

Warringah Council

ANNUAL REPORT

2006-2007

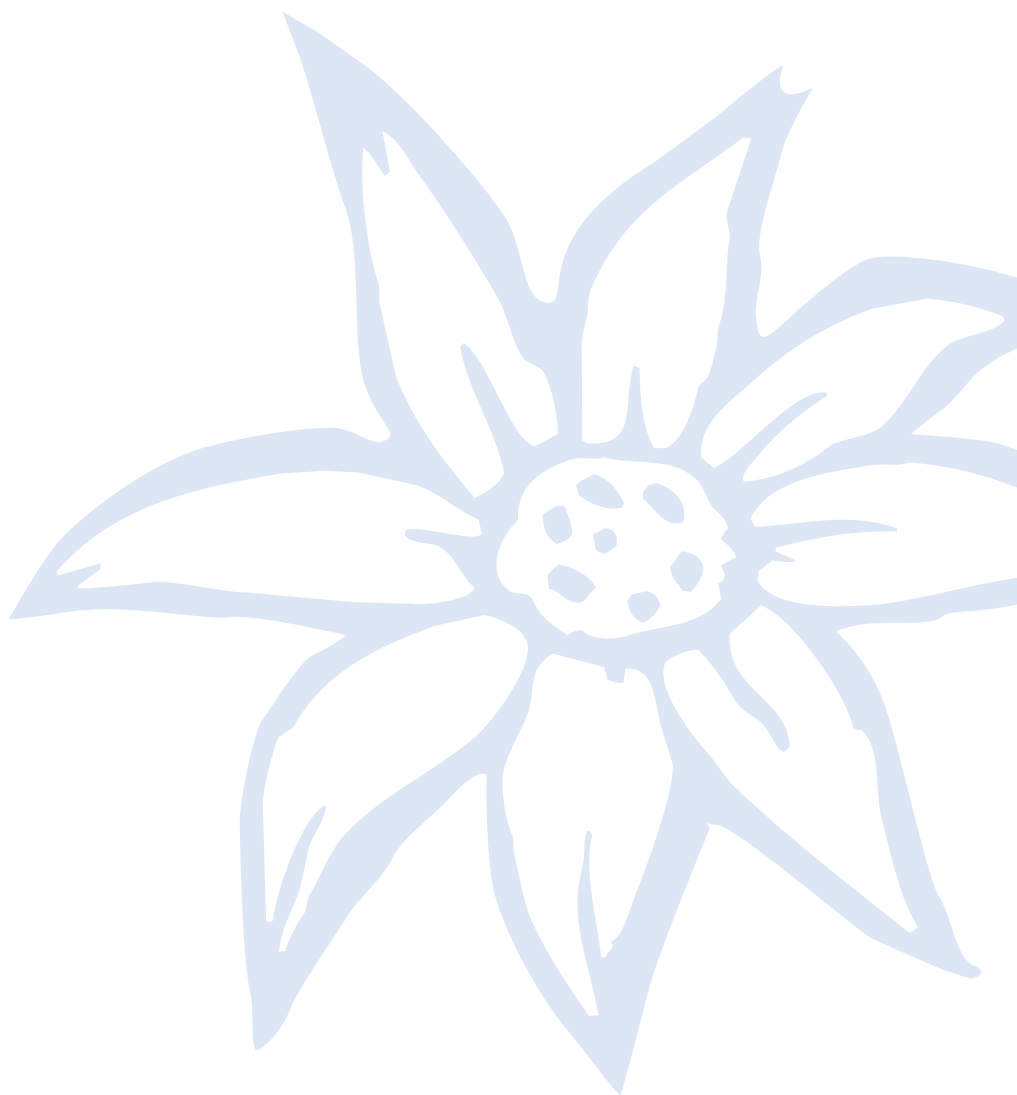


Warringah Council



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Our Vision

A vibrant community, improving our quality of life by living and working in balance with our special bush and beach environment.

Our Values

Openness

We communicate what services are available

We value community and staff participation in decision making

Equity

We provide equity of opportunity to community members and staff

We provide a right of review, where possible, with regard to our decisions and practices

Integrity

We value consistency in decision making

We promote ethical practice

We are mindful of our role of acting in the public interest

Efficiency

We value innovation and creativity

We aim for value for money, recognising the full costs of providing services

Service

We are customer focused

We are flexible and receptive to change

We anticipate needs and future trends

We provide services in partnership with other organisations and the community

Respect

We welcome the opinions of all

We conduct all our dealings in an atmosphere of mutual respect



Welcome to Warringah

Warringah Council, established in 1906, administers an area of 152 square kilometres on Sydney's northern beaches. Warringah was originally the home of the Guringai people and is now home to around 135,000 residents and ratepayers. Warringah's Indigenous name is thought to mean 'middle harbour'. Our bush and beach environment stretches between Manly in the south, Pittwater in the north and inland to the Kuringai Chase National Park.

