



an **inclusive**  
RANDWICK CITY

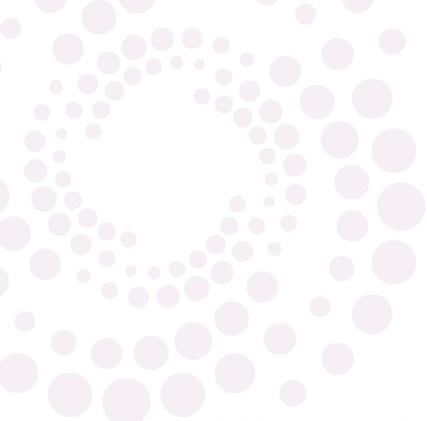
"Overcoming poverty  
is not a gesture  
of charity;  
It is an act  
of justice.

It is a protection  
of a fundamental  
human right,  
the right to dignity  
and  
a decent life"

— Nelson Mandela

# CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	3
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	5
1.1 Why prepare An Inclusive Randwick City?.....	6
1.2 Our plan review and evaluation process .....	6
1.3 Relationship to the <i>Randwick City Plan</i> .....	7
1.4 State government context.....	8
<b>2 PRINCIPLES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION</b> .....	9
2.1 What are the causes of social disadvantage?.....	11
<b>3 OUR COMMUNITY</b> .....	13
3.1 Population size, growth and age structure .....	14
3.2 Household incomes .....	15
3.3 Indigenous population.....	16
3.4 Unemployment .....	17
3.5 Levels of education .....	17
3.6 Born overseas.....	18
3.7 Proficiency in English .....	19
3.8 Affordable housing and housing stress .....	20
3.9 Social housing .....	21
3.9.1 Internet connection .....	22
3.9.2 Social wellbeing and disadvantage within Randwick City.....	22
3.9.3 Vulnerable groups within Randwick City.....	24
<b>4 OUR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES</b> .....	27
4.1 The Council's policy framework .....	28
4.1.1 Rental subsidy program .....	29
4.1.2 Community grants programs .....	29
4.1.3 Professional development for local support service providers.....	30
4.1.4 Council managed activities.....	30
4.2 Community planning, programs and services.....	30
4.2.1 Council managed programs and services .....	31
4.3 Advocacy, referral and partnerships with service providers.....	32
4.3.1 Inter-agencies and service provider networks.....	32
4.3.2 Partnerships with support service providers.....	33



<b>5</b>	<b>SOCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>35</b>
5.1	Community consultations	36
5.2	Opportunities and priorities for addressing gaps	36
5.2.1	Increasing accessibility of community transport	36
5.2.2	Improving the community's knowledge of available services	37
5.2.3	Expanding services and programs to meet identified gaps	38
5.2.4	Giving young people the best start in life	39
5.2.5	Addressing affordable rental housing and homelessness issues	40
5.2.6	Addressing the needs of our Indigenous community	41
<b>6</b>	<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>51</b>

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Adopted in March 2010

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*An Inclusive Randwick City* is our 10 year Plan to enhance opportunities for people living within Randwick City to be able to participate and be actively involved in community life. The Plan is aimed primarily at those who experience social exclusion and disadvantage. While the population of Randwick City is relatively advantaged when compared to the overall Sydney population, there are distinct pockets of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The 2006 Census estimated that 17.5% of all households in Randwick City have weekly incomes of less than \$500<sup>1</sup>. Many of the actions identified within the Plan will also benefit members of the broader community either directly or indirectly. The actions are designed to complement the programs, events and activities that the Council already provides to address the social needs of our residents.

*An Inclusive Randwick City* forms part of a suite of social/community related plans directed at addressing the social issues identified in our City. It is the Council's objective in implementing the suite of plans to encourage a more inclusive and cohesive community built upon the principles of social justice and sustainability. The other documents which form part of this collection of plans are:

- *Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan* (2007)
- *Cultural Plan: A Cultural Randwick City* (2008)
- *Crime Prevention and Community Safety Plan: A Safer Randwick City* (2008)

Other Council plans also contributing to the wellbeing of our community are the *Recreation Needs Study* (2008) and *Community Facilities Plan* (2003).

*An Inclusive Randwick City* outlines our community's unmet social needs and recommends a list of strategies and actions for implementation over a 10 year period. The actions and strategies have been informed by our 20 year *Randwick City Plan* which describes the outcomes we want to achieve for all those who live within Randwick City, including those residents experiencing social disadvantage. It also describes how we intend to achieve these social outcomes. It is important to note that not all of the issues identified within this Plan are within Randwick City Council's responsibilities or authority to resolve. However, because they are issues which affect the overall wellbeing of Randwick City residents, the Council will, where appropriate, advocate on behalf of its residents.

<sup>1</sup> Australia Bureau of Statistics (2006) *Census of Population and Housing*, Canberra.



The actions in this Plan are primarily concerned with ensuring that appropriate programs and social services are available and accessible to residents in need. The Council's Community Project Officers work in partnership arrangements with local service providers as they are the expert providers of social services. The Council also provides grant funding to eligible organisations to deliver social support services through its *Community Partnerships Funding Program* and its *Rental Subsidy Scheme*, amounting to some \$1.4 million annually (based upon 2009 figures).

The six key areas for which actions have been identified for implementation are:

1. Increasing accessibility of community transport
2. Improving the community's knowledge of service
3. Expanding services to meet identified gaps in service provision
4. Giving young people the best start in life
5. Addressing affordable rental housing and homelessness issues
6. Addressing the needs of our Indigenous community

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1

### Why prepare An Inclusive Randwick City?

Randwick City Council supports the active participation of its residents in community life. The majority of the City's residents are engaged in a range of social and community activities. However, some sections of our local community experience varying degrees of social exclusion due to a number of reasons. This Plan aims to address the social needs of residents who experience exclusion due to social disadvantage. By this, we mean residents who suffer from the effects of poverty; disability; unemployment; homelessness; family breakdown; domestic violence; drug and alcohol addiction and neglect.

The Plan briefly describes the programs that the Council already has in place to address social needs and identifies those that will be ongoing over the next 10 years. It also lists a series of new actions to be implemented over a 10 year period, commencing from 2010. Although the Council will take on the role of lead agency in implementing a number of these actions, it will also rely on the area's existing network of social service providers and government agency partners to develop cost effective and efficient ways of achieving the best outcomes for our residents.

In summary, *An Inclusive Randwick City* will:

1. Document the identified social needs of our local community.
2. Provide information about how the Council uses its staffing and financial resources to mitigate social disadvantage within our community, including the level of financial assistance it delivers directly and indirectly to social service providers and local residents.
3. Describe how the Council will promote a socially inclusive community through:
  - Advocating on behalf of our residents and service providers
  - Supporting and working in partnership with our local service providers
  - Implementing our *Community Partnerships Funding Program* and *Cultural Community Grants Program*
  - Reviewing and researching social needs and data

Each year, Randwick City Council will select a number of new actions from its suite of social/ community plans for implementation based on a priority ranking. The budgetary requirements to undertake these actions will be incorporated into the Council's annual Management Plan and budget.

## 1.2

### Our plan review and evaluation process

The achievements and progress of actions contained within the Plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis, and reported to the Council on an annual basis as part of our State of Our City Report, produced at the end of each financial year. A major review of *An Inclusive Randwick City* will be undertaken by 2020, or earlier, to support City Plan amendments or to ensure that the Plan continues to align with our population's demographic characteristics, and any emerging social issues.

### 1.3

## Relationship to the *Randwick City Plan*

The Local Government Act 1998 requires all local councils in NSW to develop a social/community plan every five years. Randwick City Council has met this requirement through the preparation and adoption of *The Randwick City Plan*. The City Plan was adopted by the Council for implementation in 2006, and reviewed and updated in 2010. The City Plan describes the strategic directions for all areas of the Council's operations including the City's built environment, economic activity, transport and its natural environment, with the articulated outcomes to be achieved by the year 2025.



## Planning framework at Randwick City Council

The City Plan also promotes a whole-of-Council approach to ensure that the community's social needs are properly addressed. Underpinning the objectives of *An Inclusive Randwick City* are the following City Plan Outcomes:

- Outcome 2: A vibrant and diverse community
- Outcome 3: An informed and engaged community

To realise Outcomes 2 and 3, the City Plan has defined the following key areas:

1. Encouraging a sense of community by creating opportunities and means for people to participate in community life
2. Celebrating our cultural diversity and encouraging harmony
3. Providing community and cultural facilities
4. Focusing on the needs of our at risk and vulnerable community groups
5. Enhancing community services
6. Advocating and developing partnership programs between Council and our community and local community services providers
7. Providing access to information on all community services and facilities

A sense of community, as described in point 1, is about creating a feeling of inclusiveness and involvement; where people feel they are an integral part of our community. The Council sees its roles of providing venues, and coordinating events and activities (be it educational, celebratory or commemorative) as valuable opportunities for residents to meet in public places and to interact with each other. Hence points 2 and 3 of the key areas as described above.



While residents of Randwick City are generally considered to be 'well-off', a proportion of our residents experience social disadvantage and/or require support services from community and government funded organisations. The key actions described in points 4, 5 and 6 are essentially about improving the availability of support services relevant to special needs or target groups. Community services in this context include services provided by community and government agencies, and programs which the Council actively provides or makes a financial contribution towards, including services operated by local service providers. The purpose of providing these support services is to address existing health issues, improve quality of life and enhance life opportunities. Active and healthy community members are also more likely to participate positively in community life.

And, finally, the key action described in point 7 is about ensuring the community is well informed about the existence of, and the type of, support services that they can access from service providers operating within the LGA. The last five key principles were instrumental in shaping the contents and actions of this Plan.

## 1.4

### State government context

The New South Wales (NSW) State Government is responsible for delivering key social services such as education, health, police, public transport and public housing to the community. The NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) is the leading NSW Government agency responsible for community services.

Within the State Plan, the NSW Government has identified that one of its major challenges is to overcome "*pockets of entrenched disadvantage*"<sup>2</sup> within the community. The Government is looking at preventing disadvantage from occurring through early intervention and prevention programs. While it is noted that such programs may not have short term measurable results, they will deliver long term benefits for people who are either marginalised or socially disadvantaged.

The NSW Government also provides local councils with grant funding to carry out a range of services and programs for the local community. The Community Services Grant Program (CSGP) is a longstanding funding program of the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) that supports a range of activities, most notably, local government community workers, youth services, family support programs, neighbourhood and community centres.

The Home and Community Care (HACC) program is funded by the Commonwealth and administered by the NSW Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care. The Council provides a Home Maintenance and Modification Service for HACC eligible clients, such as frail older people, people with disabilities, and their carers. This service provides low-cost small to medium home repairs and modification services, such as the installation of safety ramps and support rails in the bathroom, changing light globes and widening doorways.

