

8 Towards Sustainability

'Sustainability' is being able to meet the needs of the present without depleting resources or harming natural cycles for future generations. Planning for environmental sustainability provides a framework which links economic, social, environmental and governance matters.

The awareness and action of the community are vital in achieving sustainable outcomes. Each Council has adopted measures to ensure operations are moving towards sustainability, and run programs for the community aimed at achieving environmental sustainability across a range of issues such as water conservation, biodiversity management, sustainable transport, energy reduction, waste avoidance and minimisation.

This chapter builds on the previous chapters by providing further detail on community and corporate action for sustainability.



Responding to Sustainability Issues

SHOROC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: *Shaping Our Future*

The SHOROC member Councils together developed the *Shaping Our Future* Strategy to strategically shape the way the region will look, feel and grow over the next twenty years. It provides direction for transport, health, housing and jobs for a vibrant sustainable SHOROC region. This regional strategy identifies the priorities for State and Commonwealth Government investment including rapid buses, better roads, a new Hospital, and how to accommodate the extra population, houses and jobs the NSW Government requires for the region in a way that doesn't compromise our way of life or natural environment.

Shaping Our Future aims to address the real challenges facing our region including significant road congestion, limited and inefficient public transport as well as the lack of access to an appropriate and accessible high quality health service. Population is expected to increase by around 30,000 people, an 11% increase over the next 20 years. This growth brings with it targets from the NSW Government to accommodate an additional 22,800 new dwellings and capacity for an additional 20,800 jobs in the SHOROC region, a coastal area which is potentially at risk from climate change.

Our way of life and natural environment are valued highly by the SHOROC community and councils. The principles underpinning SHOROC's *Shaping Our Future* are to maintain and enhance these characteristics as the region grows.



Traffic in the SHOROC Region. Source: Mosman Council



Regional SHOROC Sustainability Plan

Strategies for what is needed regionally in the way of other infrastructure and service delivery to maintain and enhance the region's vibrant way of life and natural environment will be covered by SHOROC's *Shaping Our Future Liveability* and *Shaping Our Future Sustainability*.

The SHOROC sustainability strategy will bring together the extensive range of work that Mosman, Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Councils already do, as well as look regionally for opportunities to take collaborative action to maintain and enhance our region's sustainability and way of life. In development potential for regional opportunities to create more sustainable communities will be explored, with a focus on areas such as transport, health and wellbeing, resource management and the natural environment. These strategies are to be developed for release in 2011/12.

'Health of the Region' Indicators Project

The SHOROC member Councils are in the process of developing 'health of the region' indicators to help track how Councils are progressing towards sustainability, as well as how regional strategies are progressing to improve our region's way of life. Indicators will be grouped under themes such as community wellbeing, resource management, employment and natural environment.

Regional Sustainable Purchasing

SHOROC supports the principles of sustainable procurement and pursues the specific objective of purchasing products and services that are socially, ecologically and financially sustainable. All member Councils are members of the LGSA's Sustainable Choice Program and actively seek sustainable alternatives in the sourcing of goods and services. As a regional body SHOROC has developed a comprehensive Sustainable Purchasing Policy that is applicable to all procurement activities carried out by the SHOROC purchasing group.

SHOROC's approach towards sustainable procurement aspires to a number of corporate and community benefits including, but not limited to:

- reductions in the use of energy, water and other natural resources
- cost reductions and avoidances
- reductions in production of waste and pollution
- reduced environmental and human health impacts of products and services purchased
- supporting the development of environmentally friendly products and the associated marketplace
- improving the viability of recycling, and
- support equity, fairness and the removal of discrimination in all procurement activities.

