

3.1. Imperfect Low Waste Living Program

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ENDORSED BY: Peter Massey, Acting Director Open Space and Environmental Services

ATTACHMENTS: Nil

PURPOSE:

This report provides a program review of the Imperfect Low Waste Living Program that was delivered in 2022.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Imperfect Low Waste Living (ILWL) Program assists residents to significantly reduce their household waste by providing a range of affordable, low-tox and zero or low waste alternatives for common household waste items. It is a wholistic program that focuses on one key area of the house per week, and is designed to fit residents means, ability, energy, access, and time. The intensive four-week program has been running since 2021 and 60 participants have achieved an average of 45% reduction in their household waste.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and evaluation of the most recent 2022 Imperfect Low Waste Living Program.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This project is funded through Council's Environment Levy. The project budget was \$10,000 with the majority of this going towards facilitator costs, staff time and materials for the program participants.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the report regarding the Imperfect Low Waste Living Program be received.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

1. Our Living Environment
- 1.2 Environmentally sustainable community

BACKGROUND

Imperfect Low Waste Living Program was developed from community feedback to provide a more comprehensive Council program to assist residents to reduce their household waste. In response to the community need, a four-week household waste program was developed. The program aims to assist residents to eliminate or significantly reduce their household waste through a combination of online coursework, live online sessions and face-to-face sessions. The (ILWL) program has three core focus areas which are to:

- reducing packaging waste through smarter shopping
- reducing food waste by being kitchen-clever
- reduce toxic load in the home when cleaning by making better choices

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

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

DETAIL

In 2022, thirty North Sydney residents were selected to be part of the ILWL program. The participants were chosen from a selective application process which required each participant to respond to key program criteria that included the need and ability to reduce waste at home, key motivations to reduce their household waste and the capability to complete the coursework and attend all the online and face-to-face sessions.

The project was delivered through a combination of lecture style and hands on workshops, online learning and social media. A Google Group was established and used for group communication, whilst also enabling participants to upload photos and discuss the weekly topics in-between workshops.

Each participant had the opportunity to be involved in hands-on making and creating workshops such as beeswax wraps and soap making, provided a comprehensive learning guide for each module, and over fifty DIY recipes from home cleaning to creating healthy skin-food products and received guided facilitation and group discussion each week. At the end of the program participants will be invited to join the ILWL alumni with exclusive access to future workshops/webinars and events on low waste living.

The program and all the sessions were facilitated by Sarah Tait from Wanderlightly. Sarah is a low waste expert and has spent the last six years working with local Sydney Councils to deliver waste education workshops and programs. Sarah has been involved in the program from conception and assisted in the program design, online course program and mapping out the delivery timeline.

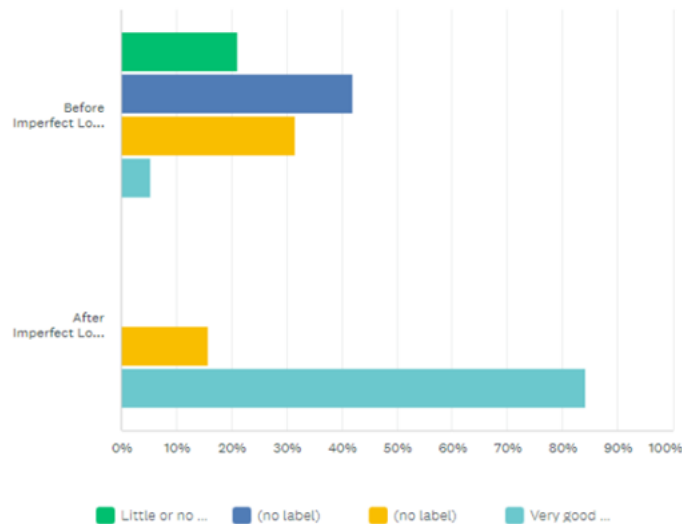
Evaluation

The evaluation results of the program were required to be submitted by each participant after they had completed a pre and post litter audit and submitted all the required coursework and assessments.

The following results were taken directly from the participant evaluation:

On the scale below, please tick the box that corresponds to your level of understanding of low waste living before and after the program.

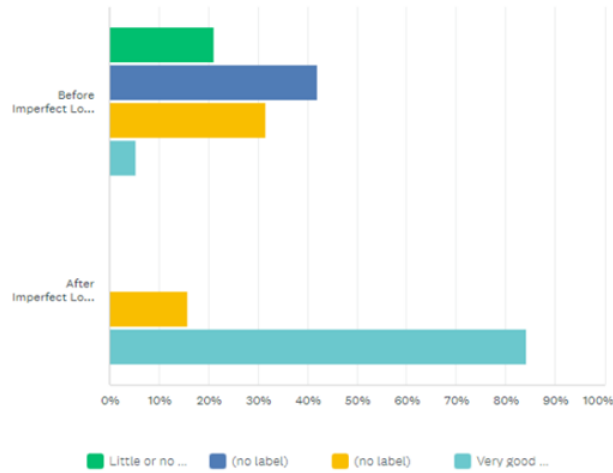
Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



84% of participants indicated that they had a very good understanding of low waste living after the program.

On the scale below, please tick the box that corresponds to your level of understanding of low waste living before and after the program.

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



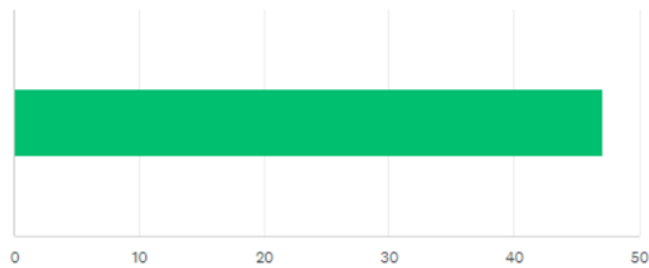
94% of participants indicated that they a very motivated to take their learnings from the program and put them into action

Q4

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Based on your bin audit or visual bin check, how much waste have you been able to reduce during the four week program per week?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
Responses	47	895	19
Total Respondents: 19			

Program participants have averaged a 47% reduction in their household waste after the program

Participant Feedback

- *I have learnt so much from this course. So much to take away and the endless possibilities to make our planet a far better place for us all to savour. Your resources are just so limitless and to know that we are still able to access them even after the course is absolutely welcoming. So much thought must have gone into planning and executing this remarkable course. – Patricia*
- *Thank you again for sharing all of your amazing knowledge with us Sarah and for facilitating such a fantastic course Jordan. I have learnt so much and it was really wonderful to connect with such like-minded souls. – Ella*
- *Thank you for organising such an enjoyable and knowledgeable workshop with Sarah, which has been really beneficial for all of us as responsible citizens. We were so inspired by how much we can do to reduce wastes and with the aid of DIY helps to save our environment. Our home general waste bin has been cut down by half! – Julie*
- *Thank you again for the fabulous program, I have learned so much and changed so many of my behaviours. I'm now making butter and bread (with buttermilk from making the butter) for our family to cut down on plastic and waste. I have a scraps container in my freezer to make stock and am now using tooth paste tablets to cut out plastic there. So many changes! - Kate*
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2022 Imperfect Low Waste Living Program participants



Beeswax wraps making



DIY soap making and dishwashing tablets



'Special Thing' household item swap



Lots of opportunities for participant sharing



Participant sharing her favourite food waste recipe with delicious samples to try