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<sup>2</sup> NSW Government (2006) *State Plan: A new direction for NSW*, Sydney, p. 4.

## **2** PRINCIPLES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

In aiming to address social disadvantage within Randwick City, the Council has adopted a social inclusion approach. Social inclusion is a term used to describe concepts relating to social and economic participation by disadvantaged groups and individuals in community life. Encouraging social inclusion is an important part of combating social disadvantage and exclusion, which are characterised by limited access to a range of basic entitlements including housing, transport, education and employment. It is closely linked to social problems such as poverty and poor living standards, crime, homelessness and poor literacy.

Recent studies have emphasised the importance of encouraging social inclusion, especially among

disadvantaged individuals and communities. Promoting community participation in the locality or neighbourhood can create positive outcomes such as increased tolerance and crime reduction. In their overview of the community development field, Jim Ife and Frank Tesoriero (2006) argue that “community development must always seek to maximise participation, with the aim being for everyone in the community to be actively involved in community processes and activities...”<sup>3</sup>

In preparing this Plan, we have referred to the *Social Inclusion Principles for Australia*<sup>4</sup>, a document that was released by the Commonwealth in November 2008 for use by all levels of government in Australia. These principles include:

<b>Aspirational principles</b>	
Reducing disadvantage	Making sure people in need benefit from access to good health, education and other services.
Increasing social, civic and economic participation	Helping everyone get the skills and support they need so they can find work and connect with the community, even during hard times.
A greater voice, combined with greater responsibility	Governments and other organisations giving people a say in what services they need and how they work, and people taking responsibility to make the most of the opportunities available.
<b>Principles of approach</b>	
Building partnerships with key stakeholders	Governments, organisations and communities working together to get the best results for people in need.
Developing tailored services	Services working together in new and flexible ways to meet each person's different needs.
Giving a high priority to early intervention and prevention	Heading off problems by understanding the root causes and intervening early.
Building joined-up services and whole of government(s) solutions	Getting different parts and different levels of government to work together in new and flexible ways to get better outcomes and services for people in need.
Using evidence and integrated data to inform policy	Finding out what programs and services work well and understanding why, so you can share good ideas, keep making improvements and put your effort into the things that work.
Using locational approaches	Working in places where there is a lot of disadvantage, to get to people most in need and to understand how different problems are connected.
Planning for sustainability	Doing things that will help people and communities deal better with problems in the future, as well as solving the problems they face now.
Building on individual and community strengths	Making the most of people's strengths, including the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from other cultures.

3 Ife, J & Tesoriero, F (2006) *Community Development: Community-based alternatives in an age of globalisation*, Pearson, p. 145.

4 Australian Government (2008) *Social Inclusion Principles for Australia*, Canberra.

The Commonwealth has also identified specific instances of social exclusion that should be promptly responded to as a matter of priority:

1. Addressing the incidence and needs of jobless families with children
2. Delivering effective support to children at greatest risk of long term disadvantage
3. Focusing on particular locations, neighbourhoods and communities to ensure programs and services are getting to the right places
4. Addressing the incidence of homelessness
5. Employment for people living with a disability or mental illness
6. Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians

The Council already has in place structures and programs to address the priority areas described under points 2, 3, and 6. For example, the guidelines for the Council's *Community Partnerships Funding Program* specify that additional weighting will be given to programs targeting these priority areas<sup>5</sup>. The Council's Community Project Officer's also work closely with disadvantaged communities on a range of initiatives such as programs aimed at enhancing employment and education opportunities. However, the Council recognises that more can be done to improve services and to reduce delivery gaps. In relation to addressing priority areas 1, 4 and 5, the Council's capacity to address homelessness and influence employment policies are limited as they are predominantly the role of both the state and federal government. Where the Council has the opportunity to address these broader issues, it will concentrate its efforts as a member of multi-agency or partnership forums. See section 5 of this Plan for further information on the Council's current community development programs and community support activities.

## 2.1

### What are the causes of social disadvantage?

Disadvantage is caused by a range of social and economic factors. It is known that these factors tend to concentrate among the same people, and their effects on health accumulate during life<sup>6</sup>. An analysis of recent ABS data by the Social Inclusion Unit of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) showed that approximately 5% of the Australian population aged 15+ years experience multiple disadvantages which impact adversely on their ability to learn, work, engage in their community and have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Another recent national study of social disadvantage by Vinson (2007) titled "*Dropping off the Edge*" aimed to pull together information generated by 25 indicators of the overall susceptibility to social disadvantage of 2,140 localities across Australia. Some of these indicators identified in Vinson's study include:

1. Early school leaving and lack of post school qualifications
2. Limited computer and internet access
3. Low incomes
4. Long-term unemployment
5. Child maltreatment
6. Criminal convictions

<sup>5</sup> Randwick City Council (2010) *Community Partnerships Funding Program Guidelines 2010-2011*.

<sup>6</sup> Wilkinson, R. and Marmot, M (2003) *Social Determinants of Health: the solid facts*, World Health Organization, Denmark, p. 10.



## **3** OUR COMMUNITY

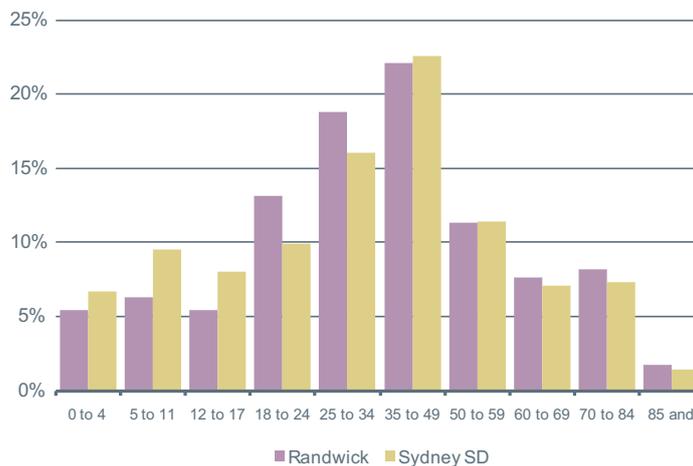
This section examines data relating to important areas of social wellbeing and disadvantage in Randwick City. These social indicators are drawn predominately from the ABS Census 2006. A comprehensive overview of Randwick City's demographic characteristics can be found on our website [www.randwick.nsw.gov.au](http://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au). This website is updated every five years in line with the release of data from the next Census. Social indicators help to signal the presence of social disadvantage within a community. While not exhaustive, the following indicators present a good snapshot of the social environment within Randwick City.

### 3.1 Population size, growth and age structure

In the 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing, the population of Randwick City numbered 122,173, up from 121,497 in 2001 and 118,905 in 1996. This represents a growth rate of 2.2% between 1996 and 2001 (annual average 0.44%), and 0.5% between 2001 and 2006 (annual average 0.1%). By comparison, the total population of New South Wales grew by 5.5% and 3.4% respectively across the 1996-2001 and 2001-06 periods (annual average 1.1% and 0.7%). The projected growth rate for the City is expected to continue at the same modest pace, estimated to reach about 131,711<sup>7</sup> residents by 2021.

Analysis of the age structure of Randwick City's population in 2006 compared to the Sydney Statistical Division (SD) shows that there was a smaller proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 17) but a similar proportion of people in the older age groups (60+).

**Fig 1. Population age structure**



<sup>7</sup> Council commissioned the ABS to provide its population projections (2001-2021).

Overall, 17.2% of the population was aged between 0 and 17, and 17.4% were aged 60 years and over, compared with 23.6% and 16.7% respectively for the Sydney SD. The major differences between the age structure of Randwick City and the Sydney SD were:

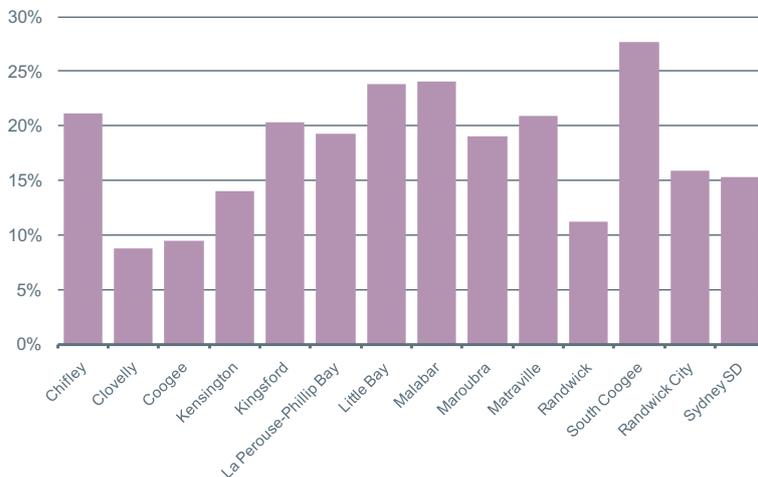
- A larger percentage of 25 to 34 year olds (18.8% compared to 15.3%)
- A larger percentage of 18 to 24 year olds (13.1% compared to 9.9%)
- A smaller percentage of 5 to 11 year olds (6.3% compared to 9.1%)
- A smaller percentage of 12 to 17 year olds (5.4% compared to 7.9%)

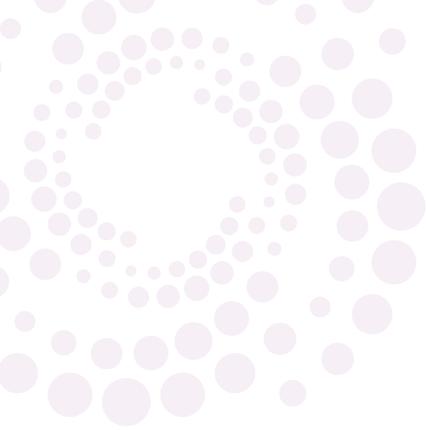
### 3.2

## Household incomes

The graph below shows the proportion of low income households (those earning less than \$500 per week) within each suburb. Out of an overall household total of 45,421 in Randwick City, 7,974 (17.5%) households earn less than \$500 per week. While the figures for Randwick City are lower than the Sydney SD, the issue is the pockets of very low income (and disadvantaged) households in parts of the LGA.

