

RANDWICK

SCENE

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28 cents a day

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Town Hall Takeover

Your invite to the city's most creative space

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Randwick City Council
a sense of community

RANDWICK SCENE

council@randwick.nsw.gov.au

Randwick City Council Customer Service Centre

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Cover image: Sisters Simone (left) and Marnie (right) Piefke at their shop House of Pie in Matraville. Photo by Mark Bond.



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From the Mayor Dylan Parker

As the seasons change, exciting changes are taking root across Randwick City.

We're unlocking the doors of Randwick Town Hall and handing the keys to local creatives. From free live jazz to pop-up markets and deep dives into ecology, Town Hall Takeover is a new Council initiative making local art more accessible. Read the story on page 16.

One of the great things about living and working in Randwick City is the wide range of unique restaurants, cafes, shops and services. Our town centres are the heart of our community. In a new series focusing on our local shopping strips, we get to know some of the hardworking and passionate business owners in Matraville. Check out the story on page 10, or even better head down to Matraville town centre and meet them in person.

It's been a year since the Environmental Levy became permanent. Check out page 14 for a wrap-up of what's been achieved over the past year and how the levy will continue to help build a healthier, greener and more sustainable city.

I'm very pleased that Randwick Council and the NSW Government are taking action to address long-standing water quality issues at Coogee Beach. We're pushing ahead with a project to

divert stormwater. Read all about it on page 20. It's another tick for the environment and for local residents and beachgoers.

Discover Little Bay's biggest secret on page 18, a fascinating read challenging the conventional understanding of who lived in the iconic bell tents photographed on the beach in the 1880s.

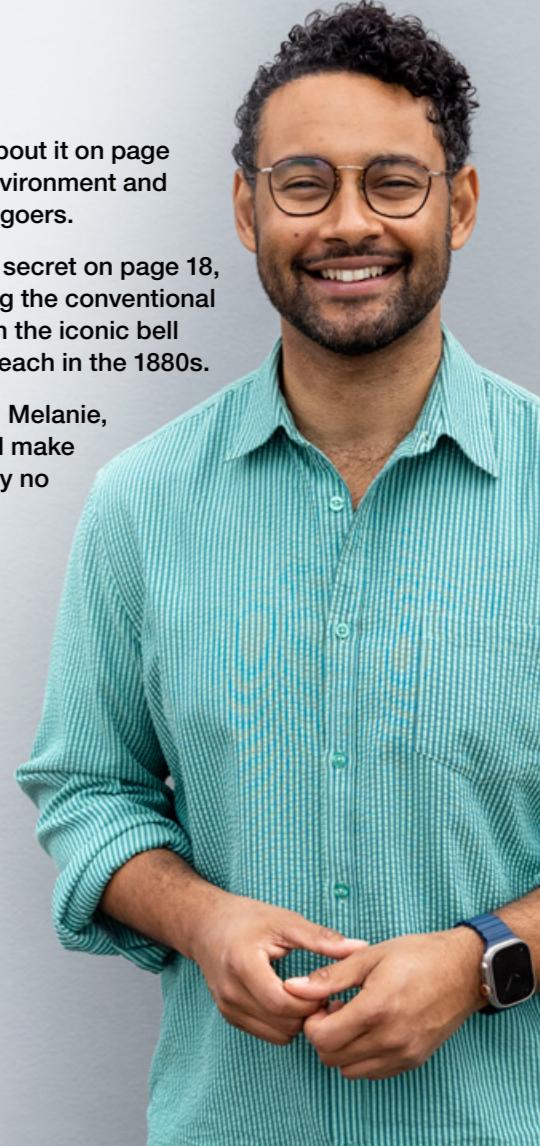
On page 21 meet 12-year-old Melanie, who shows us that we can all make a difference in our community no matter our age.

Finally, if you're looking for new ways to connect with your neighbours and the community over the holiday season, check out page 12 for a story on how Council can support you to host a street party

Enjoy!


Dylan Parker

Dylan Parker
Mayor of Randwick



news in brief

Sign up to eNews for your weekly fix of Randwick Council news, projects, events and more.

randwick.nsw.gov.au/enews

HAVE YOUR SAY

Randwick Council values community feedback, and we regularly seek community comment on our proposed projects, policies and plans.

Your input is important to help us improve our projects and activities to ensure we're delivering the best outcomes for Randwick City.

Check out our current or upcoming consultations:

- Draft Social Media Policy
- Randwick Junction Town Centre Planning Proposal
- Baker Park Multipurpose Court

And our recently completed consultations:

- Draft Affordable Rental Housing Strategy
- Safer Randwick: Community Safety Action Plan
- Urban Forest Policy
- Illumination of Town Hall
- Maroubra Surf Club Redevelopment
- Plan of Management for Community Land

Register to be the first to know what's happening in your area!

yoursay.randwick.nsw.gov.au



Former Olympian and 'The Iceman' inducted into Australian Surfing Walk of Fame

Two legends of surf were inducted into the Australian Surfing Walk of Fame on Sunday 20 July at Maroubra Beach. Former Olympian and long-time surf life saver Maxwell Raymond Metzker (second from right), and two-time world surfing champion Damien Hardman (second from left), also known as 'The Iceman', were inducted into the prestigious Walk of Fame as part of Randwick Council's annual Beach Breaks event. Also pictured from left: Surfing NSW's Matt Lawson, Deputy Mayor of Randwick Cr Marea Wilson, Let's Go Surfing founder Brenda Miley, and Member for Kingsford Smith Matt Thistlethwaite.



Multi-Headed Reclining Figure (2025), by Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran, Kingsford.



Reko Rennie's 'Totemic' (2025) in Todman Square, Kensington.

First artworks unveiled: New Monumental launches in Kensington and Kingsford

Reflections on monumentality is the theme for new ground-breaking public art, called *New Monumental*, popping up along the evolving Kensington to Kingsford town centre corridor of Anzac Parade.

The first work in the series, *Multi-Headed Reclining Figure* (2025), is a peaceful reclining figure by acclaimed Sri Lankan-Australian artist Ramesh Mario Nithiyendran, now installed under a frangipani tree at Kingsford.

Kamilaroi artist Reko Rennie's *Totemic* (2025) in Todman Square,

Kensington is a striking bronze sculpture reimagining the traditional totem through a contemporary lens.

Both artworks were curated by Vital Commons and commissioned by developer Scape who are building significant new student housing development in the area in close proximity to the University of NSW.

A final piece in the trilogy, *Home Under My Feet and Bells in My Ears* (2025), by Monica Rani Rudhar, will be installed in Kensington at Scape Lachlan in late 2025.



Kingsford Municipal Markets 1959 located at the former Nine Ways intersection. Photo: Local Studies Collection, Randwick City Library.