SHOROC Sustainability Forum

The SHOROC member Councils supported a SHOROC Conference in October 2009, hosted by Warringah Council as part of the Narrabeen Lagoon Creating a Sustainable Catchment Grant Project. The Conference was aimed at supporting the SHOROC member Councils in their commitment in establishing, promoting and maintaining a culture of sustainability and environmental responsibility within each council, inter-council, amongst staff and the community. This was to be achieved by bringing together staff representatives from the SHOROC member Councils to share their experiences and knowledge about sustainability not only within the community but within council governance as well. The conference was centred on three key sustainability themes, comprising: (i) embedding sustainability and identifying local indicators; (ii) examining process improvement; and (iii) showcasing regional projects. Interactive workshops followed session allowing participants to interact and identify key elements of sustainability as they related to the topic. A highlight of the conference was the third session - 'Showcasing Regional Projects' where five regional projects were showcased to demonstrate success in sustainability.

There were 106 conference delegates including attendees from SHOROC member Councils, external organisations and regional councils and such as Willoughby, Hornsby, Hunter's Hill and Fairfield City, as well as Northern Sydney TAFE, SCMMA, Local Government and Shires Association, Local Government Managers Australia, University of Technology Sydney, SCCG and the NSW Environmental Trust. Positive evaluation reports show that the participants gained valuable knowledge from sharing their ideas and experiences and the conference has forged effective partnerships between various councils. Ninety-six percent of respondents stated they will implement more sustainable workplace practices as a result of the conference and will explore new sustainability initiatives that were presented by conference delegates. Since the conference there are five newly formed SHOROC regional project groups that are demonstrating their commitment to regional collaboration by devising new projects and working towards regional sustainability.



*Winner Sustainability in Landscaping.
Source: Pittwater Council*

Delivering Local Responses

Manly Council

Sustainability and Climate Change Committee

The Sustainability and Climate Change Committee (SCCC), one of Council's special purpose advisory committees, continued to meet this reporting year. The SCCC has provided valuable strategic input into some of Council's projects and plans that relate to sustainability and climate change. A few examples include the Education for Sustainability Program, the Carbon Emissions Reduction Project and implementation monitoring of the Manly Sustainability Strategy.

Manly Sustainable Business Awards

The Manly Sustainable Business Awards Program was conducted for its fourth year in March 2010. This initiative expands upon and replaces the annual Green Business Awards Program that was run by Council for 11 years. Manly Sustainable Business Awards looks at business management across the triple bottom line: social, economic and environmental. The aim of the Awards Program is to promote corporate responsibility within the local business sector and provide community acknowledgement for outstanding sustainable business management. In 2010 awards were offered under six categories: Water Use Management, Waste Management, Energy Efficiency, Fair Trade, Contribution to Local Community and Excellence in Sustainable Business Management.

Manly Sustainability Fair 2010

In June 2010 Manly Council held its fourth annual Sustainability Fair on Manly Corso, integrated within the Manly Food and Wine and Sustainability Festival. "Green Up Your Life" was the theme, sending out the message that sustainability can and needs to be incorporated into all aspects of people's lives. The Fair showcased sustainable lifestyle products, technologies and practices such as eco-shopping, sustainable gardening and sustainable building design. Thousands of people attended the event, making it the most successful of Manly's Sustainability Fairs to date.



Green Up Your Life! Sustainable Living Program

The *Green Up Your Life!* Sustainable Living Program is an education for sustainability initiative designed to engage, educate, empower and inspire the local community in the face of climate change and an increasing need for individuals, communities and countries to be rapidly shifting towards a sustainable way of life. The program is comprised of:

1. practical workshops (a minimum of 1 per month)
2. 'Swap to Shop' events, e.g. Clothes Swaps (quarterly)
3. documentary screenings at the local cinema on issues pertaining to sustainability (quarterly)
4. promotion of Manly Council's Sustainability Events e.g. Sustainability Fair and Fair Trade Markets

The purpose of the documentary screenings and Swap to Shop events are to engage a new, larger and more diverse crowd beyond the usual suspects and the workshops are to provide practical advice on how to take those next steps once engaged. It has proven a great success having had the participation of just under 1000 people from the community since its inception in September 2009 (not including participation in the Sustainability Fair or Fair Trade Markets).

Fair Trade

In September 2008, Manly Council officially received Fair Trade Accreditation from the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand (FTAANZ) making Manly NSW's first Fair Trade Community.