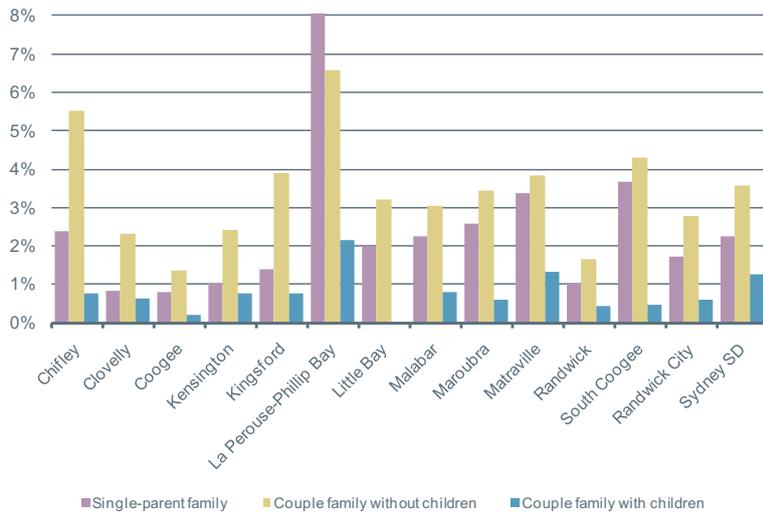
**Fig 2. Proportion of households with weekly income less than \$500 per week by suburb 2006**





An examination of family household types earning less than \$500 per week showed that La Perouse-Phillip Bay had the highest proportion of financially disadvantaged single parent families of all suburbs, as demonstrated in figure 3 below.

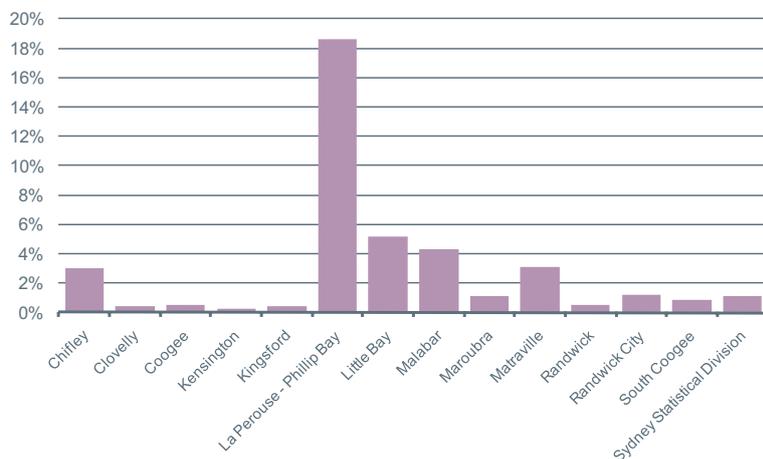
**Fig 3. Proportion of families with weekly income less than \$500 per week by family type and suburb 2006**



### 3.3 Indigenous population

In line with the rest of NSW and Australia, the Indigenous population in Randwick City increased by 9.1% between 2001 and 2006 (from 1,351 to 1,474), while the City’s total population increased by only 0.5%. The graph below shows the comparative proportions of Indigenous residents by suburb<sup>8</sup>.

**Fig 4. Proportion of Indigenous population by suburb**



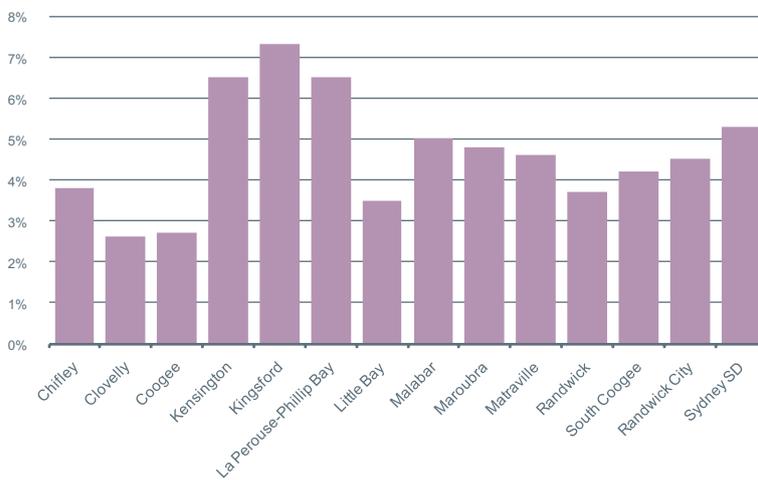
<sup>8</sup> It is acknowledged that there is always a higher level of under reporting for this particular Census question.

### 3.4

## Unemployment

Employment status is an important indicator of the socio-economic status of an area. The highest rate of unemployment within the LGA was recorded in Kingsford (7.3%), while the lowest rate was recorded in Clovelly (2.6%). Compared to the Sydney SD, higher levels of unemployment were also recorded in La Perouse and Kensington (both 6.5%). The high unemployment rates in Kingsford and Kensington are attributed to the large numbers of overseas students who live in both suburbs.

**Fig 5. Unemployment levels by suburb 2006**

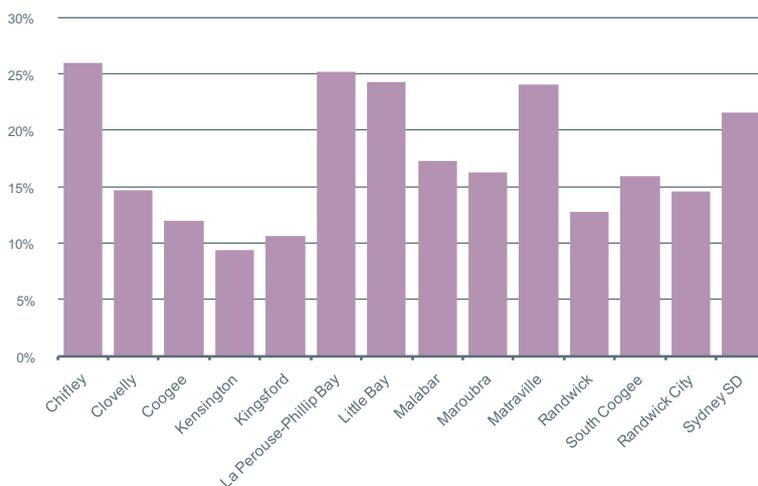


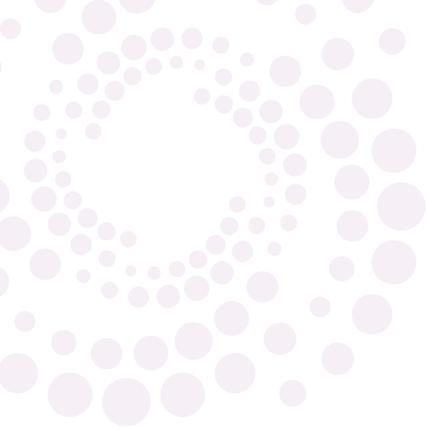
### 3.5

## Levels of education

Combined with educational qualifications, year of schooling data allows assessment of the skill base of the population. Compared to the Sydney SD, (21.5%) a smaller proportion of people in Randwick City (14.6%) left school at the end of year 10.

**Fig 6. Proportion of people who completed high school in year 10 by suburb 2006**

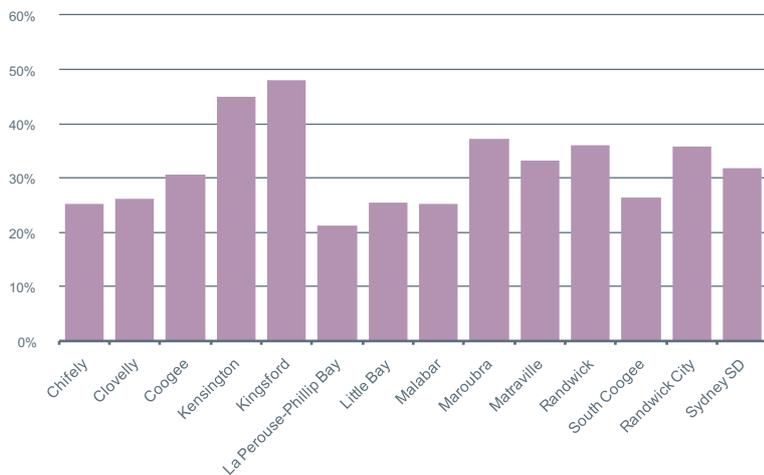




### 3.6 Born overseas

Over a third of the people living in Randwick City were born overseas (35.8%). This proportion is slightly higher than in the Sydney SD where 31.8% of the population were born overseas. At a suburb level, Kingsford is home to the highest proportion of people born overseas (47.9%) followed by Kensington 44.9%. Both suburbs are home to large overseas student populations.

**Fig 7. Proportion of people born overseas by suburb 2006**



The number of new arrivals through Australia’s humanitarian program to an area is a key measure of social exclusion as most new arrivals require access to a range of support services. Data regarding the number of new arrivals to Randwick City over the five year period 2004–2009 has been sourced from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) online Settlement Database. Figure 8 below indicates that only a small proportion (5.0%) of all migrants to Randwick City between 2004 and 2009 have arrived as part Australia’s humanitarian program.

**Fig 8. Proportion of recent immigrants by migration stream to Randwick City**

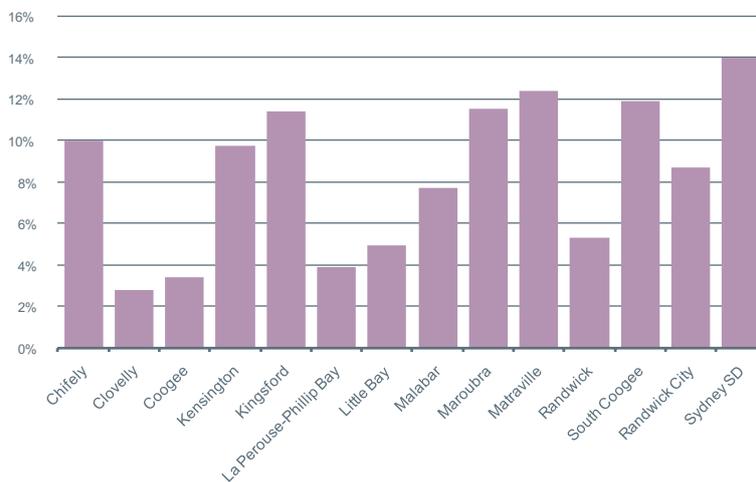


### 3.7

## Proficiency in English

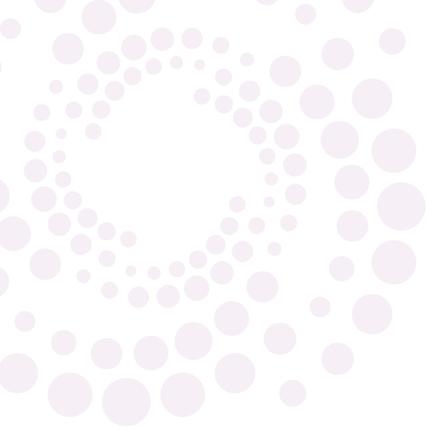
The 2006 Census shows that over a third of Randwick City's residents were born overseas (about 42,567 persons out of 122,173). While 35.8% of Randwick City's population were born overseas, some 3,704 persons (equivalent to 8.7% of overseas born residents) do not speak English very well or not at all. Compared with Randwick City, the Sydney SD has a much higher average proportion (14.0%) of overseas born population with low or no spoken English language skills.

