year began like many others. We consulted with our community on a range of issues, seeking comment on our Local Strategic Planning Statement (a 20-year vision for land priorities), a landmark City Park and, more recently, Council's Youth Action Plan.

We ran a Volunteer Expo to connect service organisations to those looking for ways to give back to their community and worked with diverse organisations on a range of events, including to celebrate International Women's Day and Day of Peace.

Council's Events Team curated another spectacular REAL Festival on the banks of the Nepean River. The November event drew 27,500 people and invited participation through an interactive performance piece.

As in previous years, we collaborated with a local school to design a playspace through the Penrith Mayoral Challenge. Students from Oxley Park Public School worked with Council's Neighbourhood Renewal team to breathe new life into Brian King Park.

Council also launched a new community newsletter, Our Place, to inform residents about our programs, services and events and celebrate the unique qualities that make Penrith a great place to live, work and play.

Among those qualities is our leadership, and I am pleased to say that over the past 12 months, Council has led a number of significant initiatives.

In November, we hosted a Mayoral Skills Summit. The event brought together over 30 stakeholders from industry, education and training organisations, government agencies and business to identify ways to keep and create new jobs and tailor skills programs to target jobs of the future. In the wake of a catastrophic bushfire season, we coordinated and hosted our Cooling the City Masterclass. The sold-out event, which was attended by a broad range of organisations from across the state, presented ideas from national and international experts on how government and industry can improve our built environment.

Council also partnered with Western Sydney University to run a heat sensor program, tracking temperature data across Penrith to support and inform our Cooling the City Strategy.

Finally, as the financial year drew to a close, Council pulled together a group of industry, government and community leaders to accelerate the City's post-pandemic recovery.

We formed two taskforces – one focused on the economic needs and opportunities the City faces, and the other on the wellbeing and resilience of our residents – to develop and collaborate on responses to the COVID-19 impacts on our City and act as a conduit to Council, industry bodies, other organisations and government.

In June, Council invited local residents to share their stories of strength, resilience and perseverance during the COVID-19 crisis. I am pleased that we have captured these experiences as a legacy of this time.

I would like to thank our community for supporting one another through this difficult year and adapting along with us as we journey into the new normal. I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors and Council staff for their dedication to creating a sustainable, healthy and vibrant future for Penrith.

ROSS FOWLER OAM MAYOR OF PENRITH



A MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

This report gives an overview of Penrith City Council's achievements, a breakdown of our finances and outlines how we've responded to challenges over the past 12 months. It also showcases the leadership, resilience and innovation our organisation has shown during this extraordinary year.

While supporting our community through drought, fire, floods and a global pandemic, Council has kept its focus on the future and remains financially sound.

In November, Council released its \$125 million Sports and Recreation Strategy, a 15-year plan to deliver 82 projects, including an initiative to improve shade in 90 local playgrounds, build a multi-use synthetic sport facility at Jamison Park and a new sports and recreation precinct in Gipps St, Claremont Meadows.

Plans were also progressed to enhance Regatta Park and create a central City Park. We significantly progressed the development of a multi-storey carpark at Soper Place, reclaiming land for our community, and advocated for investment to enable transformative projects and maximise our potential.

Over the past 12 months, Penrith continued to work with all levels of government to realise the City Deal. As long-term advocates for the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport we have helped connect our residents to employment opportunity and fostered the creation of the 30-minute city.

Council has demonstrated its future focus and strong governance through our flood management with comprehensive modelling across our City to inform planning and evacuation routes, including our advocacy for the Castlereagh Connection.

When catastrophic fires hit the east coast of Australia, Council provided staff to our neighbours in the Blue Mountains to help them respond to and recover from the disaster.

But it is through our COVID-19 response that Penrith's leadership, resilience and innovation shone most brightly.

Council's innovative systems saw us move to a remote working model with minimal disruption to employees and service delivery. We continued to be productive, responsive and connected. Our assessment of Development Applications did not slow down and our outdoor staff worked safely to maintain roads, parks and reserves. Our Children's Services made their exceptional curriculum and programs COVID Safe, while our Library Services offered an inclusive range of virtual events.

Council championed Neighbourly Isolation cards through our Good Neighbour Program to help our residents connect with one another and offer support. We shared this idea with our own neighbours, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury Councils, with great success.

When social distancing came into play, Council connected with our community in many ways, including our Thursday Night Live Lockdown Series. Streamed on our Facebook Page, these events attracted 50,000 views from the launch in April to the end of June.

We partnered with Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District to provide 116 free flu vaccines to vulnerable residents and with Nepean Food Services to deliver food parcels to those in need.

Importantly, Council provided over half a million dollars in immediate relief to local businesses impacted by the pandemic through the waiving of fees and commercial rents. To assist local community sports associations to get through lockdown and come out the other side, we waived sports ground hire fees for winter 2020, summer 2020-21 and winter 2021. We're also championing initiatives from two taskforces led by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to foster the recovery of our City.

The past months have been particularly challenging for our cultural and sporting institutions, but the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, Penrith Regional Gallery and Lewers Bequest and the Penrith Whitewater Stadium have responded to change in remarkable ways and Council continues to work closely with their community boards.

Again, it's been an extraordinary 12 months and I am proud of Council's response and the fact that we have emerged strong, positive and on track for a sustainable future.

WARWICK WINN GENERAL MANAGER



OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19



FERNZ CAFE

The COVID-19 pandemic raced around the world in early 2020. With protecting the health of the population the highest priority, the Australian response focused on measures designed to slow the spread of the virus, including banning large gatherings and temporary closure of pubs, restaurants, gyms and other places people were likely to gather. Schools, although not closed, transitioned to online learning wherever possible, and 88% of organisations across the country encouraged or required employees to work from home. Local government elections planned for September 2020 were rescheduled for September 2021.

INTRODUCTION

Thanks to Council's innovative and future-proof ICT Strategy, when COVID-19 hit we were able to follow health warnings and quickly move our indoor workforce to remote working. A focus on cloud-based applications ensured our systems are available 'Anytime, Anywhere and on Any Device', allowing all staff, including the 60% without Councilissued mobile devices, our Customer Experience Centre and Customer Contact teams, to work effectively from home.

Our outdoor workforce operated week on/week off during April, followed by a 4-day 36-hour week from May. These changes allowed us to meet social distancing, comply with health advice and provide greater flexibility for staff that cannot deliver services from home. Other measures included allowing employees to take vehicles home, establishing two satellite depots for Civil Operations staff, and staggering start and finish times.

Council's Children's Services remained open throughout the pandemic providing care for children of frontline and essential services workers, and all our families as they returned to work. Council placed all fees on hold and guaranteed positions for families deciding to keep their children at home, and subsequently implemented the government funding packages to provide childcare free of charge. We also supported children at home with a weekly Preschool program and made educational and activity resources available through our social media channels. Our mobile playvan reached out to the community by delivering craft packs.