Scroll through time – Randwick's history a click away

Ever wondered what Randwick looked like a century ago? Now you can explore our local history with ease, thanks to *Randwick: Our Story*, Council's new history website.

This online platform brings together decades of photographs, documents, oral histories and more, all in one accessible space. Whether you're a curious resident, a student, or a passionate history buff, *Randwick: Our Story* makes discovering Randwick's past as simple as scrolling and clicking.

From the earliest Council minutes dating back to 1859, to vibrant snapshots of community life, the site offers a treasure trove of insights. You can browse by theme, explore timelines, or even hit "Surprise Me!" for a spontaneous journey through time. And if you've got a piece of history to share, we welcome contributions from the community, making it a living archive of community memory. So why not take a moment to explore? It's never been easier to dive in.

ourstory.randwick.nsw.gov.au

Site chosen for BMX pump park

Cromwell Park (north) in Malabar will be the site for Randwick City's first BMX pump park after community consultation found strong support. The facility will cater to BMX riders, skateboarders, scooter users, and mountain bikers, providing a dedicated space for active recreation. The park will be designed to blend with the natural landscape and avoid major disruption to current users. The \$1.35 million project is being funded by Randwick Council and \$500,000 from the NSW Government's Metropolitan Greenspace Program.

Council and NSW Government clean up Coogee Beach

The NSW Government and Randwick City Council are getting on with the job of fixing Coogee Beach's long-standing water quality issues, delivering \$7 million to divert stormwater away from the beach.

Work will commence in the new year to build an underground pump station to divert a stormwater pipe currently emptying into Coogee Beach away from the beach.

"This project will address a long-standing issue important to our local community, delivering a better experience for everyone



at the beach and in the water, and is a significant step towards protecting our beautiful coastline," said Randwick Mayor Dylan Parker.



Scan to watch a video explaining how we're cleaning up Coogee. Read the full story on page 20.



NSW Police Force



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8/10 homes are entered by car thieves via unlocked doors or windows.
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A MESSAGE FROM NSW POLICE FORCE

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Crime Stoppers (1800 333 000) To provide crime information. It can be in confidence.

Plans progress for Coogee playground upgrade

Stan Windon Memorial Playground at Grant Reserve in Coogee will receive a major upgrade with Council endorsing plans for a \$1.35 million improvement. The plans propose to keep the playground in its current location and to upgrade the ageing play equipment.

A proposal to expand the playground into a larger regional facility was found to be unfeasible due to high costs, accessibility issues, and potential loss of passive recreation space.

The project is currently being designed and community consultation will take place soon. Council is also applying for grants to assist with funding.



Randwick's best new buildings revealed

A stunning clifftop abode in Coogee and a reimaging of a 1920s South Coogee house are among the winners of Randwick City Council's prestigious 2025 Architecture and Urban Design Awards.

Launched in 2004 by Randwick City Council, the biennial awards recognise and celebrate architects and designers behind outstanding buildings and renovations in the Local Government Area. Architects Virginia Kerridge and

Luigi Rosselli took out best house / alteration for their Coogee and South Coogee projects. KA Design Studio won best apartment and best urban project, Architect George won best conservation project and Sam Crawford Architects won best sustainable design for the Matraville Youth and Cultural Centre.

UNSW student design awards went to Alexander Anggriawan and Andres Lamberti. The awards are independently judged.

More lifesaving defibs coming to Randwick parks

Randwick Council is boosting public access to defibrillators (AEDs) by installing a 24/7 AED at the new changerooms in Heffron Park north. Council also approved an audit of existing AEDs and will develop a plan to guide future installations in high-traffic public areas like beaches, sportsfields and parks. Prompt use of a defibrillator can significantly increase the chances of saving a person's life by up to 70 per cent. A full report with recommendations and funding options will come to Council before mid-2026.

Free waste collection for local charities

Local not-for-profit organisations are set to benefit from free waste collection as part of a new Council policy. Councillors formally endorsed a trade waste fee waiver policy which supports eligible groups – such as charities, surf clubs, and community centres – with free rubbish removal services. To be eligible, organisations must meet at least one of several criteria, including promoting sustainability, improving wellbeing, or fostering community support. The new policy provides a standardised and consistent approach to managing trade waste services.

Youth centre plans move ahead

Councillors have endorsed the start of planning for a new Southern Suburbs Youth Facility at Yarra Oval in partnership with the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The project will deliver a modern space for youth services, fitness, learning and cultural programs. A design consultant will now be engaged to develop a concept plan, with broad community consultation to occur.

The new facility supports Council's Inclusive Randwick Strategy and aims to meet growing demand for youth support in the area.

Newly upgraded Wills Reserve playground in Kensington now open

Local kids and families in Kensington have more reasons to play, with the newly upgraded Wills Reserve playground – featuring new swings, a carousel and seesaw – now open. The popular playground, located on the corner of Duke Street and Balfour Road in Kensington, was recently upgraded following community feedback about ageing equipment and worn-out rubber surfaces. The new playground features a carousel, seesaw, four square handball court, hopscotch game, and new swings with a toddler seat. It also has a picnic table and new soft fall, paving and lawn.

Tree target takes root in new policy

Randwick Council has unveiled a draft Urban Forest Policy aiming to boost tree canopy cover from 16 to 22 per cent by 2040. The policy consolidates and replaces three previous tree management policies and sets out a clear plan to plant more trees, protect existing ones, and improve biodiversity. The draft also introduces a broader definition of the urban forest, including understory plants and habitat value. It responds to community feedback and sets realistic goals based on local conditions. The policy was on public exhibition for feedback in July and August. Council has already allocated \$200,000 for tree planting in 2025-26 with more in future years planned.

New native animal recovery centre opens in Randwick

Rescued possums, birds and other animals have moved into their new home at the WIRES Native Animal Recovery Centre, officially opened in June at Randwick's Sustainability Hub.

The purpose-built \$1.8 million facility replaces ageing pens and gives WIRES volunteers nine possum enclosures, three bird spaces, an aviary, storage and work areas.

Randwick Mayor Dylan Parker joined WIRES CEO Leanne Taylor and Member for Coogee Dr Marjorie



O'Neill to open the centre as part of a community Biodiversity Open Day.

"This new centre helps protect our local wildlife and gives volunteers the space they need to care for injured animals," Mayor Parker said.

The centre was funded by Randwick City Council, the NSW Government and WIRES, and will play a key role in protecting biodiversity across Sydney's east.



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Swimming legend Mina Wylie honoured with blue plaque in Coogee

Champion swimmer Wilhelmina (Mina) Wylie—the first Australian woman to win an Olympic silver medal—has been honoured with a blue plaque at Coogee. Installed next to her old training ground at Wylie's Baths, the plaque recognises the trailblazer who paved the way for female swimmers. The plaque was nominated by Randwick Council.