As part of Manly Council's commitment to Fair Trade, Council ran two Fair Trade Markets during the reporting year. Council's seventh Fair Trade market, a Christmas market, was held on 28 November 2009, and the eighth Manly Fair Trade Market on May 8 2010, during Fair Trade Fortnight. A range of Fair Trade vendors were showcased along with entertainment, kid's activities, Fair Trade coffee and chocolate.

Many local enterprises have moved towards fair-trade certified products, highlighting the successful continued growth of the Fair Trade Program and were presented with awards from the Mayor, Councillor Jean Hay. These local enterprises included: Arlingtons, Barefoot, Cafe La Bas, Candys, Forty Beans, Harris Farm, Ironbark, Manly Health Foods, Oxfam, The Village Grocer and Wild Bean Cafe.

Starfish Food Safety Hygiene Rating System

Council's Starfish Food Safety Hygiene Rating system was revised to incorporate sustainability targets for waste reduction and re-use, recycling practices, electricity and water conservation and sustainable purchasing. Two hundred and fifty one food businesses were audited during the reporting period and were advised on available improvement measures.



Manly Swap to Shop Event. Source: Manly Council.

The Manly Environment Centre

The Manly Environment Centre (MEC) acts as an environmental resource and research centre, an advocate and environmental educator. The shop front houses more than 30,000 publications and other resources, the largest collection of environmental education materials accessible to the community in Australia. Information is provided to people, empowering them to take action and make lifestyle choices which will create positive outcomes for themselves, the wider community (locally and globally) and the environment. The MEC hosted numerous international and national interns, and school students doing work experience and Duke of Edinburgh.

In 2009/10 the MEC held a range of events including festivals, art exhibitions open house and garden events. The MEC celebrated international days and years, annual festivals and national events like the Guringai and Manly Arts Festival, Earth Day, National Science Week, Sustainable House Day and Ocean Care Day and also organised numerous educational programs, and projects to protect and enhance the environment and to inspire and lead the community.

The MEC hosted the first Lagoon Life Festival as part of National Science Week. This festival highlighted Manly and Warringah Council's lagoon projects aimed at improving the health of the lagoon as well as celebrating the community achievements over the last 20 years.

Mosman Council

Sustainable Purchasing

During 2009/10 Council continued to investigate and research sustainable products. In May/June 2010 Council commenced the purchase of 100% recycled envelopes. The envelopes are brown with the Council Footprint logo on the front as a reminder to the community to reduce Mosman's ecological footprint. The rates notice was the first large community mailout with the new 100% recycled envelopes.

During 2009/10 Council also worked on sustainable specifications for inclusion in Council's procurement policy.

I Love My Planet @ Mosman Library

In the April 2010 school holidays Mosman Library went green, coming up with ways to show kids how to have fun and think about the future of the planet. The Library celebrated a Fair Trade Easter, sourcing Fair Trade chocolate eggs to hand out at Easter events, including two story time sessions, a craft activity and the annual teen Chocolate Festival. Other holiday activities included an I Love My Planet sculpture competition, where kids were challenged to make a statue of themselves using only recycled materials from around their home, a craft activity making shimmering mobiles out of recycled items, and a performance by Mic Conway in his musical Rubbish Show. It was a great success with the Children's Librarian and the Environment Team working closely to provide displays, inspiration for craft activities and prizes for the sculpture competition in the form of miniature wheelie garbage bins, and the children got on board with imaginative ideas on how to reduce, re-use and recycle.



I Love My Planet Sculptures. Source: Mosman Council.



Fair Trade Taste Testing

In accordance with Council's Sustainable Purchasing Action Plan, and Environmental Sustainability Plan, Council has been investigating the purchase of Fair Trade products such as coffee and tea for Council staff use as well as for meetings and events. To gain staff input on the preferred Fair Trade brands, the Environment Team hosted a Fair Trade morning tea on 13 May 2010, which all staff were invited to attend to taste test various brands of Fair Trade tea, coffee and chocolate. Staff were able to vote for their favourites, this data being collated and used to recommend the brands to be purchased by Council.