Our Library programs quickly moved online, and although our Home Library Service was suspended in April our team remained in regular contact with customers by phone to try and ease their social isolation. In response, one resident who is legally blind and has remained housebound since the start of the pandemic phoned to praise our Library team for their exceptional service and support.

In May, Council established two taskforces to accelerate our City's post-pandemic recovery, one focused on the economic needs and opportunities the City faces and the other on the wellbeing and resilience of our residents. The taskforces, chaired by our Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively, bring together industry, government and community leaders to collaborate on responses and act as a conduit back to Council, industry bodies, other organisations and government. The taskforces first met in June, will meet monthly for the next year, and will work together on programs and initiatives to boost the local economy, build capacity in the community sector and foster connection in our City.

With all our staff working under changed conditions, we undertook a Resilience Survey to gain information so we can ensure we are supporting them effectively. The results were extraordinary, with 73% of employees (1,030 staff) responding. Of staff who responded:

- 96% agreed that Council is looking after their wellbeing
- 98% felt Council had responded appropriately to the COVID-19 situation
- 94% rated themselves as productive during their working week
- 92% felt they could still collaborate effectively with colleagues
- 93% agreed that current work arrangements allow us to meet customer needs
- 86% were positive about the effectiveness of our technology and systems while working remotely.

The Resilience Survey and the adaptability of our staff showed that we can deliver high levels of service through non-traditional work environments. To build on this, Council developed a set of Finding Balance Guiding Principles to maintain the positives of the last few months and build flexibility into our ongoing work practices wherever possible.

CASE STUDY

THURSDAY NIGHT LIVE - LOCKDOWN SERIES



Penrith City Council has always recognised the important role artists, musicians and performers play in the life of our City and a regular feature of Council's events calendar has been a series of live musical performances featuring talented homegrown artists called Thursday Night Live.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Council introduced the Thursday Night Live -Lockdown Series, an innovative alternative that gave artists the opportunity to perform for an online audience via a livestream on Council's Facebook page. The live engagement each Thursday night was a standout feature, with on average 300 comments or interactions during each gig. After 12 weeks and nearly 50,000 views the series wrapped up at the end of June. The participating artists were grateful for the opportunity to get both a paid gig during lockdown plus the opportunity to reach new audiences, with artists increasing their social media followings and engaging with audiences they wouldn't normally reach.

Not only were the artists buoyed by the support they received from the program, it also resulted in positive local messages and connections. Messaging shout outs for mental health support services as well as encouraging shop local and local takeaway delivery listings was made possible throughout the program. Overall, the Thursday Night Live – Lockdown Series provided a lifeline to artists, local businesses and the community.

OTHER KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OR ISSUES RELATED TO COVID-19

The information below is drawn from all seven Outcomes to provide a complete picture of how our planned works were impacted. This information is not repeated under individual Outcomes.

Extra or unplanned activities

- We provided financial relief to affected lessees and outdoor dining permit holders.
- Our Good Neighbour program partnered with Nepean Food Services to distribute 250 everyday essentials packages. 11,500 residents received a Neighbourly Isolation Card encouraging them to let others know how they could help, with 450 residents downloading their own cards.
- We developed a fortnightly news snapshot to provide residents an overview of the latest public health information, changes to Council services and where they could go to find out more.
- To prepare for the reopening of community and sporting facilities we:
 - developed COVID-19 Safety and Operational Plans for every community centre and hall
 - supported local sporting associations and clubs with the development of sport code-specific COVID-19 Safety Plans and compliance with restrictions
 - helped regular hirers of community facilities to develop COVID-19
 Safety Plans including signage for display in every facility
 - organised a 'deep clean' of the community centres and halls prior to reopening and distributed cleaning packs for user groups.

Activities where planned delivery was changed

- The Community Assistance Program was brought forward to provide funding to non-profit organisations and groups to address emerging community needs; and Magnetic Places was re-designed to fund arts projects that provided creative alternatives to face-to-face engagement.
- Online Council meetings were enabled for both Councillors and staff, and the audio of these meetings was streamed live for members of the public.
- Library staff maintained phone and email enquiries services, processing memberships, expanding online services with additional eBooks and extra online tutoring hours for students. We provided innovative new virtual children's story time programs and activities for adults and children, as well as hosting our first ever 'Zoom author talk' with author Robert Tickner.
- National Simultaneous Storytime celebrated 20 years of promoting reading across the nation with celebrations at all Council childcare centres at 11am on Wednesday 27 May. The Mayor and General Manager pre-recorded a reading of this year's book "Whitney and Britney Chicken Divas" by Lucinda Gifford, with the Mayor and Leadership Team attending services via Zoom on the day to share the story.
- An e-learning module on Active Supervision was rolled out to all Children's Services staff to ensure consistent understanding across all services, and to address any concerns that had emerged in relation to supervision requirements.
- The Queen Street Riches and Textures
 Project this year is focusing on listening to the
 community to develop an intergenerational
 project based on a retrospective of a
 1978 production called The St Marys Kid.
 Workshop activities were unfortunately
 suspended as a result of COVID-19. Where
 possible, this project is continuing online.

 The Western Weekender and Penrith Press suspended their print editions. Council's advertising was disrupted during this time as the weekly Corporate News Page (CNP) could not be published in print. As an alternative, the CNP was published on the Western Weekender and Penrith Press websites and social media channels. The online publishing of the CNP met Council's requirement under legislation to publicise DAs and other critical messages.

CASE STUDY

VILLAGE CAFÉ FLU VACCINATION CLINIC

During COVID-19 restrictions, local services raised concerns about some residents experiencing limited access to everyday groceries and essential items. The Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District's flu vaccination program was also temporarily placed on hold due to restrictions in schools. In response, Council's Village Café project collaborated with the local health district and local community services to run free flu vaccination clinics in North St Marys, Kingswood and Llandilo, providing 116 residents with free flu vaccinations and distributing 150 emergency food relief packages.

The Village Café flu vaccination program was warmly welcomed by local residents who enjoyed the opportunity to connect over a cup of coffee following their flu shot. For some residents, the program offered a valuable opportunity for social connection during a time where many people faced extended periods of isolation.