Australian swimmers Fanny Durack (gold) and Mina Wylie (silver) and British swimmer Jennie Fletcher (bronze) celebrate after the 100 metres freestyle at the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm. Courtesy: National Museum of Australia.

Nine Randwick schools win grants to go greener

Nine local schools will receive nearly \$30,000 in funding through Randwick Council's 2024-25 Sustainable School Grants Program to support hands-on environmental projects. The schools awarded funding are OLSH Kensington, St Mary - St Joseph Maroubra, St Margaret Mary's Catholic Primary School, Claremont College, Malabar Public School, Maroubra Bay Public School, Randwick High School, South Coogee Public School, and La Perouse Public School. Projects include native gardens, compost systems, worm farms, sustainable outdoor learning spaces, waste reduction plans, and bush food planting. Malabar Public will install colour-coded waste stations while Claremont College will create a bush food garden with help from local First Nations educators. The grants are funded by Council's Environmental Levy.

Hall bookings just got easier

Booking a community hall for a birthday, event or community meeting is now a lot easier with a new booking system for Council's community halls now live. Hirers can now search and compare all venues on the one website sorting by date, availability, location and venue type. You can now book and pay online. More improvements are planned with keyless access technology next on the list. Check it out by visiting randwick.nsw.gov.au.

Randwick Junction plan set to deliver more homes, jobs and open spaces

A plan to revitalise Randwick town centre with taller buildings – unlocking more homes, affordable housing and jobs – will be put out for public comment soon. The revised plan responds to conditions set by the NSW Government and provides for 800 new homes, including 62 affordable units, and will support around 750 new jobs. Heights at key sites including Royal Randwick Shopping Centre, Randwick Plaza (Coles) and the Randwick Club are proposed to increase to up to 45m (13-storeys) to encourage renewal and investment in the precinct.

Truck fires on the rise; remove batteries before disposing

Randwick City residents are being urged to remove batteries from household appliances before placing them out for a clean-up collection, following a series of fires in Council trucks. Items such as vacuum cleaners, laptops, tablets, phones, power tools and toys often contain lithium batteries, which can ignite or explode when compacted in trucks. These items should be taken to the Randwick Recycling Centre for safe



Maroubra and Matraville town centres getting a fresh new look

Maroubra Junction and Matraville are getting a major upgrade, with work now underway to improve footpaths, landscaping, seating and street furniture. Randwick City Council has started construction at Maroubra Junction, along Anzac Parade between Maroubra Road and Boyce Road. New paving, trees, and public seating will be added to make the area more attractive and pedestrian-friendly. At Matraville, upgrades along Bunnerong Road include new footpaths, native gardens and updated street furniture, building on earlier upgrades completed in 2024. The improvements are part of Council's plan to revitalise local town centres, making them greener, safer and better for walking and outdoor dining. Work is being undertaken in sections to minimise impact and will be finished by the end of the year.



disposal, or the batteries removed. Household batteries such as AA, AAA, 9V and button cells should also be kept out of bins. Residents are being asked to cover the ends of these batteries with sticky tape and drop them off for recycling at the Randwick Recycling Centre, Bunnings, Coles, Woolworths or ALDI.

Council unveils \$15M revamp for Maroubra Surf Club

Plans for a new Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club building have been released. The modern design will replace the 100-year-old clubhouse offering better facilities for the club's 1,400-strong volunteer lifesavers. Features include accessible changerooms, a lift, more storage and larger training areas.

Mayor Dylan Parker, also a volunteer lifesaver, said the upgrade will support the club's vital role.



Council adopts 2025-26 budget with boost for pensioners

Randwick City Council has adopted its 2025-26 Budget and Operational Plan, following community feedback. The \$46.8 million capital works program will deliver upgraded parks, safer streets, more trees, and improved community facilities across the City. To help with cost of living pressures, eligible pensioners will receive an extra \$100 rebate, potentially increasing their total rebate to \$450. Key projects include upgrades to six playgrounds, intersection safety works, new outdoor gyms and basketball courts, and a new arts space at Blenheim House.

Blue Tree project takes root

Randwick Council will support the Blue Tree Project by painting a dead tree blue to raise mental health awareness. The tree will feature signs with support service information. The initiative, led locally by The Man Walk group, aims to reduce stigma and encourage open conversations about mental health.

Plans released to deliver 300+ new affordable homes

A new strategy to boost affordable rental housing across Randwick City could deliver more than 300 new affordable homes over the next 15 years. The draft Affordable Rental Housing Strategy sets out clear actions to respond to rising rents, housing stress, and the need to support local key workers and families. Council's current affordable housing portfolio includes 33 new dwellings that are managed by community housing service providers. New housing is planned through development contributions, land purchases and partnerships.

Founded in 1906, Maroubra Surf Club is one of Australia's oldest lifesaving clubs and continues to provide vital beach patrols, youth programs and surf education.

Community consultation took place in July and the results are expected to be reported to Council soon. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2027-28.

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Did you know that as a Randwick City resident, you're already part of a local precinct?

Precincts are local meetings run by local people supported by Randwick Council. Connect with neighbours, raise local issues, and help shape the future of your area.

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- ✓ Attend meetings anytime.
- ✓ Work cooperatively with Council to improve your area.

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Matto on the rise

Where pies, pinot and patron saints collide

Our town centres are the heart of our community. In a new series focusing on our local shopping strips, we get to know some of the hardworking and passionate business owners behind some of Matraville's best kept secrets.

Downtown Matraville has always had humble roots – it's close to the city, airport and beaches yet removed from the hustle and bustle. The suburb is forever evolving, with new businesses popping up and streetscape upgrades. Stroll down Bunnerong Road and you will see new and old collide. When it comes to what everyone likes to do best – eat and drink – we can say Matraville delivers.

Quintessential Australian – a pie way of life

Local Lyndon Piefke founded House of Pie in 1989, and today the family business remains an institution. Lyndon retired not that long ago, but daughters Simone, Marnie and Carlie have been running the pie shop for the past 20 years.

Open 24/7, House of Pie makes 1,000 pies a day. It's known for its classic meat pie, but it also boasts 35 other varieties of pie, plus quiches, cakes, and sweets all made in-house.

"The cooking never stops to keep food fresh and to support demand," Simone



says. "Marnie is baking from 3 am and endures 14-hour shifts most days.

"People come in their pyjamas at dawn to get some pie when they can't sleep. We get visitors from all over Sydney and overseas who have heard about us somewhere. Families going on holidays stop here to stock up or pick up pies to take back home as they come back from the airport."

So, what's their secret? "We put a lot of meat in our pies," Simone says.

The family has tried their best to keep the pies reasonably priced over the years. "Despite the rise in food costs, we know many families are doing it tough, so we haven't increased prices," Simone says.



Marnie Piefke is in charge of baking 1,000 pies a day.