Keep Cup Program

Approximately 25 Council staff participated in the Keep Cup Program trial to reduce the use of disposable cups. Staff were asked to complete a detailed survey so that accurate data could be obtained on the number of disposable cups being purchased per week, benefits of disposable cups and barriers to purchasing coffee in a reusable cup. Staff that responded to the survey were provided with a Keep Cup and asked to record the number of times the Keep Cup was used each week for a total of four weeks, as well as the number of disposable cups still purchased. E-mail prompts and data on water, energy, waste, and trees saved were provided to staff each week. Over the four week period, staff reduced their use of disposable throw away coffee cups by 77%, and have maintained the usage rate of their Keep Cups since the trial ended. On average per year, by using Keep Cups staff have saved: 3,796 paper cups made from trees, 11kgs of plastic lids, 53kgs of landfill, and 3.9gigajoules of energy.

Worm Farming Workshops for Childcare Centres in Mosman

As part of the Early Childhood Environmental Education Network, many of Mosman's childcare centres have participated in a sustainability planning workshop and worm farming workshops to start reducing their food waste. Three childcare centres with 45 children each daily, have established worm farms and are reducing their food waste going in the waste bin, whilst teaching children the importance of worm farming in reducing organic waste to landfill.

Community Education Workshops

A Kimbriki Tour and Composting Workshop was held on 6 May 2010, as part of International Composting Awareness Week. Approximately 19 Mosman residents participated in the tour and workshop, learning about general ecogardening principles, developing skills to start practicing ecogardening principles at home, and reducing their food waste to landfill, through composting and worm farming, and general waste reduction.

A Balcony Garden Workshop was held on 14 March 2010, with 27 participants. The participants were able to learn about potted gardens and the possibilities for growing their own vegetable patch on their balcony or in a small space.



Balcony Garden Workshop. Source: Mosman Council.

Stormwater/Catchment Education

During 2009/10 Council staff held Stormwater Workshops in collaboration with Lands Edge Education Centre. Approximately 120 high school geography and biology students participated in the workshop which included presentations at Lands Edge Centre, and an excursion along Balmoral Foreshore to educate the students on the catchment area, where the stormwater flows through the catchment, the stormwater infrastructure and how the stormwater quality improvement devices work in capturing gross pollutants before they enter the harbour.

Council also held a brief 30 minute session with two Year 1 classes at Sacred Heart Primary School on the Water Cycle, Water Catchments and Water Conservation.

Footprints Program

The Footprints Treading Lightly Program was run as a joint program between Mosman, North Sydney and Willoughby Councils. The aim of the program was to encourage behaviour change towards a more sustainable lifestyle in the 20-40 year age group. The Footprints program was launched on 9 February 2010, with the film screening of the 'Age of Stupid' at Starlight Cinema, North Sydney Oval. Community members signed up to the program at the film launch, as well as via Facebook. The program was promoted to the younger age group via Facebook, websites and twitter, as well as the local media, and at local cafes and pubs/bars. Those that signed up to the program were given a free sustainability assessment of their home and provided with a sustainability report, provided with a free energy power remote, and were able to attend a variety of workshops/events across the three LGA's. Mosman Council hosted an Ecotrivia night on 24 February 2010 at the Hotel Mosman, with the winning group scoring a worm farm and a hamper of organic/Fair Trade products.

Sustainability Workshop for Council Staff

Over one hundred of Council's staff attended a staff sustainability workshop held at the Drill Hall on 3 December 2009. The workshop was undertaken to raise staff awareness of sustainability in the workplace and how it relates to their role. The workshop began with a panel session where staff could ask sustainability questions of panellists. Panellists were staff from across different departments of Council. The second part of the workshop involved a facilitated group session, where each team were asked to respond to two questions around their role in sustainability and what they could achieve in their actual position/team, and what they could do as an individual and group to be more sustainable at work. Each group was facilitated by a member of staff from a different section of Council that had been nominated as 'champions' and trained as facilitators for the workshop. Staff have since provided the Environment Team with sustainable ideas on how to promote sustainable behaviours and make changes to council practices.