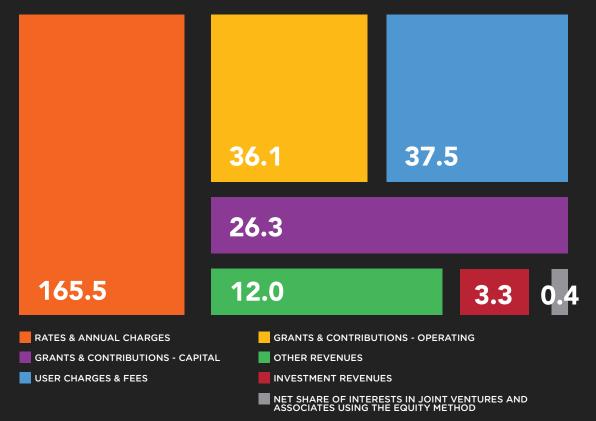


Negatively impacted activities

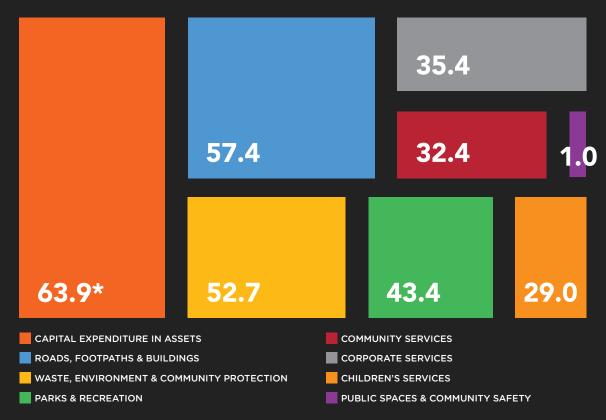
- The Tourism Strategy and planned events were placed on hold, with the Marketing team focussing on liaising with tourism operators, promoting activities that were permitted during lockdown and planning new itineraries for future day trips.
- Some activities under the International Partnerships program have been delayed due to COVID-19, such as a visit from our Japanese partners in Fujieda and Hakusan.
- Parking enforcement operations have been severely impacted, and we are working with the community and stakeholders to monitor parking demand with a view to returning to normal operations when safe to do so.
- Routine environmental health inspection programs were temporarily suspended, though priority or emergency matters, including customer requests and incidents that could potentially result in significant risks to the environment or public health, were still responded to. Where possible, alternative approaches including phone and email have been taken to monitor compliance and assist businesses to meet COVIDSafe obligations.

- Public health initiatives such as food safety and skin penetration seminars were placed on hold, replaced by distribution of monthly newsletters. Proactive routine food safety and public health premises inspections were also put on hold, replaced by updates around COVID Safety awareness and COVID-19 operational requirements.
- Community engagement to support development of the new Community Plan started in February, however it was placed on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although specific engagement on the community plan has not recommenced, we have been gathering information from other engagement activities that will help us understand community priorities. A revised program which will target groups that we have not yet connected with and seek more in-depth understanding of key issues will commence rollout in the first quarter of 2020-21.

WHERE DOES OUR MONEY COME FROM? (\$m)

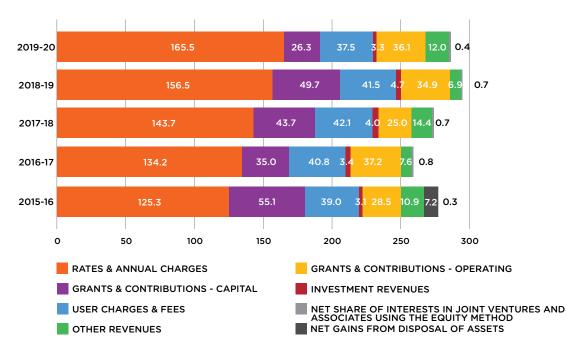


WHERE DOES OUR MONEY GO? (\$m)

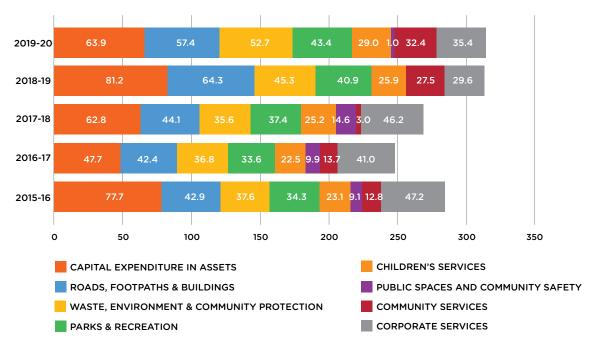


* Capital expenditure has also been funded from reserves and disposal of assets.





Comparison of expenditure over 5 years (\$m)



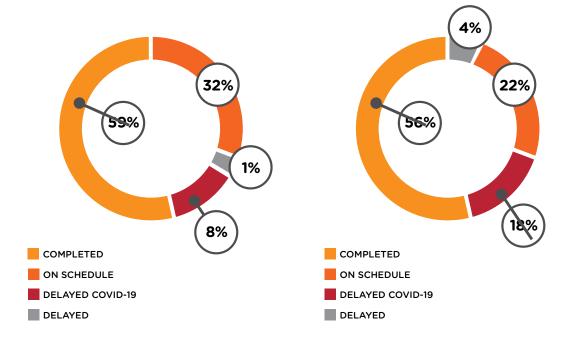
HOW DID WE DO?

OUR PROJECTS

At the end of the financial year, 91% of Councils reportable projects (Capital and Operational) were on track or completed, with 8% experiencing some delay due to COVID-19, and a further 1% experiencing other delays. Although we do our best to anticipate what needs to be done each year, unexpected challenges and opportunities inevitably arise. In some cases, this affects our ability to undertake the work we had planned, however, in others, we can respond without affecting our agreed program of works.

OUR OPERATIONAL PLAN ACTIONS

At the end of June 2020, 78% of the 2019-20 Operational Plans were on track or completed, with 18% experiencing some delay due to COVID-19, and a further 4% experiencing other delays. For further details refer to the Our Performance section of this report on page 35.





OUR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION INITIATIVES

Our dedication to continuous improvement has led to the creation of a permanent Business Improvement team, previously known as Innovative Performance, within the Business Transformation Department. This team has developed a Business Improvement Framework which will align its activities each year with business objectives and community outcomes.

The launch of the Customer Experience Transformation program was another key outcome for the Business Improvement team, reflecting its alignment with the Customer Promise – to put our customers at the heart of everything we do. This program will focus on reviewing and improving Council's internal processes that impact how we serve our external customers.

This cross-functional program was piloted with reviews focusing on four key areas in the organisation, including:

- booking community and neighbourhood facilities
- parking
- overgrown properties, and
- animal services and administration.



