



living communities

Cultural Services

Warringah Council delivers a range of services, events and activities each year to help build a vibrant and culturally rich community. Annual events such as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and Oxford Falls Peace Park celebrations generate enormous community involvement. Staff worked closely with the Manly Dam Memorial Trust to present ANZAC and Remembrance Day events in April and November. Both events were well received and involved a number of young people through local high schools and Guides and Scouts groups.

Warringah has one of the largest Australia Day celebrations with 32,000 people attending events this year. Australia Day was celebrated at four locations – Dee Why Beach, Melwood Oval at Forestville, Berry Reserve at Narrabeen, and Governor Phillip Lookout at Beacon Hill. The Australia Day events were made possible through the efforts of many volunteers from community and service groups.

A world music concert formed part of the 11th annual anniversary event for the Oxford Falls Peace Park in August. Schools from across Warringah also took part in a project to make peace flags to decorate the park.

More than 770 people took part in community consultations this year during the development of a new Cultural Plan to allow Council to take a leadership role in creating stronger, safer, more connected communities. The Cultural Plan provides an integrated approach to cultural planning, enhancing the cultural wellbeing of the community through the provision of vibrant, high quality public places, a strong sense of identity and access to creative practices.

A key cultural initiative this year was the Ripple Festival: a Celebration of Water in Warringah, launched in March to remember, protect, treasure and celebrate water in our lives. Council developed a series of events, activities and projects that drew on themes relating to water to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the value of water. The festival was celebrated at various locations over two months. More than 25 events and activities took place including free outdoor concerts featuring traditional music from Indonesia, the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands, art projections, guided eco walks, a 'dive-in' movie night at the Warringah Aquatic Centre, Treasured Water Community Event at Manly Dam, and lantern-making workshops.

Council supports initiatives that foster greater awareness and understanding of Indigenous heritage such as the Guringai Festival. The annual event aims to bring the northern Sydney region together as a community to celebrate one of the oldest living cultures in the world. The seventh Guringai Festival was coordinated by nine councils with events promoting friendship and reconciliation. As part of the festival local primary schools and Warringah Council's vacation care centres were visited by Indigenous performers and storytellers.

Warringah school students were also involved in the 2006 Local Government Week program with tours for approximately 200 students from several local primary schools. The children learnt about the role of local government and conducted a mock council meeting in the Council Chambers with students taking on roles of mayor, councillors and the media.

Artists young and old were involved in the 2006 Warringah Art Exhibition which opened in July at the Manly Vale Community Centre. The annual exhibition attracted 275 entries in a range of mediums including oil paintings, pencil drawings and photography. The exhibition was attended by more than 680 people who viewed the 90 works exhibited.



Children's Services

Warringah Council provides childcare for children and their families in a variety of ways to meet different needs. Council also produces the Warringah Childcare Directory for all services within Warringah and provides advice to carers and parents about childcare choices and other support services.

Some 1,055 children accessed Warringah Council's Long Day Care, Family Day Care and Mobile Occasional Care this year. Access to Long Day Care is managed through a waitlist which is prioritised according to need based on Commonwealth guidelines. Utilisation rates for all Council's childcare services remained high this year in a competitive market across the local government area.

Our Children's Services team works with schools, community groups and other government agencies to build their capacity to provide equity of access to services for children and their families particularly for disadvantaged groups or families with special needs.

Council operates four Long Day Care Centres for children up to six years old. All centres achieved 'high quality' ratings in all quality areas under the National Childcare Accreditation Council assessment. This year saw a high demand for Council services with our reputation for excellence, commitment to the inclusion of families with additional children, priority for children with additional needs, and support offered through partnerships with other agencies.

Family Day Care is designed for children up to 12 years of age and is operated by private individuals according to government guidelines. Council manages the scheme to ensure that providers meet high quality accredited standards and this year we had 45 people registered as family day carers in Warringah.

Mobile Occasional Care provided for 212 children aged up to six years old, catering for casual use by parents requiring ad hoc care while they are at work, shopping or attending appointments. The service operates on a scheduled rotation between different locations within Warringah. Parents often make regular use of this service as an interim measure or in times of crisis.

Youth Services

The Warringah Youth Advisory Committee provides Council with a consultative body for youth issues in the area. Members represent a diverse and enthusiastic voice for young people in the community. The annual Warringah Youth Forum held in June involved 60 young locals learning about various youth services available to them in the area and advising Council on youth issues.

The Youth Activity Service (YAZZ) and Family Support Workers provide support for at risk younger people with activities and learning experiences for young people to improve their social skills. During the year YAZZ changed to Youthlinx and continued to be funded by the federal government under its Youthlinx program.

Four Speakers' Nights and four Parent Education Courses were hosted throughout the year on a range of topics from 'Improving our Children's Social and Relationship Skills' to 'Drug and Alcohol Information for Parents of Teenagers'. More than 500 people attended these events with audiences including parents and professionals working in youth services and related fields.

A Triple P Parenting Program was introduced and attracted more than 40 participants to the course.