A taste of Croatia tucked inside the arcade

A couple of years ago, chef Vedran Perojevic brought the European flair of fine dining to Matraville, transforming a rundown coffee shop into a cozy Croatian bistro called St Blaise. Hailing from Dubrovnik, Vedran's previous restaurants back home have received praise from The New York Times.

Named after the patron saint of Dubrovnik, St Blaise in Matraville focuses on Dalmatian cuisine with a modern twist. "I wanted to bring something different to the area, and as far as I know, we're the only ones doing it in New South Wales," Vedran says. "At home, we share a sea with Italy, so it's mainly seafood, but we do game meat, pasta and risotto too."

The menu at St Blaise is different every day, but Vedran says standouts include cod pate, octopus salad, black cuttlefish risotto and seasonal venison.

In the evenings, Vedran transforms the arcade where St Blaise can be found into a relaxed space for alfresco dining.

"We don't do two-hour seatings like city restaurants. I ask my customers if they're in a rush, and if so, this is not the place for them. We want you to relax, drink wine and get close," Vedran says.

"Cooking takes time. There are no microwaves here. It's an open kitchen, so you can see what's going on."

He adds: "Why pay 50 to 60 dollars in Ubers to go to the city and dine when you can be closer to home?"

Cheers to this bottle shop!

New kids in town, Jeff Beresford and Shane Yasserrie, took over the local bottle shop last December, now named Bunnerong Wine Shop and Deli.

This small, independent bottle shop isn't like any other. It sells a wide selection of boutique wines, champagne, spirits and non-alcoholic drinks, and recently Jeff and Shane began hosting wine tastings. "We want to champion local and independent producers," Jeff says. "We sell \$6 wines to \$1000 wines. There was no place selling craft beers around the area, but we now have them. The closest craft beer we have is made in Botany."



He adds: "When you come into the store, we love to help you find new things, and if someone says they don't drink, we've got the best non-alcoholic drinks!"

The deli section is also full of delights: fresh sourdough daily, organic eggs, local cheeses, cured meats and olives. For customers who crave international foods, there's a selection of pasta, sauces and other gourmet products. But if there's one thing everyone needs to try, it's the French potato chips. "They're the best in the world!"

Coffee, crystals and good vibes

Café Carmelos, another local favourite, is the baby of husband and wife Melissa and Carlos. Opened 17 years ago, Melissa says Carmelos is the place that locals and visitors passing through the suburb stop for a coffee and their best-selling bacon and egg roll.

"We have great coffee and a friendly and relaxed atmosphere," she says. Carlos is the cook, and I make the coffee and serve customers," she says.

The café is a unique space and has a relaxed feel, with half the seating area adorned with crystals. "My mum was into crystals and energies, so I have always liked them. I thought, why not, bring them into the store and sell them," Melissa says. "They're a real conversation starter."

Melissa says all the surrounding business owners in Matraville are friendly and help each other out, yet many come and go. Known in the community for her advocacy to improve parking and services, she wants everyone to succeed.

"Matraville is such a nice area. The people here are so supportive. When they come into my café, I love chatting with them. Some I've known for years, they tell me their problems and I give them advice."

A proud local community

Change is evident in Matraville, but the suburb's laid-back nature and sense of community are stronger than ever.

Simone says that it's House of Pie's supportive staff and friendly community that keep her and her sisters going.

"We've got 12 employees, some are family and others young kids or single mums that need the extra income so we give them shifts around their schedules," she says.

"Multiple generations of families have worked here. I know people 50 and 60 years old now that I knew when they were kids, even toddlers."

"People have told me they're happy I'm here."



Husband and wife, Melissa and Carlos at their café.

House of Pie
540 Bunnerong Rd, Matraville

St Blaise Restaurant
2/496 Bunnerong Rd, Matraville

Bunnerong Wine Shop & Deli
Shop 2, 508 Bunnerong Rd, Matraville

Cafe Carmelos and Co
163 Perry St, Matraville

Fresh Food Farmer's Market
Matraville RSL Club car park every Tuesday 2.30 – 6 pm

"The next generations come in, and they bring their families in, and you get to know them too."

Vedran agrees: his customers and neighbours are what make Matraville special. "A couple of months ago, some naughty kids knocked down my outdoor plants. When I arrived in the morning, my neighbours were cleaning it for me. And recently I finished renovations in the restaurant, and my local customers were the ones who helped me change the tiling and paint the walls."

Jeff says that he had family friends who lived in the area and suggested exploring a new business. "After some research, I found out that this area was up and coming, with people of all backgrounds, and I said, why not Matraville?"

"People have told me they're happy I'm here."

Let's get this (street) party started!



From bunting and Christmas barbecues to piñatas and pet parades, neighbourhood gatherings, aka street parties, have long been vibrant hubs of connection for residents. Randwick Council is here to help you host your neighbourhood celebration.

During the past decade, Randwick City Council has been helping create more connected communities by taking the red tape out of hosting old-fashioned street parties for year-end celebrations.

Gone are the days when people could simply roll a couple of garbage bins out to block a street and start partying. Between road permits, insurance, liability and public safety, there is rightfully a lot to consider these days before a road can be closed.

That's where Council is helping. Residents interested in hosting a street party can apply to Council (applications close 10 October) to host an event between mid November and late December.

One person who has been hosting parties on her street with the help of Randwick Council since 2023 is Randwick resident and business owner Vivien Reed.

Vivien says she wanted to bring her community together, so she led the organisation of two Christmas parties.



"It was so nice to see families get to know each other and for their kids to play, as well as welcome the new families from down the road."

"Street parties encourage a sense of community, allowing intergenerational connections just like the old days,"

Vivien Reed,
Randwick resident and business owner.

In 2024, Council facilitated 16 street parties that ran for about five to six hours until the street was opened again.



So how do you get the party started?

Getting community buy-in

Residents on a street must agree on throwing a party on a specific date and time. A party can only go ahead if 75 per cent of households on the street support it.

Vivien says she wrote letters asking her neighbours if they were interested in closing the street for a party.

"I dropped off the letters in each neighbour's mailbox; the response was positive!"

Vivien Reed,
Randwick resident and business owner.

A few days later, she met up with her neighbours at a nearby park, formed a street party committee of 10 people and started organising plans.



Around 150 neighbours and their guests joined the party.

Checklist for application process:

- Get 75 per cent of households on your street to agree to the party
- Fill out the application and include your neighbours' signatures
- Submit your application by 10 October with Council

Apply online at www.randwick.nsw.gov.au or by phoning 1300 722 52.



Neighbours cooking up a storm at Vivien's street party.

prizes for the raffles," she says. "The kids also organised care packs for the people in the shelter and created Christmas cards for the kids there. "This is a reflection of the calibre of residents in our community."

Navigating the application process

Randwick Council staff will work with residents interested in holding a street party. This includes helping obtain the necessary road closure permits, supplying public liability insurance and providing the road barriers and staff to close the road on the day of the event.