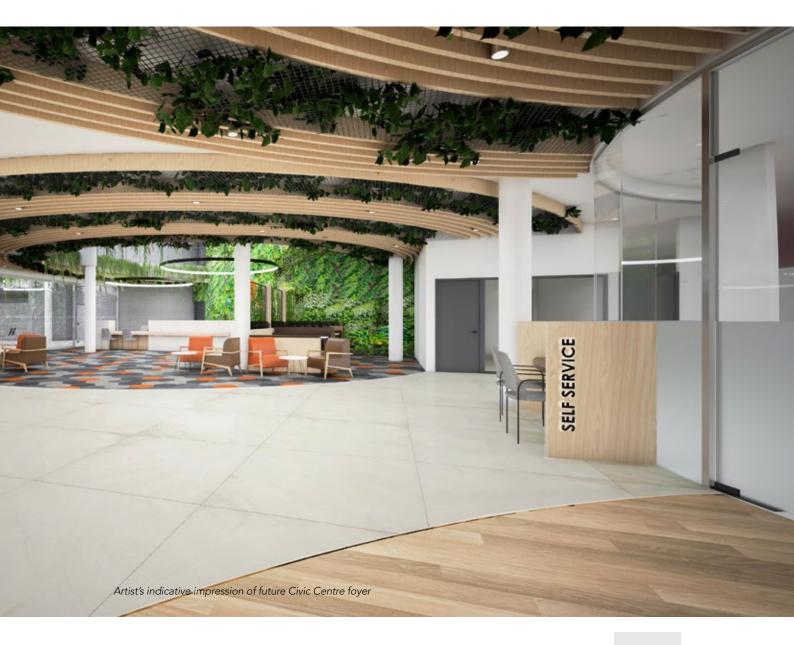
These areas were chosen because they're some of the services our customers interact with the most, so they provided a great opportunity to redesign processes to deliver our Customer Promise and create a more positive customer experience. The reviews identified 153 actions we can take to make things easier for people using these services. Partnering with ICT, delivery of these improvements will create more efficient workflows for our internal departments while providing an optimum experience with reduced touchpoints, greater access to our services and seamless processes. Eliminating waste and streamlining processes is estimated to improve the administrative efficiency of our Ranger services by at least 20%.

Business Improvement also played a critical role in reviewing Council's front foyer. This review aimed to understand how customers move through and experience the front foyer of the Penrith Civic Centre. The review included:

- 64 internal and external active contributors
- 34 initial concepts developed through consultation and workshops
- 17 confirmed concept designs which progressed to more detail design, including:
 - self-serve kiosks- reducing customer wait times by up to 5 minutes and providing information on our online services
 - dedicated concierge 100% interception and first line triage
 - varied seating options and café integration – making times you need to wait more pleasant for all customers
- capture and analysis of information relating to interactions at the security desk (roughly 1,000 each month).

We have already seen how this review has improved processes, with the introduction of a queueing system which allows us to track the different types of customer enquiries we receive. This information can be used to adjust staffing levels to match peak times and help the concierge and kiosks provide a quick option for simple matters. Going forward, the review has helped inform the development of a contemporary redesign for the foyer area which will start construction in late 2020. The finished foyer will be not only be a much nicer place for customers and staff, but it will help us provide a more efficient service. Building on previous work, the online application system for Road Reserve Opening Permits has been permanently implemented. This system has increased visibility of applications and associated work, resulting in:

- correct application processing has increased bond compliance by 86%
- greater ability to prevent unauthorised works
- reduced costs associated with correction of unauthorised works
- better management of the risks associated with excavation works occurring in our road reserves, and
- improved ability to identify those responsible for undertaking works.



OUR AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

DURING 2019-20, COUNCIL'S EFFORTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS HAVE BEEN RECOGNISED IN NUMEROUS WAYS.

Civic Risk Mutual Excellence in Risk Management Award

Council's City Services department received the Civic Risk Mutual Excellence in Risk Management Award for the development and implementation of a Street and Park Tree Management Plan. The plan offers a defendable risk-based approach to tree management and fosters a reduction in reactive tree maintenance requests. It also supports appropriate tree species selection within the road reserve to reduce the need for other works.

Local Government NSW Excellence in Environment Award

Council's City Services department received both the Category C and Overall Division Awards for Asbestos Management at Local Government NSW's Excellence in the Environment Awards. Sponsored by SafeWork NSW, the award recognised the excellence of our 'all of Council' Asbestos Management Framework to address asbestos matters in Council-owned buildings, parks and open spaces.

National Growth Areas Alliance Congress Awards

Council received three awards at the National Growth Areas Alliance 2019 Congress:

Partnerships Building Connections

Council received this award for the Penrith Health Action Plan - a collaboration between Council, the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, and the Greater Western Aboriginal Health Service that aims to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of communities and residents in Penrith City.

Advocacy

Council received this award for our Advocacy Strategy and Implementation Plan, which have allowed Council to provide compelling evidence to support campaigns for additional infrastructure. Our desire to become good advocates on behalf of our community is now recognised by other levels of government and City stakeholders alike.

Leadership in Growth Areas

Nathan Burbridge, Council's City Economy and Marketing Manager, was Highly Commended for his work on the Executive Committee of the NGAA, demonstrating leadership through the guidance and support he has given the Executive Officer and his enthusiasm in championing the NGAA within Council and NSW more broadly.

Certificate of Appreciation Award – Australian Defence Force

This award, from the Australian Defence Force, was presented in appreciation of our support during the 2019-2020 Australian bushfire crisis.

Planning Institute Australia (PIA) NSW – Best Planning Idea – Small Project and Hard-Won Victory

Council's Property Development department was recognised by the Planning Institute Australia (PIA) NSW with two awards for its Open Space Reinvestment Project in Erskine Park in the Best Planning Idea – Small Project and Hard-Won Victory categories. This project was then nominated as the NSW entrant for the above two categories in the PIA National Awards for Planning Excellence.

2019 National AUSTSWIM Recognised Swim Centre of the Year

Council's Ripples Leisure Centre was awarded the 2019 National AUSTSWIM Recognised Swim Centre of the Year Award. This is a national governing body award that is voted on across all states for public and private providers, with more than 1,000 providers across Australia registered for consideration.

2019 Margaret Hind Memorial Award

The Margaret Hind Memorial Award is for outstanding commitment to the Environmental Health Industry including integrity, work ethic and achievement. Suzie Gates, Environmental Health Administration Officer, was Highly Commended for the 2019 Margaret Hind Memorial Award.



Australasian Reporting Award (ARA) – Gold Award in Annual Reporting

Council was awarded a Gold Award by the ARA for its 2018-19 Annual Report. This is the fifth consecutive year our Annual Report has been awarded a Gold Award for reporting excellence.

LG NSW Excellence Awards - Oxley Park Door Knock Project

The Oxley Park Door Knock Project was Highly Commended in the Community Development and Services (population over 100,000) category of the LG NSW Excellence Awards. While working with the Oxley Park community, the Waste Services team discovered a communication disconnect between residents and Council. During the project, the team visited over 700 properties and met with a large cross-section of residents to gain valuable insights about local waste issues. The program resulted in residents feeling heard about issues important to them, and greatly improved communication between Council and the community.