Local youth entertainment opportunities were promoted in several ways this year. The fourth annual Northern Composure Band Competition attracted 28 local bands and 1,700 patrons. YOYO youth centre held seven band nights and dances with more than 2,200 young people attending.

YOYOs Hip Hop Breakdancing and Spray In Sessions remained popular with up to 25 young people participating each week. Council's six legal graffiti walls continued to provide young artists with an outlet for their artwork as well as planned murals at several locations in the Warringah area. A North Side Grind Skate Series was introduced at Manly Vale Skate Park as part of a regional series of events. The event attracted a high number of participants as well as spectators.

Another popular event this year was the 24/7 Youth Film Festival. This new event involved a series of workshops and teams of young people completing seven-minute films in a 24-hour period. Over 100 young people were involved and over 700 people attended the heats and movie finals screenings. This project is run in conjunction with other SHOROC Councils (Manly, Mosman and Pittwater).

Six young people spent a week in Warringah's rural Sister City of Brewarrina in far west NSW as part of the annual Youth Exchange. The program helps young people in Warringah gain a better understanding of life for young Indigenous Australians and a reciprocal visit brought 'Bre' youth to Sydney's northern beaches.

Warringah was also visited by students from Peak Hill in the state's central west on a vocational tour. Billed by families of the Rotary Club of Belrose the students spent a week in Sydney visiting various sites and toured Warringah Council and Dee Why Library to learn about employment opportunities at a local government level and how to use the library for job searching.

Council's School Holiday Recreation Program catered for 342 young people with a range of exciting and adventurous programs including circus skills, flying trapeze, skateboarding, inline skating, skate tours, screen acting, movie making, paper making, outdoor adventure days, visits to Jamberoo Recreation Park and Luna Park as well as beach awareness and surf education. More than 12,000 children also attended Council's seven Vacation Care Centres during school holidays in 2006/07.



Community Safety

The Warringah Council Community Safety Committee involves a number of local agencies focusing on crime prevention and community safety initiatives. Supporting community safety was a key feature of the Social Plan adopted in December with a number of strategies identified to meet the needs of a diverse community.

Safety initiatives undertaken this year by Council in partnership with the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and other local stakeholders included community education programs targeting senior safety, learner drivers, drink driving, speeding, safety around schools, pedestrian safety, correct fitting of child restraints and car maintenance workshops.

Council's Northern Beaches Transport Guide was distributed to more than 15,000 people at bus stops, on buses and in pubs and clubs to help raise awareness of transport options to reduce drink driving. In response to the requirement for older drivers to take an annual driving test Council developed a Seniors Refresher Driving Course. Following the success of the program with more than 100 participants this initiative has now been adopted by a local driving school.

Warringah's Beach Awareness and Safety Education Program (BASE) delivered water safety messages to primary school students and adults from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. A total of 5,800 people took the program with Council Beach Inspectors in the classroom and on the beach.

Warringah is home to nine beaches over 14km of coastline from Freshwater to North Narrabeen. Our Beach Services team manages and patrols Warringah's beaches seven days a week from September to April. On weekends and public holidays the team works with volunteers from local surf life saving clubs.

More than two million people visited our beaches this year with lifeguards undertaking 466 rescues and administering 3,647 first aid treatments. Council Beach Inspectors also dealt with 3,000 breaches of regulations in regards to litter, dogs and anti-social behaviour on beaches and beach reserves.

Warringah Council donated \$62,120 towards local surf life saving clubs to assist their ongoing support to the community and to purchase rescue equipment.

Aged Services

Council offers a range of projects and services for older people within Warringah such as our telephone information and referral service as well as projects that recognise the value and contribution of seniors.

This year's Seniors Week was celebrated with a 'Back to BASICS' (Being Active – Staying Independent and Carefree) program offering a wide range of activities based on themes for the body, mind and spirit. Forty local businesses and groups offered free activities for seniors to sample over a four week period. Senior citizens participating in the program were encouraged to try as many different activities as possible with the aim of experiencing something new.

Some of the highlights of the program included the launch of Lifeball for Seniors, a concert for residents from aged care facilities in partnership with Dee Why RSL, a guided walk and barbecue at Manly Dam, a creative writing workshop, a reconciliation discussion and the annual indoor bowling tournament.

Following the successful launch of Lifeball, new groups were set up in Curl Curl, Forestville, Avalon and Warriewood. Lifeball is a simple and safe team ball game for seniors played at a walking pace and designed for safety. The aim of the program is to encourage seniors to enjoy exercise, decrease incidence of falls and reduce social isolation.

Players quickly demonstrated an increase in skills and enthusiasm and further workshops focused on coaching and umpiring. The Northern Beaches Creative Leisure and Learning Inc is now involved in this new project and auspicing the local groups. This was the first step towards ongoing sustainability of the game and has meant the players now have a major role in the operations and management of their group.

Lifeball is currently played by over 70 local seniors from both sexes who enjoy it for several reasons including forming new friendships and regaining physical and mental skills.