**Fig 9. Proportion of people who speak another language & English not very well or not at all by suburb 2006**



Therefore, an estimated 96%<sup>9</sup> of residents are considered to be relatively proficient in spoken English. This higher proportion of proficient English speakers may be due to the higher proportion of settlers who have migrated under the skilled migrant category upon completing tertiary education at the University.

9 3,704 over 122,173 (2006 population) is equivalent to 3.03% of the total population.



### 3.8

## Affordable housing and housing stress

Overall, 27.2% of the population in Randwick City owned their dwelling, 20.2% were purchasing, and 42.2% were renting, compared with 30.1%, 31.1% and 29.7% respectively for the Sydney SD. The private rental market in Randwick City represents 32.6% of all occupied private dwellings, up from 31.5% in 2001, compared to 21.9% for the Greater Metropolitan Region (GMR).

Utilising Centrelink data, Housing NSW has calculated the proportion of people on low incomes in the private rental market and in receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) paying more than 30% of their income as an indicator of housing stress. Some 4,214 residents in Randwick City receive CRA and 65% of these residents are defined as being in 'housing stress' (2,739 residents)<sup>10</sup>. Almost 70% of residents who are in housing stress are single person households, and of which about 812 are under 25 years of age. Only four other LGAs in the whole of NSW have a higher proportion of residents in housing stress than Randwick LGA, including North Sydney, Sydney City, Waverley and Willoughby.

From the 2006 Census, 66% of Randwick City's low<sup>11</sup> and moderate income households renting in the private rental sector are in housing stress, compared to an average of 56% across the GMR. There were only three LGAs in NSW with more low and moderate income households renting and in housing stress (Sydney City, Canterbury and Newcastle). According to information provided by Housing NSW<sup>12</sup>, Randwick LGA has significantly more low and moderate income renters in housing stress than low and moderate income home purchasers in housing stress.

10 The calculation is based on the proportion of people on low incomes in the private rental market and receiving Commonwealth Assistance, paying more than 30% of their income towards rent.

11 'Low income' –income in under 80% of the median household income while 'Moderate income' –income is between 80% and 120% of the median household income.

12 Housing HSW, *Information of Randwick Housing Market*.

### 3.9

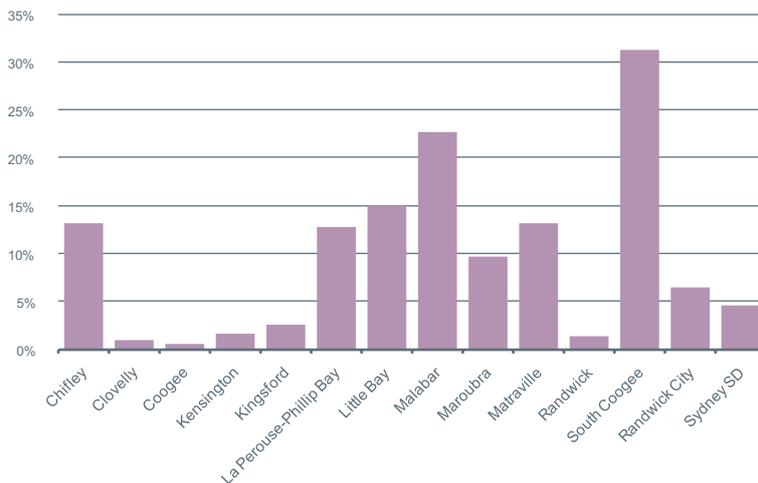
## Social housing

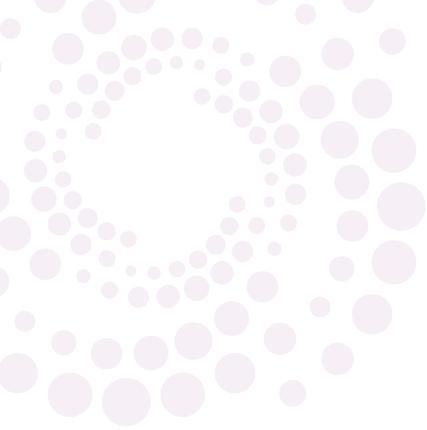
There are currently 4,296 social dwellings in Randwick City including 3,984 public housing dwellings, 62 Aboriginal Housing Office dwellings and 250 community housing properties. At the 2006 Census, public housing represented 6.5% of all housing in Randwick City, which is above the average of 4.5% for the Sydney SD (4.5%).

Housing tenure data indicates that Randwick City has a higher concentration of public housing dwellings (6.5%) than Penrith City (4.5%), on par with Holroyd LGA (6.5%), and a slightly lower proportion than the LGAs of Parramatta (7.8%) and Liverpool (7.8%). Figure 10 below shows that the suburbs of South Coogee (31.2%) and Malabar (22.6%) had the highest concentrations of public housing.

Information provided by Housing NSW indicates that the majority of public housing tenants in Randwick City are aged over 55 years (60% compared with 51.2% on average across all public housing tenancies in the GMR). Further, the vast majority of tenants are single person households (63.4% compared with 51% across the GMR).

**Fig 10. Proportion of people renting from the Government by suburb 2006**

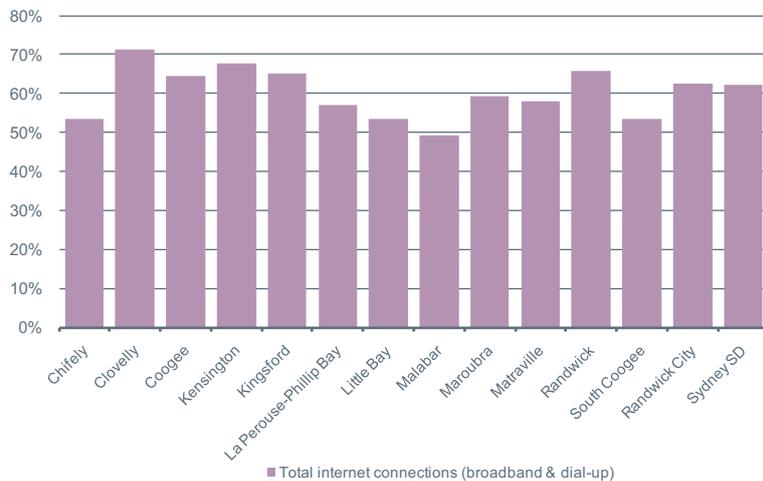




### 3.9.1 Internet connection

Compared to the Sydney SD (45.5%), there was a smaller proportion of households in Randwick City (42.2%) with either no internet connection or a dial up connection, and a larger proportion of households with broadband connectivity (46.7% compared to Sydney SD 45%). Malabar had the lowest proportion of households with internet connection (49.1%) while Clovelly had the highest proportion (71.3%).

**Fig 11. Proportion of households with internet connection by suburb 2006**



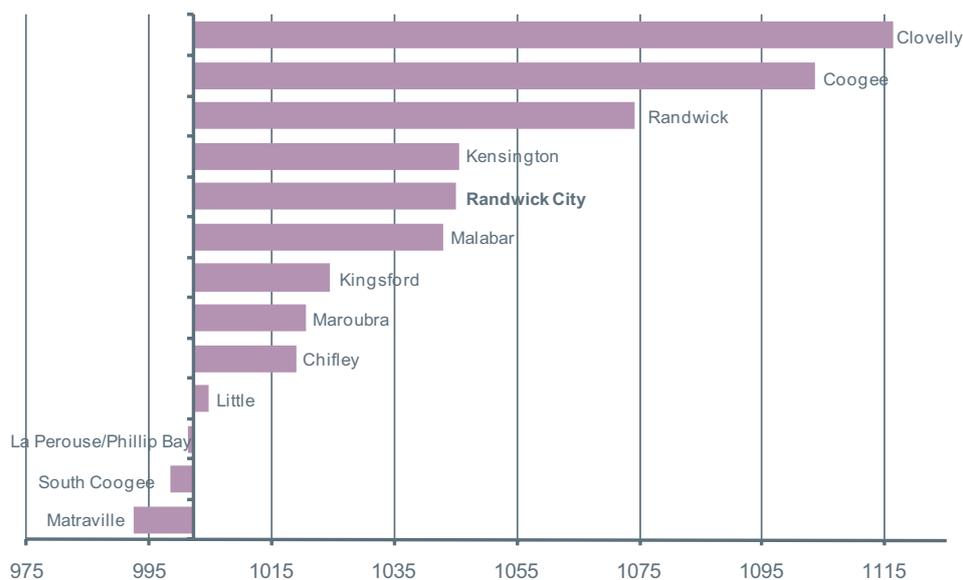
### 3.9.2 Social wellbeing and disadvantage within Randwick City

Feedback from service providers within Randwick City suggests that due to the perceived overall level of wellbeing they tend to be overlooked when seeking government grants to increase their capacity to deliver support services to disadvantaged residents. Demographic data for the Local Government Area (LGA) of Randwick as a whole tends to present it as a 'well-off' area. However a more detailed review of ABS statistics reveals that there are a number of pockets experiencing disadvantage including the area's public housing estates. While the level of public housing concentration in a given area is a useful indicator for service planning purposes, the SEIFA Index provides a more comprehensive measure of relative disadvantage, taking into account attributes such as income, educational attainment, unemployment rates and workforce in unskilled occupations types.

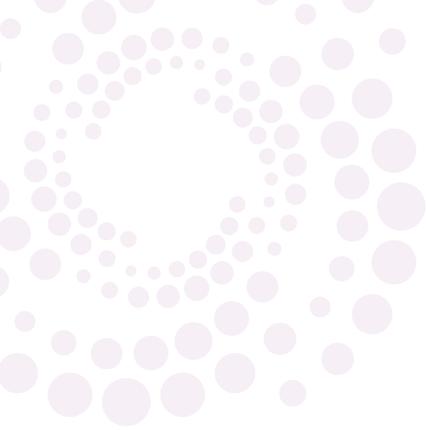
The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) are produced by the ABS using data collected through the Census of Population and Housing. The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSED) is especially useful in identifying geographic areas that are relatively disadvantaged. It is interesting to note that the SEIFA Index of disadvantage for Randwick City shows that the three largest concentrated pockets of disadvantage within the LGA are located in and around the City's public housing estates. IRSED scores recorded in some of the collector districts surrounding these public housing estates are as low as 600 (a score of 1,000 is considered an average score). An area with an IRSED score of 600 or below is considered to be experiencing high levels of disadvantage.