LG NSW Excellence Awards –Journey to Remuneration, Reward and Recognition Excellence

Council's Journey to Remuneration, Reward and Recognition Excellence received the Excellence in People and Culture (population over 60,000) category at the 2020 Local Government Professionals Excellence Awards. The award acknowledges our journey following the 2017 Employee Engagement Survey to become an employer of choice and an industry leader in remuneration, benefits and recognition. It also celebrates a range of significant policy improvements and initiatives, with more information included in the Corporate and Governance section of this report.

RECOGNISING OUR COMMUNITY

2020 Australia Day Awards

Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)

Captain of the Orchard Hills Rural Fire Brigade, the late **Greg Speed**, received an OAM for his service to the community.

Kingswood resident and St John Ambulance volunteer, **Malcolm Towle** was recognised for his service to the community.

Paralympic athlete and medalist, **Erik Horrie** received an OAM for service to the rowing community.

Former President and current Treasurer of the Nepean District Tennis Association, **Dennis Sales**, was recognised with an OAM for his dedication to the sport.

Penrith resident **Jose Relunia** received an OAM for his service to the Philippine community.

Former Penrith Citizen of the Year, **Ross Hutchison**, was also recognised with an OAM for community service through his charity the Ross Hutchison Foundation, involvement in Rotary and many other community commitments.





Council Awards

Council also recognised the community work of five local residents and two outstanding community groups at a special Australia Day function on 22 January 2020.

Citizen of the year Malcolm Robar

Penrith Local Appreciation Award Jose Relunia OAM

Penrith Local Appreciation Award lan West

Penrith Local Appreciation Award Robert Rigby

Penrith Local Appreciation Award Cherise Terry-Jongejans

Penrith Community Group Award Mama Lana's Community Foundation

Penrith Community Group Award Penrith Giants' Kickability

Queen's Birthday Honours

Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)

President of the Sydney Speleological Society, John Bonwick of Emu Plains was recognised for his service to caving and casting.

South Penrith resident and Chair for the Penrith City Children's Services Cooperative, **Max Friend** was honoured for his devotion to children services

The late **Lynette Vaak**, formerly of Emu Plains, was recognised for her advocacy and service to women and girls.

Special Mentions (both received OAMs)

Although these individuals are not Penrith residents, they have made significant contributions to our City.

Lisa Beehag was recognised for service to netball.

Barry Smith received his OAM for services to Local Government.



PENRITH CITY COUNCIL • Annual Report 2019 -20

OUR HISTORY

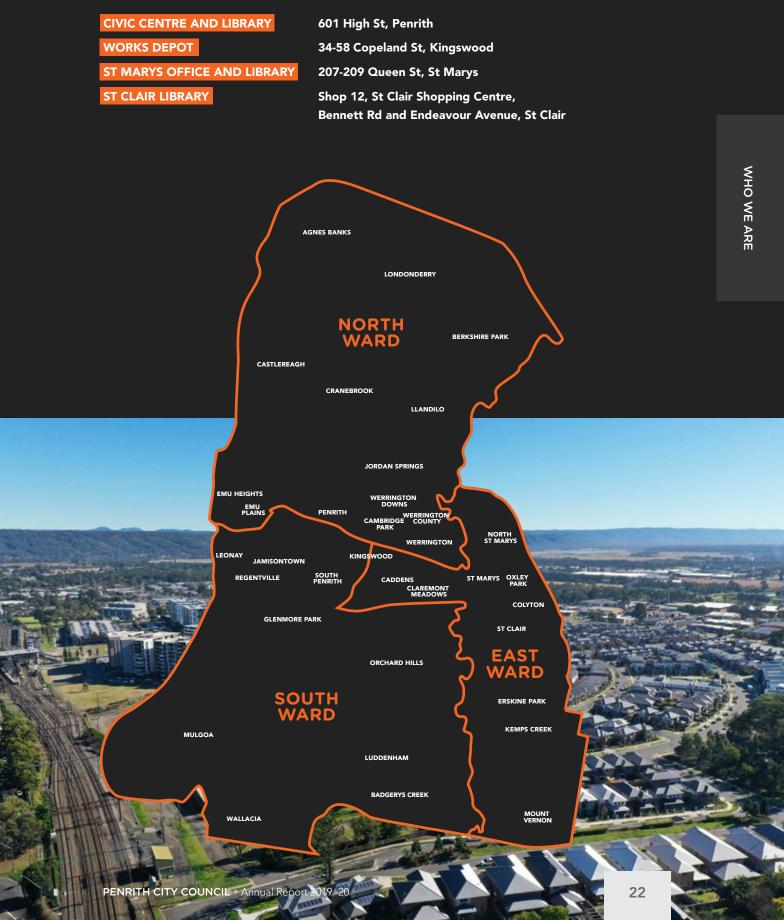
Indigenous Australians lived in Penrith for tens of thousands of years beforehand, but our written history of the area begins on 26 June 1789.

Before this time, within the present boundaries of the City of Penrith there were around 1,000 Aboriginal people living close to watercourses such as South Creek and the Nepean River. Local clans included the Gomerrigal, who lived in the vicinity of South Creek; the Boorooberongal, who lived from Castlereagh to the Hawkesbury; and the Mulgowie who lived along the Nepean River and in the lower Blue Mountains from Mulgoa to Penrith and Emu Plains. Each clan lived within a defined area and came together for special ceremonies. People lived in open campsites and gunyahs, which were traditional dwellings. Eighteen months after the landing of the First Fleet, in June 1789 a party of men led by Captain Watkin Tench set out to explore this area. After a day's travel West, Tench laid eyes on the broad expanse of the Nepean River, near the spot where the M4 Motorway Bridge is today. He later wrote, "We found ourselves on the banks of a river, nearly as broad as the Thames at Putney and apparently of great depth". The party could not cross the river, so travelled north along the bank for a short distance, observing signs of Aboriginal daily life as they walked. Phillip later named the river after Sir Evan Nepean, the Under-Secretary of State in the Home Office, who played a pivotal role in organising the First Fleet.

The colonial settlers commenced local government within the City of Penrith in 1843, with the formation of district councils. Incorporation of the town of Penrith in 1871 was followed by St Marys (1890), Castlereagh (1895), Mulgoa (1893) and Nepean Shire (1913). On 1 January 1949, all of these local government authorities amalgamated to form Penrith Municipal Council. Ten years later the Municipality of Penrith was proclaimed a City.