Please note that not all roads are able to be closed and vehicle access still needs to be retained for emergency services and residential access.

Sustaining our City for years to come

For more than 20 years, Randwick City has been leading the way on sustainability initiatives. We reflect on what's been achieved in the past year and look to the future.

From Coastal Walkway upgrades, sustainability rebates, waste reduction and cleaner beaches, Randwick Council's Sustaining our City program has delivered programs, infrastructure development, educational initiatives that benefit the environment and in the long run, ratepayers' pockets.



Funded by a small levy on rates of just 28c a day or \$1.95 a week, the program was made permanent and part of the rates base in 2024.

One of the most popular Sustaining our City programs is a wide range of sustainability rebates open to local residents and businesses. In the past year more than 383 sustainability rebates have been provided, with rooftop solar and solar battery storage installations accounting for more than half.

The program is also supporting people making the switch to electric vehicles by rolling out more public EV chargers. In the past year, more than 70 have been installed bringing the total to over 205 across Randwick City.

When it comes to keeping our beaches clean, Council's work to install pollution filters on stormwater outlets continues to lead the way. Two Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) – one at South Coogee and the other in Malabar – were installed bringing the total number of these gigantic underground systems that prevent large pieces of debris and litter in stormwater from entering the ocean to 38.

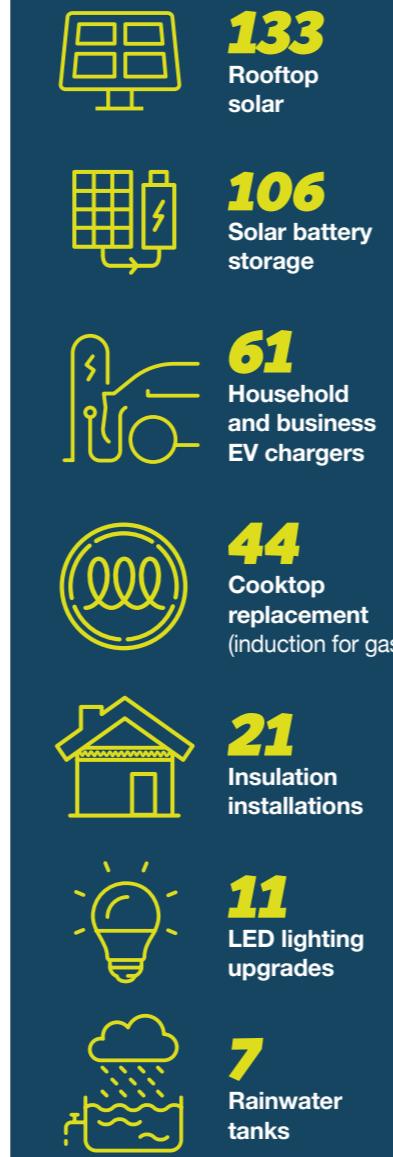
A resilient Randwick

A new focus for the levy is community resilience. Council's newly established resilience team is working with community members on how to best prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse situations.

The team is developing Randwick City's first public emergency dashboard, which is set to go live by early 2026. This digital platform will offer real-time updates on local disasters and hazards, including weather alerts, road closures, service outages, and other critical information.

Randwick Mayor Dylan Parker emphasised the importance of equipping the community with the tools to get through challenging times. "Whether it's a storm, power outage, the cost of living, housing stress, or climate change, Council is working to make sure people, places, businesses and our systems adapt and thrive," Mayor Parker says.

Number of sustainability rebates provided 2024-25



Greener pastures continuing

During the next five years, Council plans to roll out more pathways that support people to walk and cycle, install more GPTs to make beaches cleaner and build whale watching and educational platforms along the coastline.

Water saving initiatives, including harvesting stormwater for irrigation and toilet flushing in parks and reserves, will continue.

Residents will be able to continue to enjoy the benefits already in place, including energy savings through sustainability rebates, and opportunities to learn new skills and connect with others through community gardens.

A step forward on the Coastal Walkway

In the past 20 years, the program has helped extend Sydney's world-famous Coastal Walkway.

More than 12km of the Coastal Walkway has been extended or upgraded over the past two decades, including important sections through Malabar Headland, Cape Banks and north Maroubra.

In November 2024, Council purchased a pivotal South Coogee property and is preparing plans to demolish the house and unlock walking access linking South Coogee and Lurline Bay.

A concept plan will be exhibited for public feedback in late 2025, including plans to honour the property's owner – the late artist and lifelong local, Ellen Waugh.

"Sustainability is something we all need to play a part in," Mayor Parker says.

We can all contribute to a greener, healthier and more liveable city.

"Let's make choices today that our future generations will thank us for."

"Let's make choices today that our future generations will thank us for."

Randwick Mayor Dylan Parker



Join us for a month of events and activities in September celebrating sustainability, including the 20th anniversary of the Eco Living Festival on Sunday 14 September 2025 at Broadarrow Reserve, Maroubra Beach.



Scan for more information.



We've planted more than 2,000 trees in the past year and more are being planted this year.

Art takes the floor at Town Hall

Local creatives are bringing Randwick Town Hall to life, one show at a time. From musicals to markets, a new bold initiative is transforming an iconic building into a lively, creative gathering place.

Randwick Town Hall. You've probably driven, walked or cycled past this historic building on the corner of Avoca Street and Frances Street, but have you ever wondered what happens inside?



The 1882 building has been the civic heart of Randwick Council for 143 years and still to this day hosts Council meetings and offices for elected Councillors. The hall is also used for events and shows – but since COVID, it has been sparsely used.

Council's response to encourage more activation has been to unlock the doors and hand the keys to local creatives. We call it Town Hall Takeover.

This new initiative gives creative groups across all disciplines the opportunity to nurture, activate, experiment and explore their ideas in a unique space that's long been part of our community's story.

Among the first to take part in the program were local creatives Eliane Morel and Merran Hughes. They applied to Council's EOI with an idea for an experimental musical, Dangerous When Wet, which traces the stories of trailblazing swimmers Mina Wylie and Fanny Durack, the first women ever to win gold and silver in an Olympic swimming event.

"We were excited about the possibilities of the space, as its character suited the vision for our project," Eliane says. "In addition, parts of our story actually occurred in Randwick Town Hall, so there is a perfect synergy between the space and our show."

"We were deeply honoured to be chosen. It meant a lot to the team to have support like this."

Eliane Morel

Eliane and Merran were among several successful applicants, with others delivering everything from DIY lantern-making workshops to mark winter solstice to live jazz jams and deep dives into ecology.

Artists for Town Hall Takeover applied through an expression of interest and were selected by a panel made up of Council staff and industry experts.

Project Market-space Pop-ups.
Photo by Teresa Tan.



"The program was extremely valuable for several reasons, including the opportunity to work for an extended period of time, without distraction, wholly focused on the project. We found having the mental space as well as the physical space gave us inspiration and catalysed the work process."