Leading Change for Sustainability Program

Mosman Council is participating in a three year grant program in partnership with the DECCW, and five other Councils, namely the City of Sydney, Ku-ring-gai, Wyong, Coffs Harbour and Orange. The program is funded by the NSW Environmental Trust and involves research, delivery and evaluation of community education and engagement projects. A reference group and communities of practice will be set up in each Council to assist in engagement across the Council. Mosman is in the process of delivering an internal sustainability education and engagement project to improve practices and processes within Council and change staff behaviours.



*Mosman Staff Sustainability Workshop.
Source: Mosman Council.*



Pittwater Council

Pittwater Sustainability Principles and Checklist

The "Pittwater Sustainability Principles & Checklist (Part A & B) – Single Dwellings, Alterations & Additions and New Homes" outlines sustainable options and principles for residential design and is intended to be a guide for home owners in regards to building and developing dwellings in a more sustainable manner. This is an aspirational document that presents simple measures to promote a move towards sustainability.

Pittwater Learning for Sustainability Plan Endorsed

Council received a grant through the Environmental Trust to develop an overarching Learning for Sustainability Plan aligned to both the NSW Environmental Education Plan and Pittwater's 2020 Strategic Plan. Pittwater's Learning for Sustainability Plan will guide resource allocation and sustainability education program development within a strategic context and with a clear focus. The Plan will help to make progress towards more sustainable ways of living.

Ongoing Support to the Sustainable Schools Program

Pittwater Council continues to support local schools in their efforts to become more sustainable. Council support includes coordination of the Northern Sydney Region Sustainable Schools Network, enabling teachers across the region to meet quarterly to share their knowledge and experience, and learn from each other. Council assists schools with resource audits in waste, water and energy and in undertaking biodiversity audits of school grounds. Council's environmental education team is closely involved with a number of innovative projects being undertaken regionally and in partnership with other organisations such as the Local Climate Change Learning Community, Cool Kids for a Cool Climate and the Local Ecostudy Project developed by Macquarie ICT Innovations Centre (MacICT) in collaboration with Field of Mars EE Centre and Macquarie University Department of Education.

Pittwater Sustainability Awards

In October 2009 Pittwater's inaugural Sustainability Awards were held. There were three categories where residents and business could demonstrate their commitment to making Pittwater sustainable. These were 'sustainability in design', 'sustainability in business' (both large and small) and 'sustainability in landscaping'. The awards were very competitive and the Award Ceremony was a great success.

Cooee! Newsletter

Pittwater Council publishes a monthly environmental e-newsletter to inform residents of current projects and upcoming events. This newsletter celebrated its one year anniversary in August 2010 and is distributed to over 250 people as well as posted in Council's libraries. Subscription is available via Council's website.

Coastal Environment Centre

The CEC is a regional facility that provides a variety of sustainability education across NSW, inspiring students, parents and the community to protect the environment and live more sustainably. It is a demonstration site for solar power, energy & water efficiency, green waste and biodiversity. The CEC provides weekly tours, workshops, eco-events and educational resources on sustainability issues as well as being open for Sustainable House Day.



Sustainable Schools Program. Source: Pittwater Council

Warringah Council

Living Green Festival

World Environment Day 2010 was a week long celebration with Warringah Council's Living Green Festival. The doors to the Warringah Aquatic Centre opened up for a behind the scenes tour of the fantastic water recycling facilities, Kimbriki provided several hands on workshops in the newly renovated Eco Garden and a bus load of residents took a mystery second hand shopping tour. Adam Spencer presented a unique take on sustainability to a maximum capacity audience as part of the Hilltop to Headland series and residents took part in a spotlighting tour at Narrabeen Lagoon. The festival concluded with the SustainABILITY Markets at Dee Why Beach.

Who Cares About Warringah?