The low IRSED scores are an indication that a high proportion of people living within these areas are experiencing multiple disadvantages including poverty, housing stress, poor English language proficiency and unemployment. It is known however that social disadvantage is not exclusively "tenure dependent"<sup>13</sup> and also affects many people in the private rental market. The graph below shows the SEIFA Index of disadvantage for each of the City's 12 suburbs based on the 2006 Census. The areas experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are the southern suburbs of Matraville and South Coogee, with La Perouse/Phillip Bay and Little Bay following closely behind.

**Fig 12. Australian bureau of statistics, 2006, socio-economic indexes for small areas (SEIFA 2006)**



13 Gleeson, B & Randolph, B (2001) *Social Planning and Disadvantage in the Sydney Context*, Urban Frontiers Program, Issues Paper No. 9.



### 3.9.3

## Vulnerable groups within Randwick City

Groups identified as being vulnerable to disadvantage and exclusion include people with poor or no English language skills; the unemployed; recent immigrants, especially refugees and asylum seekers; people who do not have or utilise access to the internet; young people without access to a computer; people with a disability; and those who are isolated at home. The following section provides an overview of vulnerable groups within Randwick City.

Randwick is a highly multicultural City, with 35.8% of its population born overseas (compared to 31.8% for Sydney SD). Over the five year period 2004-2009, 8,561 new settlers of all ages arrived in Randwick City. This accounts for 4.1% of all new settlers to NSW during that period, the majority of whom (70%) were from countries where English was not the main language spoken. According to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's (DIAC) Settlement Database (1/9/09)<sup>14</sup>, the majority of Randwick City's new settlers arrived under the professional/skilled migrants (68%) or family re-union (31%) categories. Less than 1%, or 72 of Randwick City's new settlers, migrated under Australia's humanitarian program. New arrivals under the humanitarian categories are regarded as a particularly vulnerable group of people because of the circumstances leading up to their arrival in Australia.

Unemployment has been identified as a concern within some local communities, especially in the southern suburbs of Randwick City. A lack of employment opportunities, lower levels of education and a lack of motivation are known to contribute to the problem. While the unemployment rate for the whole of Randwick City (4.5%) was lower than the Sydney SD (5.3%), the unemployment rate within some local communities was considerably higher. For example, within the La Perouse Indigenous Location<sup>15</sup> (includes the suburbs of La Perouse, Little Bay, Phillip Bay and Chifley) the unemployment rate at the time of the 2006 Census was 19.5%. The suburbs of Kingsford (7.3%) and Kensington (6.5%) also recorded higher unemployment rates than the Sydney average largely because of the high number of overseas students living in the area, many of whom have not sought working permits.

14 DIAC Settlement Database (extracted 01/09/2009), Table entitled Total number of permanent arrivals in NSW by LGA and Migration Stream.

15 Indigenous Locations are defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as single Collector Districts or aggregates of CDs which have a population of at least 80 Indigenous persons. At the time of the 2006 Census there were 342 Indigenous persons usually resident in the La Perouse Indigenous Location, which includes the suburbs of La Perouse, Little Bay, Phillip Bay and Chifley.

Randwick City has a number of suburbs with high concentrations of public housing and low-income households. Many households located in these neighbourhoods continue to face difficulties in accessing services and facilities. Local consultations have identified a lack of community services available in the LGA, particularly services that assist families in need of social welfare support.

Randwick City is home to a large international student population with 7,000 international students attending the University of New South Wales (UNSW) alone. Attacks on international students in Australia were highlighted in the media during 2009, however these attacks largely occurred in areas of Western Sydney and Melbourne. Some incidences of crime against students have been recorded around the UNSW campus but were largely robbery motivated. This issue is being addressed through the Council's Crime Prevention and Community Safety Plan: A Safer Randwick City. It is noted however that a proportion of international students experience hardships such as income pressure, labour exploitation, accommodation issues and social exclusion (Hardy 2009)<sup>16</sup>. While these factors are generally outside the roles and responsibilities of local government, the Council can assist principally by acting as a point of referral to support services available through the UNSW student union and social clubs, or other appropriate government agencies and local service providers.

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<sup>16</sup> Hardy, J (2009) *Australian International Education: Expectations and Outcomes*, South Sydney Community Aid Coop Ltd.



## **4 OUR SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

## 4.1

### The Council's policy framework

As articulated within our City Plan, the Council's policy approach<sup>17</sup> is to facilitate and support community based and not-for-profit service providers to deliver services to their clients through its grants and subsidies programs. Instead of taking on a direct service provider role, the Council, in recognition of the valuable role of local organisations as the expert social service providers, allocates financial assistance to eligible organisations to deliver support services. It also works in partnership with key support providers to address specific issues. Our community based organisations play an important role in enhancing the social environment of Randwick City. They have a better understanding of the social environment and needs of their clients. While able to tap into community goodwill and volunteer

efforts, they are not always able to raise sufficient funds for all their activities.

The Council's Grants, Donations and Rental Subsidy policy framework, introduced shortly after the development of the Randwick City Plan in 2006, provides an equitable, transparent and accountable framework for allocating financial assistance to not-for-profit community organisations. Each year, Randwick City Council spends an estimated \$1.4 million (using 2009 figures) on a range of community development programs and activities, including its rental subsidy program and two community grants programs. A breakdown is provided in the table below:

<sup>17</sup> This approach is commonly adopted by many metropolitan based councils in NSW.

Programs/Services	Allocated amounts (approx)	Recipient
Rental Subsidy Program	\$980,000	Support service providers, childcare centres, not-for-profit community organisations
Cultural Community Grants Program	\$110,000	Support service providers and community groups/ individuals
Community Partnerships Funding Program	\$143,000	Social welfare service providers
Professional Development Program for Support Service Providers	\$30,000	Community based or not-for-profit support service providers
Vacation/holiday Care Programs (outside grants program)	\$70,000	Vacation care programs for children and Holiday Program for young people at Kooloora Community Centre and The Shack Youth Services, respectively.
Council funded and managed community activities: Library-based activities Summer Activities (sustainability theme)	\$100,000	Residents and visitors to Bowen, Randwick and Malabar Libraries. Available to all residents with bookings.

In addition, the Council also allocates from its annual budget a donation totalling \$200,000 to local Surf Life Saving Clubs. While providing essential beach safety and surveillance services on our local beaches, the surf clubs also organise beach safety related activities for school children and young people. Such activities help to promote a sense of community and involvement.

#### 4.1.1 Rental subsidy program

Under this program, the Council provides \$980,000 in annual rental subsidies to community organisations. Service providers using Council-owned buildings at substantially discounted rent include neighbourhood centres, baby health and childcare centres, kindergartens, youth services, meals on wheels and family day care. The Council also provide financial assistance to community organisations such as fishing clubs, Coogee Diggers, Rotary, Surfing NSW and Randwick netball. The subsidies include rental subsidies, maintenance of buildings, insurance and waiver of rates. Giving local community services organisations substantial rent subsidies help them to reduce overhead costs and direct their savings towards helping more people in need. The subsidies also help leisure/recreation based clubs to maintain affordable membership fees, enabling residents on low incomes to participate in a range of local activities, keeping them active and socially engaged. Further subsidies in the form of discounted hall hire are given to not-for-profit groups and social service providers that operate for the benefit of local residents, such as seniors groups, various health services, welfare services, church groups, playgroups, multicultural groups and Precinct Committees.

#### 4.1.2 Community grants programs

The Council provides financial assistance to community organisations through two community grants program:

- *Community Partnerships Funding Program*
- *Cultural Community Grants Programs*

The Community Partnerships Funding Program provides financial assistance to social service providers to deliver programs or services aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged residents. Examples of projects funded under this program are:

- Funding to extend local community transport services
- A range of structured youth activities aimed at preventing anti-social behaviour of young people
- After school activities on Friday evenings in Coogee, Randwick and Maroubra focusing on reducing anti social behaviour
- Accommodation, support and education programs for young women who are pregnant/ have a child, are homeless and require intensive support
- Provision of food vouchers to people experiencing disadvantage
- Activities aimed at enhancing community participation, development of social networks and skills of adults with a disability
- Reading support program for primary children who struggle significantly with reading
- Child protection service for women coming out of DV situations to re-learn parenting strategies
- A community garden project at Namatjira, Chifley, involving disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

The Cultural Community Grants Program supports a range of cultural activities and events promoting participation and community involvement, and are open to not-for-profit community groups and organisations. Some of the projects funded under this program include:

- South Coogee Art Project, involving 20 young people from the South Coogee Housing Estate working with an artist on a mural project
- Coogee Family Fun Day 2009, a day of festivities for the community in general and proceeds to be donated to the Children's Hospital
- International Day of People with a Disability (IDPWD), a dance party held with their families and carers to mark the occasion
- The Shack Photography Workshop, a 12 week digital photography workshop targeting disengaged youths
- Mugadung Dreaming, a project to showcase urban Aboriginal contemporary Art in La Perouse
- Carols by candlelight 2009, held in Matraville, Malabar and Coogee for local residents, friends and families in December leading up to Christmas Day

#### 4.1.3 Professional development for local support service providers

The Council has extended its in-house staff training program to not-for-profit social service providers. Offering training courses to community organisations is an effective way of fostering partnerships and supporting organisations in delivering community services to our local residents. Workers have attended a range of courses such as mediation skills, negotiation skills, computer skills related courses, effective time management and problem solving through innovation.

#### 4.1.4 Council managed activities

The Council provides opportunities for people to interact with others as a strategy for promoting a feeling of inclusiveness and involvement where people feel they are a part of our community. It does so by providing venues as well as funding and organising activities for its residents and visitors. More specifically, the Council holds activities that are either free or at nominal cost to members of our disadvantaged communities. Examples of programs and activities include snorkelling, learn-to-sail and scuba diving, and book clubs for children, teenagers and seniors. Further details of community activities provided through the Library and Community Services Department are listed under a separate sub-heading to follow.

#### 4.2 Community planning, programs and services

Randwick City Council's social planning and community development staff is located within the Council's City Planning Division and Library & Community Services Department. The Community Planning Unit<sup>18</sup> is responsible for identifying issues affecting the community and developing appropriate policy responses. Key strategies recently developed by the Unit have addressed affordable housing, crime prevention and community safety, public art and cultural development. The aim of this Plan, An Inclusive Randwick City, is to address issues affecting our vulnerable and marginalised residents. The Unit is also responsible for managing the Council's two community grants programs: Community Partnerships Funding Program (for social service providers) and the Cultural Community Grants Program (for local artists and cultural workers, community groups and local residents).

18 Community Planning Unit and Community Programs and Partnership Unit are based in the Administration Building, Frances Street, Randwick.