Our 14 kilometres of coastline includes nine beaches and the Warringah area covers close to 6,000 hectares of natural bushland and open space with many features of cultural and heritage significance including hundreds of Aboriginal significant sites. We are home to the Manly Dam, lagoons in Narrabeen, Manly, Dee Why and Curl Curl, Stony Range Botanic Garden and 75 threatened native plant and animal species.

Warringah Council owns and manages the Glen Street Theatre and Warringah Aquatic Centre, and is a partner in the Kimbriki Waste and Recycling Centre with Mosman, Pittwater and Manly Councils. Warringah Council owns and manages 24 community centres and several childcare centres as well as four libraries, located at Belrose, Dee Why, Forestville and Brookvale.

On census night in August 2006, 133,838 people nominated Warringah as their usual place of residence – an increase of 10.3% since the 1991 census. Our population is ageing with 25.8% of residents 55 years or older, a 15% increase on the previous decade. The number of 0 -12 year olds has increased by over 16%. Numbers of 18 - 30 year olds, however, have fallen by 15% with the most significant falls experienced in people in their 20s. The median age of people living in Warringah is 38.

More than 26% of Warringah residents were born overseas although only 6.3% are not fluent in English. The most common countries of birth are England, New Zealand, Italy, China and South Africa. Some 85.4% of residents are Australian citizens and 14.6% speak a language other than English at home. We have a small Indigenous population representing 0.3% of residents.

The most prominent family type in Warringah in 2006 was 'couple families with children' (48.9%) followed by 'couple families without children' (37%) and 'one parent families' at 12.6%. Some 22.2% of Warringah's households are now lone person households with our most common households made up of two people.

Administrator's Message



One of my personal highlights this year was the official opening of the new Dee Why beachfront in December and later seeing thousands of people enjoying the upgraded facilities for Australia Day celebrations. This project was the result of extensive planning and community consultation to ensure this important parkland is maintained at the highest standard. Residents and visitors have also been able to enjoy enhancements to the coastal walkways in Warringah.

Some of the funding for the upgrade of Dee Why beachfront and the walkways came from the infrastructure levy introduced at the start of the year for the renewal and replacement of Council owned assets and infrastructure. Warringah is one of only a handful of councils to have developed a fully funded, sustainable infrastructure program for the future.

Staff introduced a number of initiatives this year to improve customer services and assist Council achieve faster and more efficient determinations of development applications. More than 1,500 DAs were received during the year and the median processing time has been reduced to 31 days.

Northern beaches residents ended the 2006/07 financial year battling a number of storms. Council staff responded to hundreds of calls about fallen trees and branches and worked around the clock to remove truckloads of vegetation from streets, sportsfields and reserves. I congratulate staff on their amazing efforts during this period.

High seas during these storms also claimed much of the sand Council had moved from Narrabeen Lagoon to Collaroy/Narrabeen beachfront as part of an ongoing sand nourishment program. Warringah tackles beach erosion regionally as a member of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group and we hope to report on the outcomes of the Group's lobbying efforts in the next Annual Report.

Warringah was recognised with a number of environmental accolades including recognition for Dee Why/Long Reef as the cleanest beach in 2007, a successful grant application for \$2million to restore Narrabeen Lagoon and Stony Range Flora and Fauna Reserve officially renamed as a botanic garden.

Council strengthened its commitment to deal with environmental issues including global warming and climate change with the adoption of an Environmental Sustainability Policy this year. Council staff continue to work closely with community volunteers to enhance the local environment for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Dick Persson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dick Persson AM
Administrator
Warringah Council

General Manager's Message



Before joining Warringah Council in March I visited the area on Australia Day to witness the local celebrations and I was impressed to see the high level of community involvement in the Australia Day breakfasts. Since taking on the role of General Manager I have been proud to note there is a strong sense of community in the area and within the organisation.

More than 770 people participated in the development of a new Cultural Plan this year and many thousands participated in Ripple Festival events across Warringah. Council provides a range of services to support our community's social strength and cohesion. A new Social Plan adopted during the year has identified a number of strategies to strengthen the local community and cater for the specific needs of a diverse population.

Council supports a wide range of local community groups and organisations with our annual grants program. This year we provided more than \$160,000 in grants and donations mostly for cultural and community development initiatives. We also supported local sporting groups with \$205,000 under a capital assistance program.

The 2007 Community Survey was being finalised at the end of the 2006/07 financial year. Responses from more than 600 residents surveyed in July 2007 will help identify key local issues and measure the importance and satisfaction with Council services.

The survey results, to be reported in the next Annual Report, point to a high level of community connectedness and satisfaction with local quality of life as well as the performance of Council.

At the end of the reporting year plans were well underway for a Warringah community summit to involve hundreds of residents, ratepayers and stakeholders. Results from the summit and the community's views on future planning and resource allocation for Council services will also be detailed in the next Annual Report.

I am happy to say that staff and community members have made me feel very welcome since my arrival. My initial impression was that Council has made significant progress over the past few years in strengthening the governance of the organisation and our relationship with the community. We have a community strategic plan 'Living Warringah' and are in a strong financial position to deliver on the aspirations in this document. I hope to build on these achievements in the coming years.



Rik Hart
General Manager
Warringah Council