Warringah Council has undertaken an 'Environmental Perceptions Survey', in order to measure the attitudes and behaviours of Warringah residents in terms of environmental issues of concern. A professional market research company was contracted to conduct a telephone survey of the region and responses from 600 residents were sought, which is a statistical representation of the Warringah community. The survey results were compared with overall NSW results from DECCW "Who Cares about the Environment in 2009?" survey. The Environmental Perceptions Survey will help build a framework for a targeted approach to education in relation to sustainability and environmental management issues in the local area.

Hilltop to Headland Sustainability Series

The 2010 Hilltop to Headland series was a phenomenal success with an audience of almost 1000 people attending environmental lectures from top celebrities including Tim Flannery, Jamie Durie, Tanya Ha, Ian Kiernan and Adam Spencer, and a further 1000 downloading the online podcasts to date. Set against the beautiful backdrop of Fisherman's Beach at Long Reef Golf Club, the evenings of entertainment were not only informative but also inspiring. Survey results showed that 99% of audience members found the lectures to be easy to understand and enjoyable and 95% stated that their knowledge of the issues and solutions addressed in the lectures was either slightly or greatly improved.

Fairtrade Awareness

Warringah participated in the 2010 Fair Trade Fortnight by holding two staff awareness sessions at the Civic Centre and the Budgeree Building at Cromer. Over 150 staff sampled a range of Fair Trade coffee, teas, nuts and chocolate as well as receiving information on the benefits of using Fair Trade products. Fair Trade tea and coffee is provided at a number of staff kitchens and meeting rooms and Council is seeking to extend the use of Fair Trade products to other facilities.

Sustainability Champions Program

The Sustainability Champions program, developed in conjunction with Pittwater Council, is designed to increase the capacity of residents to engage in sustainable behaviours that protect and manage the Narrabeen Lagoon catchment area and also build their capacity to 'champion' the sustainability message in the community at a grass-roots level. Round one was implemented between March and June 2010 and was comprised of three free community workshops on waste reduction, energy savings and biodiversity protection. Sixty residents participated in the program and an evaluation showed that 81% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge about energy,



SustainABILITY Markets. Source: Warringah Council



biodiversity or waste has increased since partaking in the workshop. Similarly 76% reported that they felt more comfortable sharing their knowledge with family, friends and the greater community.

Warringah's First Community Garden

Construction has begun on the new Innes Road Park in Manly Vale which will house a leading edge playground and Warringah Council's very first community garden. The official opening of the Manly Vale Park is planned for spring 2010.

The park will be an exciting new community space aimed at bringing children, families and neighbours together to enjoy and learn to live more sustainably. In addition to a playground, is a community garden with a meeting shelter, aptly named 'The Hub', where community workshops will take place on composting, mulching, worm farms, permaculture and plant propagation. The garden will provide a food forest with edible shrubs and trees, community compost bins and a mixture of individual and shared plots. Applications for membership of the community garden are now open.



Manly Vale Community Garden. Source: Warringah Council

Community Based Education and Involvement

Warringah Council has undertaken progress towards a best practice framework for Community Based Education and Involvement by holding learning and development courses in Community Based Social Marketing by Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr and Thematic Interpretation by Professor Sam Ham. These are both internationally recognised methodologies for creating sustainable behaviour change across communities. Community Based Social Marketing is implemented by firstly building capacity within an organisation and then to foster and build capacity in the community for sustainable behaviour change. Thematic Interpretation teaches us that people forget isolated facts. However, if people feel capable and motivated to process and elaborate on the information presented, they are more likely to internalise themes and messages, such as 'through interpretation, understanding; through understanding, appreciation; through appreciation, protection'. This project will empower community members, schools and local business owners to take responsibility and ownership of specific project actions - in particular how to adopt sustainable behaviour in their communities.

Eco News

Warringah Council publishes a quarterly environmental e-newsletter filled with Council events and activities to protect and celebrate Warringah's local environment. Eco News has just celebrated its second birthday and is received by almost 1000 local residents. Subscription is available via Council's website.