The Community Programs and Partnerships Unit is essentially the implementation arm of the Council's social planning and community development activities. Community Project Officers work closely with government agencies to improve services coordination and information provision to social service providers assisting vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. It also works with local service providers to develop joint projects addressing the needs of specific target groups. This is a key function of the Council given that a range of support agencies are involved in delivering services to a diverse group of residents. Ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of these services requires coordinated effort and a broad knowledge on the Council's part. The Council receives financial assistance from the NSW Department of Community Services through the Community Services Grant Program (CSGP) to help fund this aspect of the Unit's operations.

In addition, the Community Programs and Partnerships Unit organises the Council's events and activities that celebrate significant occasions, our diverse community and encourage community participation. Such activities include Australia Day Celebration, the Seniors Christmas Party, Urban Shorts, Senior's Week, Youth Week, Local Government Week, as well as Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks.

The Council's Library and Community Services Department is located at Bowen Library in Maroubra Junction. The Department develops and delivers a wide range of book-based activities, cultural events and educational programs to the community throughout the year. Available from all three libraries at Maroubra (Bowen), Randwick and Malabar, these activities are designed to engage the interests of all age groups. Well attended by the elderly and young visitors alike, the library is a valuable conduit for residents to make new friends and avoid social isolation. The Council's library bus service ensures that specific target groups with limited mobility are able to access library services.

#### 4.2.1

### Council managed programs and services

Some of the key programs and services delivered by the Council include:

- *Randwick Community Development and Support Expenditure Scheme (CDSE)*. In addition to its own two grants program, the Council also helps to administer the local CDSE Scheme. Working closely with the Scheme's executive members as a committee convenor, the process of assessing and prioritising applications takes place every year, and is based on the Council's identified funding priorities. However, the final funding decision on applications is entirely at the discretion of the contributing Clubs.
- Moverley Childcare Centre is a Council managed childcare facility. The Council owns 9 other childcare centres operated by community based organisations that pay subsidised rents.
- *Bilingual staff*. Accredited language aides help people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds remain informed about services and programs and ensure that they are appropriately assisted with their enquiries.
- *Home Maintenance and Modification Service (HMMS)*. The Council receives state government funding (NSW Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care) to provide a HMMS for Home and Community Care eligible residents, such as frail older people, people with disabilities, and their carers. This service provides low-cost small to medium home repairs and modification services, such as the installation of safety ramps and support rails in the bathroom, changing light globes and widening doorways.

- *Library based Community Activities and Education Programs.* The Council provides a wide range of affordable (free) activities on a regular basis. Some examples are the Seniors Interest Groups (5 different activities), Weekly Cyberwise classes for seniors, Authors talk Program, Community Book Clubs (5 groups), Baby lap-sit programs and English language classes (conducted by volunteers but Council managed), The Teen Book Club, Monthly Eco Heroes Club and Kids Club.

### 4.3 Advocacy, referral and partnerships with service providers

Part of the Council's advocacy work lies in maintaining a good understanding of the community's needs, and representing those needs to our local service partners and government agencies. However, consultations with local service providers have revealed that our community wants the Council to take on an even stronger advocacy role in the future.

The Council also receives a high volume of enquiries from residents seeking information or assistance from support services. The Council provides a referral service to residents via its Community Project Officers. The Council is committed to improving communication between those in need and the relevant community service providers.

#### 4.3.1 Inter-agencies and service provider networks

An important ongoing function for the Council is to continue to strengthen our existing interagency relations and actively forged new partnerships with government and non-government agencies. A strong and viable network of support service providers minimises duplication of service delivery and improves targeting of services to clients in need. The Council will continue to support and facilitate forums where broader issues about local social needs can be analysed and brought to the attention of state government and relevant agencies. Examples of inter-agency forums and community services networks attended and supported by the Council's staff include:

- Inner Eastern Sydney Multicultural Interagency (Council as lead agency)
- Eastern Sydney Disability Interagency
- Eastern Suburbs Youth Services Network (Council as lead agency)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Interagency
- Eastern Suburbs Families and Children Interagency (Council as lead agency)
- Eastern Suburbs Home and Community Care (HACC) Forum
- Randwick Community Drug Action Team (CDAT) (Council as lead agency)
- Eastern Suburbs Domestic Violence Forum (Council as lead agency)
- Eastern Region Local Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum

The Council also convenes five advisory committees, attended by community representatives and Councillors.

- Older Persons
- Access & Disability
- Multicultural
- Aboriginal
- Arts and Cultural

### 4.3.2

#### Partnerships with support service providers

The Council has developed formal agreements, generally referred to as Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), with a number of state government agencies. It has MOUs with Housing NSW, the Department of Health, and Maroubra Local Area Command. The MOUs outline how both organisations will work together to achieve specific outcomes. For example, the aim of the MOU established in 2005 with Housing NSW was to improve planning and service provision for the benefit of social housing communities in Randwick City.

However, MOUs are not essential for the Council's staff to develop joint projects or partnership arrangements with local service providers. A fundamental function of the Council's Community Project Officers is to work in partnership with service providers in their service delivery roles. The support that the Council's staff can offer to local service providers is varied and may include strategic/business functions, grants preparation support, staff skills training, advocacy and joint project developments. Examples of partnership projects or program developed with community organisations in response to an identified need or critical issues include:

- Healthy living and wellbeing workshops for older people held in partnership with local community based service providers
- Breakfast program at La Perouse Public School
- 'Love Bites' violence prevention program implemented with local secondary schools and teachers and community workers.
- Vacation care and holiday programs for disadvantaged families
- Parenting calendar program
- Service information forum for people from a multicultural background
- Community development projects on the South Coogee Public Housing Estate
- Old time dance
- Therapeutic gardening workshop
- Community gardens projects
- Multimedia and digital workshops (films are produced about issues e.g. LEXO film; Drug effect youth forum
- Domestic violence forum
- Carers support forum
- In living memory photographic exhibition
- Street outreach support project for young people
- Drug and alcohol information sessions
- Funky fins puppet show (Children and Sustainability)
- Youth anti bullying program



# **5** SOCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As highlighted in the section three of this Plan, there are distinct pockets of households within Randwick City that are experiencing disadvantage. This section summarises the unmet social needs of our residents, based on consultations with service providers and residents over a number of years.

## 5.1 Community consultations

In November 2009, a biennial Service Providers Planning Day was held to provide networking opportunities for staff from various local support services. It was also an opportunity for the Council's staff to share information about the Council's major projects, such as the draft Social Inclusion Plan, and to obtain participants' responses or comments on the day. The proceedings of the planning day are presented in a booklet entitled Proceedings from RCC Community Planning Day.

The Council's staff also attended a number of service provider meetings to discuss various aspects of the draft Plan. The draft Social Inclusion Plan was also publicly exhibited for three months. Where relevant, comments and issues gathered from the Planning Day, public exhibition period and community meetings are reflected under section 5.2 below or in the Action Plan<sup>19</sup>.

## 5.2 Opportunities and priorities for addressing gaps

The current gaps in service provision that need to be addressed over the next 10 years are:

### 5.2.1 Increasing accessibility of community transport

Transportation can be a major cause of social exclusion because those without access to a car often have difficulty accessing employment, education, health and other services, food shops, sporting, leisure and cultural activities<sup>20</sup>. Within the Randwick LGA there is a range of transport options available to the community however not all of these options are accessible and affordable to groups and individuals with specialised needs, such as our older residents. Compared to the Sydney SD, Randwick City has a higher proportion of older people aged 70+. Local community transport providers<sup>21</sup> also report that the majority of their trips are health related, predominately to the hospital and other medical appointments. As a result, there are limited opportunities to provide shopping services and social outings to frail and elderly residents who live alone, many of whom experience higher levels of social isolation.

There is also an especially strong demand for community buses to transport young people and people with disabilities to activities, outings and camps. While it is possible to hire buses, service providers have reported that the costs are often prohibitive and takes up a large part of the budget set aside for activities. Specific target groups such as young people from low income and disadvantaged households, and older people who depend on community transport to attend medical appointments, often have difficulties securing affordable and appropriate transportation.

19 Council staff will raise this as part of its day to day liaison with government agencies and advocate on behalf of local service providers.

20 Hurni, A (2006) Transport and social disadvantage in Western Sydney, UWS and WSCF, Parramatta, p. 13.

21 These include Waverly/Randwick Community Transport.

Buses servicing the City's lower density southern suburbs are much less frequent and it has been reported that residents who are not well enough to walk to their nearest buses stops and cannot afford taxis often miss medical appointments. In 2009, a local community transport service provider, with funding from a government agency, ran a trial shuttle bus services from Randwick to La Perouse and on to the POW hospital via public housing estates. The trial service has since come to an end and there is a need to seek alternative financial support to enable this transport service to continue into the future. Another issue raised by local transport providers is the lack of secure and affordable overnight bus storage facilities in Randwick City. This is a major issue that often confronts highly populated urban centres. As such, a key priority for the Council's staff will be to work with service providers in an effort to alleviate shortfalls in transport services and infrastructure facilities.

Local service providers have also identified that some young people, especially those experiencing disadvantage, are finding it difficult to complete the 120 hours of supervised driving needed to obtain a drivers licence. Research carried out by the NRMA supports these concerns, with a survey of 1,200 young people indicating that 40% of young people admitted to having either lied, knowing someone who lied or may lie in their logbook<sup>22</sup>. Learner Driver Mentor Programs (LDMPs) are one way to provide support for new drivers to become licensed by allowing them use of a vehicle for practice while being supervised by a volunteer mentor. These programs are designed to assist Learners who may not have ready access to a suitable car and/ or supervising driver but need to get their licence for employment or other opportunities.

## 5.2.2

### Improving the community's knowledge of available services

Some of our community are not aware of the existing social support services that they may be eligible to receive. Community members most susceptible to this issue are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds with poor English language skills. The majority of our City's CALD residents are proficient in English<sup>23</sup> and are well integrated with the community in general. Evidence of our City's multiculturalism and diversity are reflected in the events that the Council celebrates, its local population mix, and in the number of shops or restaurants co-existing in our town centres, offering a great variety of products and cuisines from around the world.

Australia, with a three tiered government structure (Local, State and Federal) has a complex support service delivery system. Confusion often arises over which tier of government funds and/or delivers social support services. The advent of the internet has improved access to information about government services, which means that for those who are computer literate and have access from home, information is much easier to access. However, many of our financially disadvantaged households, elderly people and members of marginalised residents still rely on traditional means of information dissemination. The 2006 Census confirmed that nearly 27% of the City's population (13,347 persons) did not have household internet connection. Many of our older residents prefer to use the Council as the initial contact point to enquire about services. There may be many more residents from disadvantaged backgrounds (including persons with limited English proficiency) who are not aware of services that could assist them. This lack of knowledge can have a significant impact upon their overall quality of life.