"It is difficult to emphasise how valuable it is to have a performance space to rehearse and perform in, and we're so grateful to the Randwick City Council for the vision they have to support artists in such a meaningful way."

Their week-long residency culminated in a performance that was met with an enthusiastic audience and glowing feedback.

says. "The stipend gave us the ability to hire these actors and rehearse with them to bring the production to life."

Eliane said Council's support allowed them to develop the musical creatively through testing and refining it in a professional environment.

"We were blown away by the positive response from Randwick residents, who booked in great numbers and sold out the show," Eliane says. "We were also delighted with the audience response, which was so overwhelmingly positive."

'Better than Hamilton' was possibly our best response."

Eliane said she and Merran would use proceeds from the Town Hall Takeover ticket sales to further develop the musical. "The boost of confidence that this has given us has made us keen to put on a full production in 2026 and, if this is successful, we plan to tour."

Town Hall Takeover was launched in June 2025 to support creatives develop and showcase their art, and make local art more accessible to everyone in Randwick City.

Town Hall Takeover is presented by Randwick City Council as part of our Arts and Culture Strategy.



Scan to view the full list of events.



Dangerous When Wet the Musical. Photo by Jacqui Manning.

Contention at the Coast

Iconic bell tents photographed on Little Bay Beach have long been thought to have housed victims of the 1881 smallpox epidemic. But new research and technology is throwing this theory out the window. So who lived in the tents?

On Monday 5 September 1881, a troupe of tired close contacts of city-based smallpox victims, Mrs Buckleton and several children, trudged down to the sandy shores of Little Bay Beach and moved into their new, albeit temporary, homes. With sand between their toes, they moved into their new abodes—a stretch of canvas bell tents just metres from the lapping small blue waves of the crystal-clear ocean ...or did they?

For decades, historians, museums, newspapers, and online articles have reported that the iconic bell tents housed victims of the 1881 smallpox epidemic.

These tents have long been regarded as the forerunners of the infectious diseases hospital, the Coast Hospital,

later renamed Prince Henry Hospital—and now the site of a new housing development.

However, former registered nurse Patrick Kennedy, who trained at Prince Henry and has authored two previous books on Malabar and Long Bay Gaol, has uncovered archival evidence that challenges this enduring narrative.

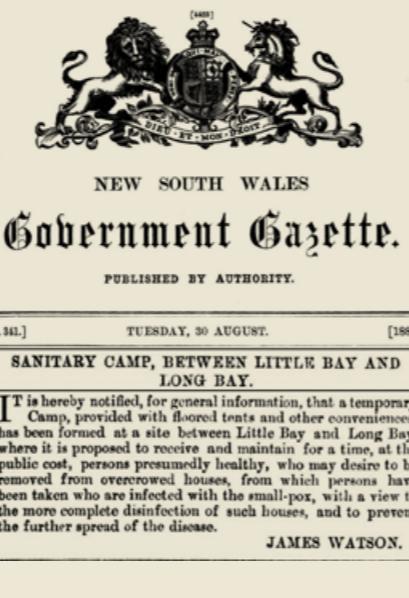
"During my research, I found the prominent photos of bell tents near the golden sands of Little Bay—widely believed to depict makeshift isolation quarters for close contacts of smallpox patients in 1881," Patrick said.

So began a months-long investigation through historical newspaper articles and musty, ancient government reports. What he found was both surprising and revelatory.

"My research revealed these iconic tents were not used to house close contacts of smallpox victims, but workers building the hospital."

Kennedy unearthed a small Sydney Morning Herald article, which signalled the beginning of his investigation into the first few months of the Coast Hospital. The paper noted that construction on the Coast Hospital began in July 1881. By August, more than 200 men were working on site, many of whom were living in "a perfect little encampment of tents along the shore of the principal beach."

The paper further reported: "Three rows of roughly constructed tables are placed adjacent, with seats on either side, at which the workmen can enjoy the bountiful repasts provided for them."



1881 NSW Government Gazette placing the Sanitary Camp between Little and Long Bays—not at Little Bay Beach.

These tables and other important attributes, are barely perceptible in the original photos. But when former registered nurse, turned photo-analyst, Ashley Kingston, enhanced and colourised the original pictures, the tables came into clear focus—providing more evidence for workers inhabiting the beachside tents.

"Ashley spent weeks analysing, interpreting and enhancing photos to help in the research," Patrick said.

Further compelling evidence from the Report of the Board of Health upon the Late Epidemic of Small-Pox, 1881–1882 places the smallpox contacts' tents elsewhere "...upon one of the highest and most exposed cliffs upon the coast..."

The NSW Government Gazette dated 30 August 1881 also supports this revised understanding. It announced "...a temporary Camp, provided with floored tents and other conveniences, has been formed at a site between Little Bay and Long Bay..."

Additional reports placed the "sanitary camp" on a bold hill north of Little Bay, on eight acres—likely on or near the present site of Randwick Golf Course.

Minutes from the 1881 Board of Health don't appear to mention tents on the beach and instead suggest that close contacts were generally housed at or near Long Bay to the north of Little Bay.

Parliamentary records and the media also often locate the camp at Long Bay or between the two bays—further undermining the popular belief that the tents on Little Bay beach were used for quarantine. "It seems history has been misremembered," Patrick said.

"This revelation may be disappointing to some who appreciate the romantic notion of those tents on the sandy beach symbolising the origins of Prince Henry Hospital," he added.

"But historical accuracy is paramount."

Though the intriguing close contacts' tents were part of the hospital's early history they were in use for only about three months until the permanent sanatorium opened in December 1881.

In 2024, NSW State Archives reported the iconic photographs were actually taken in 1884, not in 1881, as previously assumed—three years after the epidemic.

However, Ashley Kingston has reviewed the photos of the tents and with his photographic interpretation experience, believes they were in fact taken in 1881 not 1884 given what he found when the photos were enhanced.

"Why would the official photographer from the Government Printing Office, Mr Sharkey, wait until 1884 to take the photographs when the hospital opened in 1881? It makes little sense," he said.

Regardless of the exact date of the photos, it is clear that the newspaper and government reports show that the hospital tents, which were the forerunners of The Coast were located on the clifftops at the northern end of the beach.

While this revelation does not diminish the importance of the tents in the hospital's formation it does reshape our understanding of the past. The tents played a crucial albeit short role—but they most likely were not where we originally thought," says Patrick.



Little Bay Beach in 1881 showing the iconic bell tents—long thought to be the early accommodation for smallpox victims.

Thank you to Patrick Kennedy for the contribution of this article. If Scene readers have other old photos or information, Patrick would be pleased to hear from you at patrick-kennedy@outlook.com.