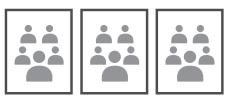
OUR AREAS OF OPERATION

Council operates out of four primary sites located across the Local Government Area (LGA). These locations are:

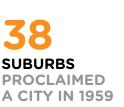




KEY FEATURES



3 ELECTORAL WARDS 15 Councillors (5 per ward)





Solar power systems across Council owned facilities





OUR COUNCILLORS

The Penrith Local Government Area (LGA) is made up of three wards, with five Councillors representing each ward. Our current Councillors were elected in September 2016 with two elected in a May 2018 by-election. Together, the 15 Councillors represent the interests of our community and the Penrith region. They will serve until the next Local Government elections in September 2021. A new Mayor is elected every two years and a Deputy Mayor every year.

Each of our Councillors brings a wealth of knowledge to the role. While each Councillor represents a particular ward, their ultimate consideration must be the current and future interests of the City as a whole.



Our Mayor

North Ward

Councillor

Councillor Ross Fowler OAM



ross@rossfowler.com.au

Cr Ross Fowler OAM is a third generation

representative in local government, following in the footsteps of his late father Bernie, a former Mayor of Penrith City and his grandfather John, who was an Alderman on Mulgoa Municipal Council.

A long-term local resident, Cr Fowler is in his seventh consecutive term on Council after first being elected in 1991. He served as Mayor in 1995-1996, 2013, 2014 and was again elected Mayor for two years in 2018. He also served as Deputy Mayor in 2015.

Cr Fowler holds a Bachelor of Commerce, is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, a registered Company Auditor and Tax Agent and is the Principal of a Chartered Accountancy firm in Penrith. He has represented Council on CivicRisk West (formerly Westpool) – the local government insurance and risk management mutual – since 1991 and has been Chairman of its Board of Directors since 1994.

Cr Fowler was instrumental in securing the Whitewater venue for Penrith in the lead-up to the 2000 Olympics, and has been Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company which operates the facility since its incorporation in 1999.

He is an executive member of the Boards of Penrith Performing & Visual Arts Ltd and Penrith City Children's Services Cooperative, and also represents Council on the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee. His extensive financial acumen has been of great benefit to Council.

Cr Fowler's goal is to help support a strong local economy and ensure Council remains in a sound financial position to best meet the needs and expectations of residents and rate payers.

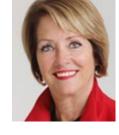
Outside his duties as a Councillor, he has been a volunteer Director of the Australian Foundation for Disability (AFFORD) since 2004 and is currently Chairman of its Board of Directors. He is a member of St Marys Rotary Club, having held positions including president, club service director, community service director, secretary and treasurer. He is also the President of the Board of Trustees for Blaxland Crossing Rest and Recreation Ground Land Manager at Wallacia. He enjoys time with his family, gardening and local history.

Our Deputy Mayor

Councillor Karen McKeown OAM South Ward Councillor

karen.mckeown @penrith.city

Cr Karen McKeown OAM was elected to Council in 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016,



served as Mayor in 2015-2016 and as Deputy Mayor in 2006-07 and from 23 September 2019.

She holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from WSU Majoring in Management with double sub-majors in Law & Employee Relations and the Executive Certificate for Elected Members from UTS. She is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees.

Cr McKeown is active in many community organisations and committees including the Australian Local Government Women's Association NSW.

Cr McKeown is also currently a Councillor on Hawkesbury River County Council, Director of Penrith Performing & Visual Arts, a member of the Penrith CBD Corporation Board, Local Traffic Committee, Chair of Council's Resilience and Multicultural Committees, Chair of the Community Recovery Taskforce, and a Director of Local Government NSW and Local Government Super.

Cr McKeown is one of Council's Sustainability Champions and represents Council and the City on environmental topics. She is also passionate about ending homelessness and providing a voice for our growing multicultural community.

North Ward Councillors

Councillor Marcus Cornish

marcus.cornish@penrith.city

Cr Marcus Cornish represents Council on various committees including Floodplain Management Australia and Hawkesbury River County Council, Director of Penrith Whitewater Stadium



and as Chair of the Heritage Advisory Committee. He has also served on Council's Access Committee, as Council's representative on the Roads and Traffic Advisory Committee and as an Alternate Director on WSROC.

Cr Cornish believes that Penrith Council is there to represent the interests of the people of Penrith before all others. He supports democracy and freedom of speech, free from political correctness.

Before becoming a Penrith Councillor, Cr Cornish was involved in working on causes on the community's behalf. This included his support for people with disabilities and lobbying for Nepean Hospital upgrades including parking, a cancer ward and a new outreach centre and served 14 years on childcare committees, including seven years in Emu Plains.

Cr Cornish is focused on applying a common-sense, productive and open approach to issues on behalf of local families.

Councillor Kevin Crameri OAM

kevin.crameri @penrith.city



Cr Kevin Crameri OAM was first elected to Council in 1974. He served as Mayor in 1996-97, 2009-10 and 2010-

11, and as Deputy Mayor in 1988-89.

He has lived in the local area since he was six years old and is actively involved in many local committees and groups, including as a member and former Deputy Captain of the Llandilo brigade of the Rural Fire Service and the Nepean District Historical Society. Cr Crameri is a qualified fitter machinist, chainsaw operator and tool maker. He received his Order of Australia medal (OAM) in 1999 for service to local government and the community. He is a dedicated husband, father and grandfather, and in any spare time he enjoys swimming, fishing and working with his horses.

Cr Crameri is particularly committed to good communication with the community and making the City an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. He is also a Justice of the Peace.

Councillor John Thain

john.thain@penrith.city

Cr John Thain has been a Penrith City Councillor since 1999. He served as Mayor in 2005-06 and 2016-18 and Deputy Mayor in 2004-05.

Cr Thain has lived in North



St Marys since 1994 and has been involved with several committees, including as Chair and Vice Chair of Hawkesbury River County Council, Chair of Penrith Sports Stadium, and as a member of the Ripples Board and the North St Marys Neighbourhood Committee. From 2016-2018, Cr Thain was the Chair of the Western Sydney City Deal Mayoral Forum.

Cr Thain holds electrical qualifications, is a former senior advisor to a NSW Housing Minister, and is currently Head of Projects at Nordoff Robins Music Therapy.

Cr Thain is a strong advocate for people with disability and of housing diversity and affordability. He is committed to building strategic alliances and partnerships to deliver Council's vision for Penrith as a sustainable and vibrant city.

Councillor Aaron Duke

aaron.duke@penrith.city

Cr Aaron Duke was elected to Penrith Council in 2016 at the age of 25. He has a keen interest in social justice and community and decided to run for Council to be a



voice for progressive ideas and forward thinking in Penrith. He has a particular interest in ensuring young people are represented in Council's decision making processes.