The Council will shortly be introducing on its website translated excerpts of its major services into the five most widely spoken languages in the LGA.<sup>24</sup> However, clearly there is a need to continue to improve the way information is disseminated, such as more accurate targeting of suitable information and contents to our marginalised or isolated residents.

### 5.2.3 Expanding services and programs to meet identified gaps

There is a need to attract more service providers specialising in families and young children and youth into the area, as identified in the Council's reports and consultations with local services providers. There is also a lack of 'top-up' state government funding to enable service providers to respond to an increasing proportion of clients with on-going support needs, or who are in crisis (e.g. drug and alcohol related problems, child neglect and domestic violence). Our local service providers often miss out on community services funding. One approach for the Council is to work with local providers to develop better targeting and coordination of strategies. Another way is to seek and negotiate with service providers outside the area who have some spare capacity to deliver additional services on a part time basis. Unfortunately, the high cost of renting office space in the locality is a limiting factor.

Identified gaps include structured after school and vacation care programs for children and young people between the ages of 8 to 17 years, family support workers focusing on prevention programs, education support and diversionary programs for at risk school children/young people, services for older residents and people with disabilities. The sorts of projects or programs that the Council considers as having a high priority<sup>25</sup> have one or more of the following characteristics:

Projects or activities that:

- Support the valuable work undertaken by not-for-profit organisations or groups who direct services to disadvantaged people and families
- Support education, employment and training initiatives aimed at building the skills and capacity of young people
- Contribute to supporting local level projects aimed at helping disadvantaged children and youths from becoming disadvantaged adults
- Support or engage young people who have limited access to mainstream services, including projects that improve access to established youth services
- Address social isolation issues and improve access to home support services for elderly and/or disabled residents

There is also a need to respond to the emerging issue of rising food costs and its impact on the health and wellbeing of low to moderate income households. This issue is often discussed in terms of environmental sustainability and food security. According to Professor John Coveney,<sup>26</sup> low income families would need to spend about 33% of their weekly income to feed a family of five a healthy diet, about double the share an average income family would spend. In other words, people are not eating healthily. If they want to, they're going to have to spend a lot more of their income on food. Families on lower incomes are choosing cheaper foods, which are often high in fat, sugar and salt. Such foods can lead to increased rates of heart disease, obesity and chronic illnesses, and a lower life expectancy.

Communities at the local or neighbourhood level however, are already responding to this issue through projects such as the community gardens movement. In addition to producing cheaper fresh vegetables for those who participate in community gardening, the gardens promote community wellbeing and friendship building opportunities regardless of a participant's cultural,

24 These include Russian, Indonesian, Greek, Italian, and Mandarin.

25 Extract from Council's *Guidelines for Assessing Grants Applications & Funding Priorities*, page 9.

26 Professor John Coveney from Flinders University is a food policy expert and expressed this view at the Australian Science Media Centre Briefing, as reported in the Herald Sun, January 17, 2008: "Experts warn of global food shortage, eat vegetables call".

social or economic background. The desire by residents for more community gardens to be established as part of its open space/reserve network is gathering momentum. The Council's staff is already working with government agencies and service providers in the development of a number of community garden projects for specific neighbourhood groups. However on a broader level, the Council recognises the need to formally develop a community gardening policy aimed at achieving nutritional and positive social outcomes. The development of such a policy is included as an action within this Plan.

#### 5.2.4 Giving young people the best start in life

A key issue raised by government agencies and service providers is the involvement of a number of young people (as young as 8 years old) in petty crimes, vandalism and other anti-social behaviour. The issue is complex and extends beyond the crime action itself. The root causes are often linked to the young person's home environment and circumstances. Inadequate parental supervision of children is a proven predictor of juvenile misbehaviour and delinquency<sup>27</sup>. Focusing on prevention strategies is where the Council can best assist. Targeting at-risk children and early teenagers, giving them the opportunities to participate in constructive and structured activities, including a voice to help shape strategies affecting their wellbeing, is an essential part of this Plan. Working closely in partnership with local services and schools are essential to achieving effective and sustainable outcomes for at risk children and teenagers.

The Council is currently addressing many of these issues with its key partners including state government agencies and through its Crime Prevention and Community Safety Plan: A Safer

Randwick City<sup>28</sup>. These issues include young people living in households where domestic violence and neglect of children occurs due to drug and alcohol abuse. Managing the issue requires whole-of-government intervention to determine how the cycle of offending can be broken. This may involve the provision of suitable housing, assisting an individual to gain employment or homework help in schools, treating substance or alcohol abuse or protecting children from the effects of a disruptive family environment. At the time of writing this Plan, a working group comprising of relevant government agencies, developed as part of the state government's Crime Prevention Partnerships Program (CPPP), was meeting regularly to address these issues on a case by case basis.

The provision of adequately funded services for children and teenagers is a difficult issue, particularly in identifying a location suitable and affordable on which to build a multi-purpose centre with a youth focus. The Council's Community Facilities Plan, developed in 2003, identified the need for such a facility. Similarly, A Safer Randwick City has highlighted the need for a place where young people can engage safely in various activities and at the same time provide opportunities to address some of the root causes of anti-social behaviour. The facility will need to meet a number of essential criteria for ensuring successful outcomes, such as convenient location for young people to get to, well buffered from noise transmission as a result of activities held there, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. More work will be required, including identifying much needed financial assistance, but when completed the facility may also provide much needed affordable office space for a range of service providers to run regular outreach programs and activities.

27 Don Weatherburn, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, February 2001, *What causes crime?* Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice No.54, pgs 3-4.

28 The crime prevention plan also refers to drug use and alcohol abuse issues, and describes the approach and actions Council will take to minimise harm.

### 5.2.5

## Addressing affordable rental housing and homelessness issues

Access to appropriate and affordable housing is one of the most important factors in developing sustainable local communities. Housing that is affordable to very low income households, young people, the elderly and people living on pensions and benefits are provided through Housing NSW. The Council has also implemented a range of initiatives designed to retain and encourage affordable housing in the Local Government Area (LGA). The lack of affordable housing for households on low and middle incomes is a critical issue within Randwick City. This is in spite of a strong social housing presence in Randwick. There are significantly higher numbers of low and moderate income tenants in housing stress than home purchasers in housing stress in Randwick City. The supply of affordable housing for the City's key workers (in essential services) is a major concern as there are a number of significant employment nodes within the City including the hospitals, schools, university, gaol and Port Botany. These initiatives are detailed in the Council's Affordable Housing Strategy (2007). This document includes an Action Plan setting out the tasks for achieving our objectives. A copy of the Affordable Housing Strategy is available from the Council's website [www.randwick.nsw.gov.au](http://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au).

Boarding houses traditionally provide low cost and accessible accommodation for many people in Sydney who cannot afford private rental accommodation. They are also referred to as 'last resort housing' for people on very low incomes, including some marginalised groups e.g. occupants with some form of disability or mental health issue. A study<sup>29</sup> of Sydney's boarding houses found that tenants are no longer confined to elderly single men. Rather, a growing proportion of residents are young singles aged between 20 and 29, with women making up a quarter of total residents. Boarding house closures have been linked to increased

demand for night shelter and increased levels of homelessness. In the past, boarding houses played an important role in preventing more people from moving into insecure sleeping arrangements or sleeping rough. This was confirmed in a report on homelessness published by the ABS 2001<sup>30</sup>. The report found that more than 55% of all homeless persons counted were residents of boarding houses at the time.

At the 2009 Community Planning Day attended by local and sub-regional level service providers, support workers noted an increase in the number of (whole) families that have been made homeless in recent years. The view was that there is an absence of family-sized supported accommodation and shelters in the locality. As a result family members had to be accommodated under separate roofs, adding to the trauma, especially for children.

Issues relating to homelessness are complex and require the involvement of all three tiers of government to address them. People defined as long term homeless or rough sleepers tended to have health related problems as contributing causes for their homeless circumstances. Many suffer from a mental illness, and in a majority of cases, require some level of support services to help them maintain successful and longer term tenancies. In August 2009, the state government introduced a specific legislation aimed at promoting the growth of affordable rental housing stock, including boarding houses, granny flats and medium density housing. These strategies have been designed to maximise the benefits of Commonwealth subsidies under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) and the Economic Stimulus Package for new social housing.

It is envisaged that many households and single persons will benefit from these strategies. However in Randwick City it is unlikely that the new affordable dwellings created under the new Affordable Rental Housing SEPP will address the issue of rough sleepers and the chronically homeless. This is because access to, and availability of, support services are critical

29 Davidson A, Phibbs P, & Cox G (1998) *Inner Sydney Boarding House Report*.

30 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) *Counting the Homeless*, NSW.

to supporting this particular client group in maintaining their tenancies. There are a number of successful national and international models for the provision of supported accommodation for chronically people with complex needs. These models will be investigated by nine local councils including Randwick City, as part of the Inner City Mayor's Forum Working Group on Homelessness. It will be through this working group that the Council will direct its resources to ensuring a positive outcome in addressing homelessness in the City and adjoining Local Government Areas.

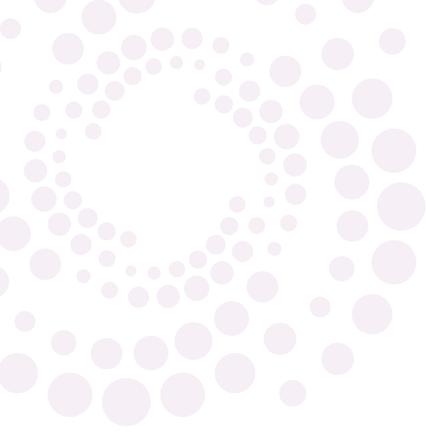
### **5.2.6**

#### Addressing the needs of our Indigenous community

At the time of the 2006 ABS Census, there were 1,480 people living in the Randwick LGA who identified as either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). Randwick City has a higher proportion of ATSI people compared to the Sydney SD but lower than NSW (1.2 compared to Sydney SD 1.1% and NSW 2.1%). A number of issues have been identified by our local Indigenous service providers, which reflect that significant disadvantage is occurring within that community. Some of the key issues include, although are not limited to, unemployment, education, transportation and inadequate housing. Data available at a local level also supports these concerns including lower levels of education, higher levels of unemployment and low car ownership. The Council has a specific Aboriginal Community Project Officer working with the local Aboriginal communities, whose role it is to support service providers in delivering a range of programs and events to those in need. In addition, the Council will look to implement a number of new programs over the next 10 years including programs targeting unemployment and education retention rates.