The CHEERS (Cheerful Healthy Eating for Elderly Residents and Seniors) luncheon program is now in its third year and continues to attract large numbers each month. Close to 70 people attended the anniversary lunch and a survey showed participants enjoy tasting new food, socialising and learning 'healthy ageing' tips from luncheon speakers. Local restaurants also gave favourable feedback in the survey.

The Aged Services team have been involved in a working party to reduce the incidence of isolation for older residents in Warringah. A Connecting with the Community flyer was developed and widely distributed and a new 'buddy system' is being established.

Our Seniors Secure at Home program offered Warringah residents improved security at home by giving a free security check of homes, \$100 rebate on purchasing locks, installation of locks at a reduced rate and free engraving of valuable items.



Leisure Facilities

The Glen Street Theatre is the only professionally run performing arts venue on the northern beaches and has the highest number of subscribers in Australia for a presenter driven venue with 4,500 subscribers per year. The theatre also acts as an important community resource with local schools and community arts groups using the venue for 12 weeks of the year.

Almost 70,000 people attended Glen Street shows during 2006/07. Highlights for the year included performances by the Bangarra Dance Company, Sydney and Queensland Theatre Companies, and the Bell Shakespeare Company. A new partnership was established with the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) to introduce drama workshops for students.

The theatre engaged with other patrons through its sell-out Literary Lunches and Music at the Glen series. Another new initiative was the Glen Street Gallery which showcases the work of local artists.

With the assistance of Warringah Council and Arts NSW, Glen Street Theatre had a complete makeover this year with 400 new seats and fresh carpet installed in the main auditorium and foyer. A new captioning service was also installed for patrons with hearing impairments.

The Warringah Aquatic Centre (WAC) in Frenchs Forest is the only indoor 50 metre swimming pool on the peninsula. The WAC was opened in 1979 to provide a facility for teaching water safety and learn to swim and to provide a place for competition for local clubs. Previously all competitions were held in ocean pools.

This year the WAC hosted more than 331,000 people including 158,000 casual swimmers and 132,500 people in structured programs and classes such as Learn to Swim, aquarobics, Swimfit, Pilates and yoga. Local schools staged 56 swimming carnivals at the centre with 23,324 participants and spectators attending.

The Swimfit program, a lunchtime adult exercise program, has grown in popularity over the past two years and is now a major part of the WAC adult fitness program.

This year the swimming squad program doubled the number of elite swimmers with a disability participating in the Australian Paralympics squad and the centre was the venue for the Australian squad training. The centre was also a popular location for five filming and photographic shoots this year.

Library Services

Warringah Council operates four libraries located at Dee Why, Belrose, Forestville and Warringah Mall in Brookvale. The libraries offer a wide range of books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and internet services with many programs expanded to support the growing needs of our community and cater for people of all ages and interests. Local studies, family history, community and disability information services are also provided. More than a million items were borrowed this financial year.

This year the library focused on developing its website, online catalogues and online resources. The library website launched in March – www.wls.nsw.gov.au – allows users to view their account, renew items, place a reservation and access databases and other online resources including a dedicated youth resource 'Warringah Library Youth Lounge'. Library users have access to 38 computers, free use of the internet and the library's subscriptions to online resources. The public access computers are in use 80% of the time.

Two major programs were organised by the Friends of the Library this year with a series of author talks at Warringah Mall Library and a monthly book club. Guest authors included Tim Bowden, John Flanagan and Petrea King.

Children's programs attracted 7,890 under 12 year olds this year. A newly introduced BiBs (Babies into Books) program encourages literacy, concentration and a love of books and libraries for babies 6-18 months and their parent/carer. All six BiBs sessions were booked out with 60 babies and their mothers.

Storytelling visits to local pre-schools, primary schools and playgroups were well received as was the library based pre-school storytimes for 3-5 year olds. School vacation programs with education workshops and craft activities for 5-12 year olds proved popular particularly Manga Workshops, Pirates and Princesses, and Crocodile Encounters.

The Summer Reading Program attracted over 400 children and was designed to encourage and promote reading and literacy during the summer school holidays. At the conclusion of the program participants attended a pool party at the Warringah Aquatic Centre.

The Home Library Service expanded its resources with the increased use of new 'Audioread Navigators' allowing staff to download books into an easy to use listening device. The existing nine Audioreads were supplemented by a donation of 15 Audioread Navigators from the Macular Degeneration Group.

The second half of 2006 saw the culmination of Warringah Council's Centenary celebrations. The Local Studies team provided historical photographs and research support for the Kingsclear Books publication 'Pictorial History of Warringah' by Jim Boyce.

Local Studies also established a growing online database of historical images of Warringah. It currently has over 6,000 searchable images which can be accessed from the library website.

A cooperative project by the four SHOROC councils won a 2007 NSW Local Government Cultural award for the website www.onashoestring.net.au. This site was the culmination of an oral history project on the Depression years across the region.

Australia Day was celebrated with a display and book sale on the theme 'In Your Backyard' highlighting how the role of the garden in our lives has changed over the years. This historical photographic exhibition was mounted again for the National Trust Heritage Festival. Local Studies was also invited to speak on local and family history at Wheeler Heights Public School, VIEW clubs, Legacy and the Fellowship of Australian Writers.