

3.8. Streets Alive, Community Garden and HarbourCare update

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ATTACHMENTS: Nil

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update the Environmental Reference Group on the Streets Alive, Community Garden and HarbourCare programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report is to update the Reference Group on the various projects Council has been undertaking within the Streets Alive, Community Garden and HarbourCare programs. As of March 2022, Streets Alive has 408 registered volunteers covering approx. 160 sites within the LGA ranging from small verges to large open spaces within cul de sacs. The Streets Alive program helps promote a sense of ownership and encourages community participation / involvement through offering gardening opportunities for the local community.

Council has eight official Community Garden groups across the LGA which are maintained by community volunteers. They provide a place for volunteers to participate in gardening, help strengthen community bonds and contribute to the development of a sustainable urban environment.

HarbourCare comprises of 21 sites around the LGA. HarbourCare supports volunteers concerned about pollution in Sydney Harbour and its effect on marine and bird life, and who volunteer to cleanup and remove rubbish from our many small beaches.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Budget allocated in the 21/22 financial year

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** the report be received and noted

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

1. Our Living Environment

1.4 Public open space and recreation facilities and services meet community needs

4. Our Social Vitality

4.1 North Sydney is connected, inclusive, healthy and safe

BACKGROUND

Green spaces are an important component within an urban environment. They play an important environmental role (ie. reducing urban heat island effect), provide spaces for physical activity / relaxation and help improve the beauty and aesthetic of the local surrounds.

Council recognises that many of North Sydney's public gardens are already receiving input from adjacent property owners and acknowledges that gardening is a valid and important recreational pursuit.

Streets Alive provides recognition to those residents who already contribute in beautifying the area, while also giving opportunities for those residents to wish to participate in gardening. This is significant especially with the large areas of medium to high-density residential status (ie apartment blocks) within the LGA, where opportunities to partake in gardening are limited.

Both the Streets Alive and Community Garden program promote gardening as a valuable recreational activity which not only enhances Council's assets but provides a platform whereby the local community can form strong bonds and foster a sense of stewardship over public open space.

HarbourCare both formally recognises and supports those volunteers who voluntarily collect rubbish along Council's many small beaches.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

DETAIL

Streets Alive

As of March 2022, the program has 408 registered volunteers covering approx. 160 sites across the LGA. These sites range in size from small verges to large open spaces with varying number of volunteers.

The program encourages residents to partake in recreational gardening while also providing an opportunity for neighbours to meet each other, fostering a sense of community and stewardship. Care is taken to ensure new planting will maintain the existing character of the surrounding area, while also enhancing the aesthetics qualities to the immediate area.

Ernest St, Crows Nest



Before



After – A new Streets Alive green space with perennials and herbs provides the community a place to partake in gardening and connect with neighbouring residents.

Winslow St, Kirribilli



Before – An underutilised green space struggling to grow grass



After – Green space is transformed into a native themed garden by local residents, encouraging a sense of community whilst improving the street's aesthetic.

Community Gardens

Council's Community Garden program plays an important role in fostering a sense of community and providing an educational platform for sustainable gardening practices. North Sydney Council has a total of eight groups across the LGA, with a total of 390 registered volunteers.

Volunteers meet weekly and assist in various gardening duties and tasks through the support of Council, offering an opportunity to learn fundamental gardening techniques whilst also meeting people through a shared interest.



Coal Loader Community gardeners sharing their harvest amongst fellow volunteers

HarbourCare

Council's HarbourCare program supports and recognises volunteers who are concerned about pollution in Sydney Harbour and its effect on marine and bird life. The pandemic and the resulting lockdown / work from home saw a steady increase in HarbourCare volunteers joining the program.

Council has 21 official HarbourCare sites with a total of 65 registered volunteers dedicated in keeping our waterways clean.



A day's collection from a HarbourCare volunteer