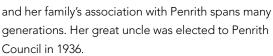
Cr Duke has lived in Penrith for more than 12 years. He holds a Bachelor of International and Global Studies from the University of Sydney and completed his Juris Doctor at the University of Technology Sydney in 2016. He believes Council should stand up for our community against unfair decisions made by the state government.

East Ward Councillors

Councillor Robin Cook

robin.cook@penrith.city

Cr Robin Cook was elected to Penrith Council at a by-election in May 2018. Cr Cook has lived in the Penrith area for 37 years



Cr Cook is passionate about maintaining the balance between development and the protection of our local environment, particularly the Nepean River. She also has a deep respect for the Indigenous peoples of the area, and is developing a deeper resolve to advocate for members of the community that are disenfranchised.

Councillor Tricia Hitchen

tricia.hitchen@penrith.city

Cr Tricia Hitchen is a highly decorated former Commissioned Police Officer. She has been on Council since 2012 and was elected as Deputy Mayor in September 2016 and 2017.



Cr Hitchen represents Council on the Access Committee, Penrith Aquatic and Leisure Centres (Ripples) and the St Marys Town Centre Board. As the mother of a special needs child, Cr Hitchen is a strong advocate for people with disabilities, accessibility and equity. She and her husband run a removal and storage business in Emu Plains. Cr Hitchen is also a Board member of the Haven Women's Refuge.

Councillor Todd Carney

todd.carney@penrith.city

Cr Todd Carney was born and raised in Western Sydney. He has lived in Glenmore Park since 2003 with his wife Sharon. Together they have three children, Zach, Lily and Indie.



After starting his apprenticeship at the age of 16, Cr Carney worked as a heavy vehicle mechanic for 12 years. He is currently a Service Manager for a crane manufacturer in Western Sydney.

Cr Carney also worked as an electorate officer in the Office of David Bradbury MP for six years, advocating for Western Sydney and helping local residents on a daily basis.

Councillor Bernard Bratusa bernard.bratusa @penrith.city

Cr Bernard Bratusa has been a local resident since 1980 and was first elected to Council in 2012.



Cr Bratusa and his wife Katheryne have raised three children, and now proudly boast the addition of two grandchildren, Alfie and Luka.

Bernard is proud to call Penrith home, believing the City's future is positive and unlimited in terms of opportunities.

Supporting local businesses, creating employment, respecting our heritage, and protecting our rural villages are key priorities for Bernard.

Bernard believes Penrith remains the big little town he fell in love with 40 years ago, blessed with good people and where dreams become reality.

Councillor Greg Davies

greg.davies@penrith.city

Cr Greg Davies has been a Penrith City Councillor since 1995. He has served three terms as Mayor, 2002-04, 2007-08 and



2011-12, and four terms as Deputy Mayor, 2001-02, 2003-04, 2014-15 and 2018-19.

He was awarded the title of Emeritus Mayor, and is a Life Member of the Australian Labor Party. Cr Davies worked in local government for 27 years before taking up a position as electorate officer to Mulgoa MP, Diane Beamer.

Cr Davies represents Council on the Regional Strategic Alliance committee, and is on the Board of Ripples Aquatic Centre. Previously, Cr Davies was Chair of the Penrith Valley Community Safety Partnership and was on the Board of the Whitewater Stadium. He also held an executive position on the Local Government Association of NSW and is a past board member of Nepean Community College and Penrith Emus Rugby Union Club.

Cr Davies was born in Lalor Park, Blacktown but has lived in St Clair for many years. He is strongly committed to working in partnership with community, business, government and other groups, and is particularly concerned with issues like planning for sustainable local jobs, housing and transport.

South Ward Councillors

Councillor Jim Aitken OAM

jim@jimaitken.com.au

Cr Jim Aitken OAM was elected to Penrith City Council in 1995 and was reelected in 1999, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016. Cr Aitken



was Penrith's Mayor in 2008-09 and Deputy Mayor in 2010-11 and 2013-14.

He has lived in the local area for more than 50 years and is a patron of many sporting and community organisations. Cr Aitken is also a successful businessman and employs more than 100 people through the Jim Aitken Group, which includes eight real estate offices and three restaurants. He is a member of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee and the Penrith Flood Advisory Consultative Committee. He is also a Floodplain Management Australia committee member. Cr Aitken is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management and was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1998 for "service to the community of the Penrith district, particularly through youth welfare and service organisations and to local government".

Councillor Brian Cartwright

brian.cartwright @penrith.city

Cr Brian Cartwright was elected to Penrith City Council at a by-election in May 2018.



Cr Cartwright has lived and worked in the Penrith area for 30 years and is passionate about his local community. He has extensive management experience gained during his three decades with the Royal Australian Airforce, in the private sector and as a small business owner.

Penrith continues to grow and develop at a rapid pace and Cr Cartwright is a strong advocate for delivering the right services at the right time, with minimal impact on residents and businesses. He also understands the importance of quality sporting fields and facilities and will be keenly pursuing the continued investment in these facilities for our growing City.

Councillor Mark Davies mark.davies@penrith.city

Cr Mark Davies was first elected to Penrith City Council in 2004 and served as Mayor in 2012-13. He is passionate about attracting



investment to the City, boosting the local economy and creating more jobs for residents.

Before joining Council, Cr Davies worked as a broadcast technician in the television industry and currently runs a small business, Tech-Dry Building Products. Clr Davies is married to the Hon. Tanya Davies MP, Member for Mulgoa. In his spare time, he enjoys photography and playing the guitar.

Councillor Kath Presdee

kath.presdee@penrith.city

Cr Kath Presdee has lived in Penrith since 2001 and believes it is Sydney's best kept secret. She served as a Penrith Councillor from 2008-12 and was re-elected in 2016.



Cr Presdee is a solicitor specialising in industrial and employment law and is currently a legal officer with the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union. Her previous role was with a large national law firm and she has also worked in education and skills policy with the federal and state government.

She is a member of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement and Resilience Committees, and represents Council on the Boards of the Penrith Performing & Visual Arts Ltd and the Penrith City Children's Services Co-operative. In her first term on Council, Cr Presdee was also a member of the Board of Penrith Whitewater Stadium.

Cr Presdee's key priority is to build a strong and resilient city; in particular attracting and retaining smart and sustainable jobs.

OUR COMMUNITY'S VOICE

HOW WE'RE COMMUNICATING



PROJECTS SHAPED BY OUR COMMUNITY

We want everyone to be involved in the decisions made about our City. This year we listened to our community to shape projects such as



STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

We understand the importance of building strong relationships with our community and stakeholders, that's why this year we've been working to create the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Framework. The goal is to create a streamlined approach to engagement across all Council departments to ensure consistency, transparency and effectiveness in all our engagement activities. The Framework is the collaborative effort of a select group of experts within Council who are passionate about improving our approach to engagement and fulfilling our Customer Promise. The Framework is currently in its testing phase and is set to launch officially later this year.