## 6 ACTION PLAN



This Action Plan was developed by the Council in response to the key social needs raised in the previous sections of this Plan. Each action has been allocated a priority ranking based upon the following timeframes:

- Short term Priority (years 1-2)
- Medium term Priority (years 3-4)
- Long term Priority (years 5-10)
- Ongoing

The following abbreviations have been used within the Action Plan to indicate the different sections of the Council listed as being responsible for ensuring each of the various actions are completed:

- **CDAT** Community Drug Action Team
- **CPU** Community Planning Unit
- **CPP** Community Programs & Partnerships Unit
- **GIS** Graphical Information Services
- **IT** Integrated Transport
- **ST** Sustainability Team

## Target Issue 1: Increasing accessibility of community transport

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Continue to assist community transport providers to improve their infrastructure/services as needs change	CPP	Ongoing
Improve community knowledge of existing community transport options including development of Transport Action Guides	CPP, IT	Short term
Investigate opportunities to provide specialised bus services to transport older persons (65 years+) to and from social outings and shopping trips, and young people to and from structured programs and activities after school hours	CPP	Ongoing
Investigate opportunities for Area Health to assist with transport provision for the elderly to access hospital services from the Randwick hospital complexes (including POW Hospital) and medical appointments outside of the LGA	CPP	Short term
Continue advocating to state government for improved and accessible public transport	All staff	Ongoing
Advocate for the provision of supplementary bus passes for young people to get home safely from after school and weekend activities	CPP	Short term

## Target Issue 2: Improving the community's knowledge of services

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Continue and expand promotion of local services in the Mayor's column, other Council publications and at community centres and libraries	All staff in Admin centre, libraries and Depot	Ongoing
Distribute copies of the Council's Community Information Directories (containing information on the range of community services available in Randwick City) more extensively and to target groups	All staff	Ongoing
Produce a map of the LGA showing the distribution of services available and update regularly	GIS/ CPP	Medium term
More information needs to be provided in a range of community languages and be available in a variety of locations such as G.P. surgeries, shopping centres, service providers and libraries	CPU	Short term

### Target Issue 3: Expanding services and programs to meet identified gaps

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Continue to improve the links between service providers through an annual joint inter-agency meeting organised by the Council	CPP	Short term
Hold an annual information day for local service providers e.g. service providers expo	CPU	Ongoing
Provide in-house training programs/courses for local service providers	CPU/Staff Development	Ongoing
Continue to provide funding to support service providers under the Council's Community Partnerships Funding Program	CPU/ CPP	Ongoing
Continue to hold the biennial Community Planning Day for service providers to raise and discuss emerging issues and community needs	CPU	On-going
Continue to assist in the administration of the Randwick CDSE Scheme and apply the Council's priority needs information as part of the assessment process	CPU	Ongoing
Develop a community gardening policy, including (possibly) potential sites that are appropriate for community gardens for sustainability, nutritional and recreational outcomes	ST	Ongoing
Identify funding and locational options for a youth focused community centre within the southern part of the LGA	CPU	Short term

### 3.1 Improving service providers' knowledge of, and access to, funding opportunities

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Continue to identify funding opportunities and promote these to the relevant service providers	CPP/CPU	On-going
Assist service providers with preparation of grant applications through grant application writing workshops	CPP	Short term & subsequently on-going
Continue to implement and monitor the Council's grants programs	CPU	Ongoing
Advocate for local businesses to provide sponsorship for service providers	CPP/CPU	Medium Term
Investigate opportunities for the Council to expand service provider subsidised office accommodation	CPU/PP	Long Term
Continue to advocate to the Commonwealth and state government on behalf of service providers for increased grants funding	All staff	Ongoing
Organise a conference of service providers to discuss and identify skill development issues, the outcomes of which will be used to inform the Council's Training for Service Provider Program	CPU/PP	Short Term

### 3.2 Increasing access to, and opportunities for, volunteers

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Continue to hold an annual volunteers information day to promote local volunteering opportunities and link volunteers with appropriate service providers	CPP	Ongoing
Continue to advocate for private sector sponsorship of volunteering opportunities	CPP	Ongoing

## Target Issue 4: Giving young people the best start in life

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Continue to provide parenting programs and information sessions about child development for local families	CPP	Ongoing
Continue to advocate to the Department of Aging Disability and Home Care regarding the need for a case manager for families of children with additional needs	CPP	Ongoing
Continue to assist with the promotion, coordination and networking of child and family services to reduce duplication and facilitate better integration	CPP	Ongoing
Support through grants funding, community engagement and diversionary activities/programs for young people (9-18 years) addressing antisocial and at-risk behaviours	CPU/ CPP	Ongoing
Focus on youth participation at local community and sporting events and activities	CPP/Events	Ongoing
Advocate for low cost out of school hour care services and more places for casual use by disadvantaged families, particularly in the Maroubra, Chifley and La Perouse areas	CPP	Short Term
Encourage and support the provision of structured, age appropriate and affordable (low cost or free) activities during after school hours and throughout school holidays, for disadvantaged and at-risk families	CPU/ CPP	Ongoing
Investigate learner driver programs for disadvantaged youths for the purpose of improving employment opportunities (e.g. commercial driving lessons are expensive and parents of disadvantaged youths may not have access to family car)	CPP/IT	Ongoing
Work with service providers to introduce drug and alcohol prevention/intervention programs, targeting young people	CPP/CDAT Forum	Ongoing

## Target Issue 5: Addressing affordable rental housing and homelessness issues

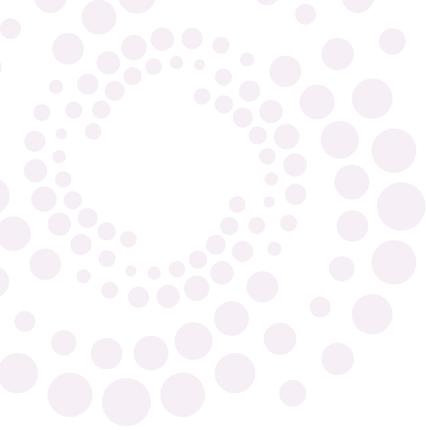
Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Actively participate in reducing homelessness in Randwick City through the Inner Sydney Homelessness Interagency and advocate for training programs to assist service providers identify clients who are at risk for referral purposes	CPP	Ongoing
Continue to refer homeless individuals to appropriate services such as the Homeless Persons Information Centre	CPP	Ongoing
Council officers to continue to informally interact daily with people who are 'rough sleeping' to maintain an understanding of each person, their safety and welfare	CPP/Public Officers	Ongoing
Continue to implement the Council's Affordable Housing Strategy and Affordable Rental Housing Program	CP	On-going
Continue to liaise closely with Housing NSW regarding local planning and service provision issues through its Strategic Partnership Advisory Group meetings and UNSW student housing issues	CP	On-going

## Target Issue 6: Addressing the needs of our Indigenous community

Action	Key Responsibility within Council	Timeframe
Liaise with the local Indigenous community into opportunities for Aboriginal employment and training programs	CPP	Ongoing
Continue to conduct a program of activities as part of National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance (NAIDOC) Week	CPP/Events	Ongoing
Promote availability of the Home Maintenance & Modification Service/ investigate potential for establishing additional services	CPP	Ongoing

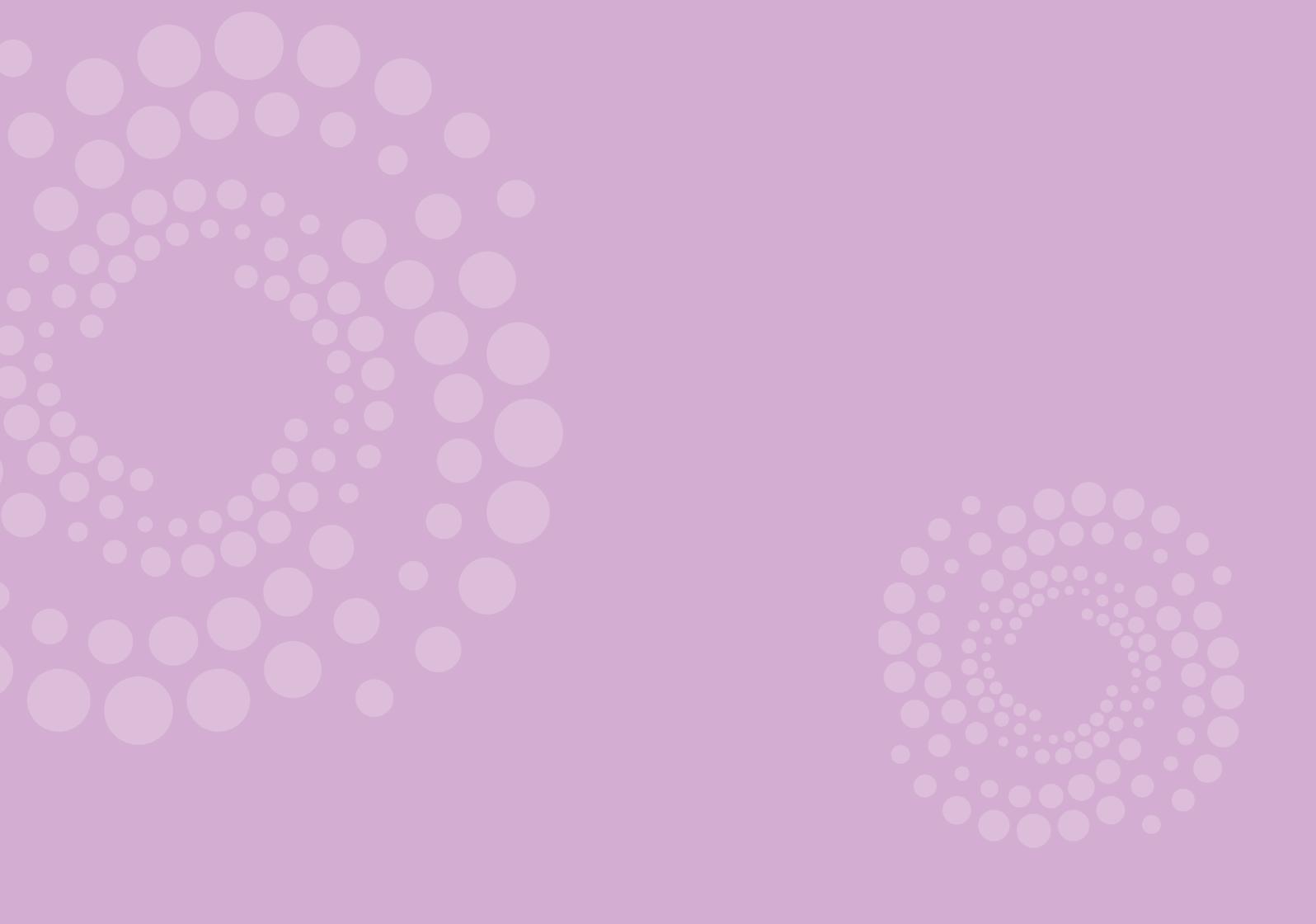


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