Coogee's clean comeback

\$7M project to end stormwater pollution

Water quality at Coogee Beach is set to improve with local and state governments teaming up to tackle the Coogee issue once and for all.

Locals have been concerned for many years about water quality at Coogee Beach with the NSW Government's own Beach Watch program rating it as 'poor' since 2022.

Now, the NSW Government, Sydney Water and Randwick City Council are pushing ahead with a \$7 million project to lift water quality ratings and make Coogee Beach a safer place to swim year-round.

Currently large volumes of stormwater discharge at the northern end of the beach. As Coogee is in a valley, it's a natural collector for rainwater from around the surrounding area.

While rainwater is not 'dirty' on its own – by the time it flows along streets, parks and roads and makes its way to the beach – it picks up contaminants and bacteria, and sometimes sewer overflow.

Council's solution is to tap into the stormwater pipe and pump the water away from the beach through a rarely-used old sewer pipe that discharges away from the beach.

Works will involve constructing a new underground pump station near the public car park near Coogee Pavilion.

Randwick Mayor Dylan Parker said the project would deliver the results that locals and visitors have long expected from a world-class beach. "Coogee Beach is not only a popular coastal destination for visitors; it holds a special place in the hearts of local residents," Mayor Parker said.

"This project will address a long-standing issue important to our local community, delivering a better experience for everyone at the beach and in the water, and is a significant step towards protecting our beautiful coastline."

"I'd like to thank the NSW Government, in particular Rose Jackson the Minister for Water and Member for Coogee Marjorie O'Neill for securing this funding and for their commitment to improving water quality at Coogee."

The new pump station will work alongside eight existing Gross Pollutant Traps – giant underground filters that prevent debris and litter in stormwater from entering the ocean.

Works are expected to commence in early 2026.



Moving to make a difference

At just 12 years old, Melanie Tzoukas is already making a name for herself as a leader, fundraiser and role model in her community, taking home the Rising Star title at this year's Randwick Volunteer Recognition Awards. We spoke to Melanie, and her mum Patrisia, about what moves her to give back.

The youngest of four children to proud parents George and Patrisia, Melanie grew up in a close-knit family with her siblings Evan, Jonathan and Tiana.

During the past four years, she has been fundraising and volunteering for a range of causes. Patrisia says Melanie's drive comes from the people she looks up to most: her siblings. "She's grown up watching them push themselves, give back, and achieve big goals, and she's taken it all in," Patrisia says.

That drive found a new focus after the passing of a beloved aunt to cancer, when Melanie followed the footsteps of her older sister Tiana and began raising money for the Australian Cancer Research Foundation.

Patrisia says Melanie has a "quiet inner strength" that allows her to act in times of need and adversity. "She doesn't wait to be asked," Patrisia says. "She just sees a need and steps up – not loudly, but with calm confidence and care. That's always been Melanie: someone who leads with her heart, acts with purpose, and makes the world better just by being in it."

This year, Melanie took her fundraising to new heights, combining her love

moment. "It showed the world what we've always known: that Melanie is a natural leader, someone who leads with kindness, and who genuinely wants to make a difference."

So, what's next for this rising star?

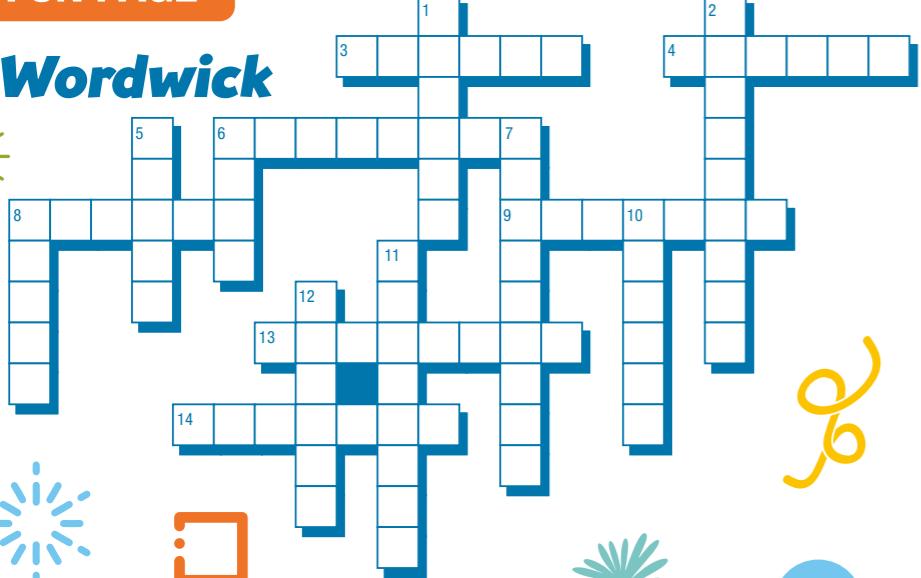
Whether it's volunteering, raising awareness about a cause, or just lending a hand to someone in need, Melanie is open to helping out wherever she can.



"What I enjoy most about volunteering is being able to help people and families who are going through a tough time. It feels good knowing that giving my time can make a real difference in someone's life."

FUN PAGE

Wordwick



ACROSS

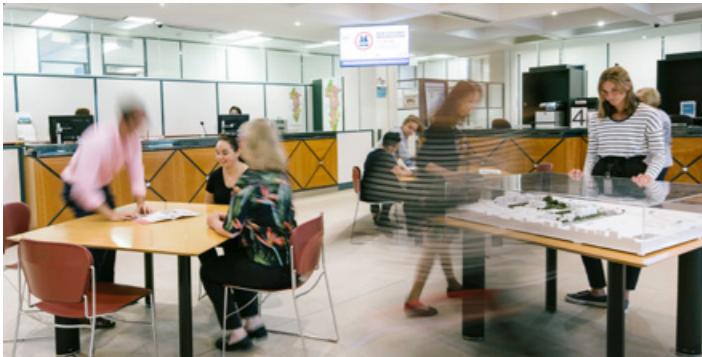
- Youngest Mayor of Randwick (hint: elected 1951)
- Current Randwick Mayor
- Traditional owners of La Perouse
- 1912 Olympic medal won by Mina Wylie
- Maroubra rock star
- Longest beach in Randwick LGA
- Number of Randwick Councillors

DOWN

- Aboriginal word meaning 'smelly place'
- Awarded Keys to the City in 2014
- Power source for 1920s Lurline Bay project
- Iconic island
- Transport system opened 2019
- Slang name for Yarra Bay swimming spot
- Maroubra sculpture solved in 2023
- Renamed from 'Little Coogee' in 1913
- First female Mayor of Randwick

Spot the difference

Our Customer Service Centre is always busy. Can you find five differences?