WHO WE ARE

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Penrith Volunteer Expo

To improve our understanding of ways Council can support more people to volunteer.

Grandparents Day Event

To evaluate the effectiveness of the event in achieving outcomes for partners and participants and inform the planning of Grandparents Day 2020.

Reimagine Ageing Festival

To engage with participants in the 2020 Reimagine Ageing activities and evaluate the effectiveness of the festival in achieving outcomes related to increasing social connection, building the capacity of the community to stay healthy and well and connecting older people to local services.



Day of Peace

To provide opportunities for the community to bring together different faiths and promote peace and harmony and to provide opportunity for cultural awareness and cultural exchange with diverse communities.

International Day of People with Disability

To increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability in the community.



Bright Nights Kingswood

To provide local residents with a positive experience after dark in response to local community safety concerns.

Kingswood Park Arts

To work with young people in Kingswood Park to create new public artworks at Illawong Ave Reserve.

Create and Chat

Women living, working or studying in Kingswood had the opportunity to attend six weekly craft events to help build a sense of community and belonging, build their confidence in public spaces, and encourage communication with Council regarding safety concerns.

Kingswood Gateway Project

To create new public art in Kingswood reflecting the pride and esteem of local residents.

Penrith Stories

An online engagement campaign focused on showcasing stories of Penrith's resilience and community spirit during COVID-19.



Village Café

To engage with residents to identify what support, information or activities would support local community wellbeing, to provide an opportunity for social connection, and to connect residents with local services providers and access to fresh and healthy food.



Good Neighbour

To support our community (both residents and businesses) to connect with people in their local neighbourhood.

St Marys Kid

A theatre play produced in 1978 developed in collaboration between professional theatre practitioners and young people of St Marys. Q Theatre is trying to revive the original play by reconnecting with community of St Marys.

Keep up to date with the latest Council-run and supported events in Penrith at penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/upcoming-events

OPPORTUNITIES TO JOIN THE CONVERSATION IN 2020-21



COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2033

- ▶ TENCH RESERVE
 - CITY PARK
 - SOPER PLACE
- PLAYGROUND UPGRADES

Learn more about ongoing and future projects at yoursaypenrith.com.au

INTERPRETING ASSISTANCE

ENGLISH	If you do not understand this, please contact the Telephone Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to contact Penrith City Council on your behalf on (02) 4732 7777. Or come to the Council offices and ask for an interpreter.
ARABIC	إذا لم يكن بامكانك قراءة النص أعلاه. الرجاء الاتصال بخدمات الترجمة الفورية الهاتفية (TIS) على الرقم 450 131 والطلب منهم الاتصال بدورهم بجلس مدينة بنريث نيابة عنك على الرقم 7777 4732 (02) . أو بمكنك الخضور إلى المجلس وطلب ترتيب مترجم فوري لك .
CHINESE	如果您无法阅读这些文字,请致电 131 450 联系电话传译服务中心,请他 们代您拨打 (02) 4732 7777 联系 Penrith 市议会。您也可以亲自到市议会来 并要求获得口译服务。
GREEK	Αν δεν μπορείτε να το διαβάσετε αυτό, τηλεφωνήστε στην Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων στο 131 450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το Δήμο Penrith (Penrith City Council) για λογαριασμό σας στον αριθμό (02) 4732 7777, ή ελάτε στη Δημαρχία και ζητήστε διερμηνέα.
HINDI	यद आिप इसे नहीं पढ़ पाते हैं, तो कृपया 131 450 पर टेलीफोन दुभाषयिा सेवा से संपरक करें और उनसे कहें कवि आपकी ओर से पेनरथि सटिी काउंसलि से (02) 4732 7777 पर संपर्क करें. या आप काउंसलि आएँ और एक दुभाषयि की माँग करें.
ITALIAN	Se non riuscite a leggere questo, contattate il servizio telefonico di inter- pretariato al numero 131 450 e chiedetegli di contattare da parte vostra il comune di Penrith City al numero (02) 4732 7777 oppure venite in comune e richiedete un interprete.
MALTESE	Jekk ma tistax taqra dan, jekk jogħġbok, ikkuntattja lit-Telephone Interpret- ing Service fuq 131 450 u itlobhom biex jikkuntattjaw Penrith City Council f'ismek fuq (02) 4732 7777. Jew ejja l-Kunsill u itlob għal interpretu.
PERSIAN	اگر نمی توانید این مطلب را بخوانید، لطفاً به خدمات ترجمه تلفنی به شماره 131 450 زنگ بزنید و از آنان بخواهید با شورای شهر پنریث Penrith City Council به شمار ه 7777 4732 (02) از جانب شما تماس بگیرند. یا اینکه به شهرداری Council آمده و مترجم بخواهید.
SINGHALESE	ඔබට මෙය කියවීමට නොහැකි නම්, කරුණාකර දූරකථන අංක 131 450 ඔස්සේ දූරකථන පරිවර්තන ය ස්වාව (Telephone Interpreting Service) අමතා ඔබ වෙනුවෛන් දූරකථන අංක (02) 4732 7777 අමතා පෙන්රිත් නගර සභාව (Penrith City Council) හා සම්බන්ධ කර දෙන ලෙස ඉල්ලා සිට්න්න. නැතිනම් නගර සභාව වෙත පැමිණ භාෂා පරිවර්තකයකු ලබා දෙන ලෙස ඉල්ලා සිටින්න.
TAMIL	இதை உங்களால் வாசிக்க இயலவில்லை என்றால், 'தொலைபேசி உரைபெயர்ப்பு சேவை யை 131 450 எனும் இலக்கத்தில் அழைத்து 'பென்ரித் நகரவை யுடன் (02) 4732 7777 எனும் இலக்கத்தில் உங்கள் சார்பாக தொடர்பு கொள்ளுமாறு கேளுங்கள். அல்லது நகரவைக்கு விஜயம் செய்து உரைபெயர்ப்பாளர் ஒருவர் வேண்டுமெனக் கேளுங்கள்.
VIETNAMESE	Nếu quý vị không thể đọc được thông tin này, xin liên lạc Dịch Vụ Thông Dịch Qua Điện Thoại ở số 131 450 và yêu cầu họ thay mặt quý vị liên lạc với Hội Đồng Thành Phố Penrith ở số (02) 4732 7777. Hoặc hãy tới Hội Đồng và yêu cầu có thông dịch viên.

CONTACT	DETAILS
Address	Penrith City Council - Civic Centre 601 High Street, Penrith NSW
Phone	(02) 4732 7777
Email	council@penrith.city