Word scramble

ACPE BSKNA _____
 IADRCWNK TNOW HLLA _____
 RIAMUEQCA WTRHTCWOEA _____
 NIRKSOFGD _____
 EGSLI TBSAH _____
 EHFORFN APRK _____
 NPSEA ARPK _____
 WNGOCONG _____
 ENLNIAENTC KARP _____
 OGEEOC _____



Rapid fire

Have you been reading your Randwick news?

- Name all five Randwick City beaches patrolled by Lifeguards. (5 points)
- Which iconic Randwick landmark was rededicated on 3 May 2025 to mark its 100 year anniversary? (1 point)
- Which Australian artist and lifelong Coogee resident's property did Council purchase in November 2024 to extend the Coastal Walkway at South Coogee? (1 point)
- What did Council announce it is doing to clean-up Coogee Beach? (1 point)
- What Maroubra park was made dog friendly in April? (1 point)
- Where is Randwick's first BMX pump park being built? (1 point)

Score:

1 - 3 You need to subscribe to Randwick eNews
 4 - 7 Well done, your knowledge is sound
 8 - 9 Exceptional, clearly you're a Randwick local
 10 Call us for a job

4. Diverting stormwater. 5. Murrahar Reserve. 6. Cromwell Park Malabar
 2. High Cross Park Centrepark. 3. Little Bay

1. Maroubra, Coogee, Clovelly, Malabar, Little Bay
 5. WAVES. 6. BARE. 7. LIGHTRAIL. 8. SUCKO. 10. RUBIKS

11. CLOVELLY. 12. MARTIN

13. MAROUBRA. 14. FILTERED DOWN. 1. COOGEE. 2. RABBITS

ACROSS: 3. LIONEL. 4. PARKER. 6. DIGITAL. 8. SILVER. 9. GARRET

WORDWICK: 1. RAPID FIRE. 2. SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Red high heels, counter number 3, clock, missing woman, missing table leg.

SCENE SPRING 2025

What's on

August to November 2025

AUGUST

COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 26 Aug, 7 - 11 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

AUTHOR TALK: ALISON BOOTH

Wed 27 Aug, 6.30 - 7.30 pm
 Margaret Martin Library, Randwick

FLOURISHING FAMILIES:
RAISING THRIVING CHILDREN

Fri 29 Aug, 10 am - 12 pm
 Clovelly and Co Community Hub

SEPTEMBER

SPOT ON

Thu 4 Sep, 5.30 - 9 pm
 St Pauls Street, Randwick

MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sat 6 Sep, 8 am - 2 pm
 Broadarrow Reserve

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER:
DEEP PLACE: EXPLORATIONS
IN ART AND ECOLOGY TALK

Sat 6 Sep, 2 - 4 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

PLANT WITH US:
FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Sun 7 Sep, 8.30 - 10 am
 and 10.30 am - 12 pm
 Arthur Byrne Reserve, Maroubra

BRING YOUR BILL DAY

Fri 12 Sep, 10 am - 2 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

SATURDAY CIRCLE

Sat 13 Sep, 10 am - 12 pm
 Randwick Sustainability Hub

DRLC GYM OPEN DAY

Sat 13 Sep, 12 - 4 pm
 Jersey Rd & Robey Street, Maroubra

ECO LIVING FESTIVAL

Sun 14 Sep, 10 am - 4 pm
 Broadarrow Reserve, Maroubra Beach

BALI COMMEMORATION CEREMONY

Sun 12 Oct, 10 - 11 am
 Dolphins Point, Dunningham Reserve, Coogee

MALABAR FAMILY DAY

Sun 12 Oct, 10.30 am
 Cromwell Park, Malabar

SPOT ON

Thu 16 Oct, 5.30 - 9 pm
 St Pauls Street, Randwick

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER:
THE LAST CASTRATO

Thu 18 Sep, 6 - 7 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

SPOT ON

Thu 18 Sep, 5.30 - 9 pm
 St Pauls Street, Randwick

LA PEROUSE MUSEUM -
REOPENING AND EXHIBITION

Fri 19 Sep, 6 - 8 pm
 La Perouse Museum

COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 23 Sep, 7 - 11 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

COMMUNITY ECOLOGIES

Wed 24 - Sat 27 Sep,
 10 am - 2 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

OCTOBER

SPOT ON

Thu 2 Oct, 5.30 - 9 pm
 St Pauls Street, Randwick



MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sat 4 Oct, 8 am - 2 pm
 Broadarrow Reserve

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER:
DEEP PLACE: EXPLORATIONS IN ART
AND ECOLOGY TALK

Sat 4 Oct, 2 - 4 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

SATURDAY CIRCLE

Sat 11 Oct, 10 am - 12 pm
 Randwick Sustainability Hub

STEP OUT SPEAK OUT WALK

Fri 21 Nov, 7 am
 High Cross Park, Randwick



For more information
 on events scan or visit
randwick.nsw.gov.au
 or call 1300 722 542.

CULTURE VIBES -
A NEW MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

Sat 18 Oct, 3 - 10 pm
 Kensington Park

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER:
THE JAZZ JUNKIES

Sat 18 Oct, 7 - 9 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER:
PROJECT MARKET-SPACE POP-UP

Sat 25 Oct, 3 - 8 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

SPOT ON

Thu 30 Oct, 5.30 - 9 pm
 St Pauls Street, Randwick

NOVEMBER

MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sat 1 Nov, 8 am - 2 pm
 Broadarrow Reserve

LET'S CHAT

Sat 1 Nov, 10 am - 12 pm
 Check online for various locations

SATURDAY CIRCLE

Sat 8 Nov, 10 am - 12 pm
 Randwick Sustainability Hub

SPOT ON

Thu 13 Nov, 5.30 - 9 pm
 St Pauls Street, Randwick

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER: MINI GAMES

Tue 15 Nov, 2 - 5 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 18 Nov, 7 - 11 pm
 Randwick Town Hall

TOWN HALL TAKEOVER:
DEEP PLACE: EXPLORATIONS IN ART
AND ECOLOGY TALK

Fri 21 Nov - Sun 23 Nov,
 various times

Randwick Town Hall

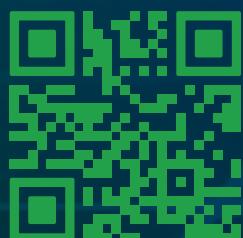


ECO LIVING FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 14 SEP 2025

10AM – 4PM

**BROADARROW RESERVE
MAROUBRA BEACH**



**SCAN FOR MORE
ECO ACTIVITIES IN
SEPTEMBER AS PART
OF ECO LIVING MONTH!**

**ECO-FRIENDLY
TALKS, STALLS,
WORKSHOPS:
PICKLING AND
FERMENTATION
NATURAL
SKINCARE
SUSTAINABLE
GARDENING
VINTAGE CLOTHING
KINTSUGI - MENDING
GARMENTS WITH
GOLD THREADS
LEARN TO DIY
ELECTRIFY YOUR
HOME, AND MORE!**