

# RANDWICK **SCENE**

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council@randwick.nsw.gov.au

## Randwick City Council Customer Service Centre

**Address:** 30 Frances Street, Randwick, NSW 2031

**Hours:** 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday

**Phone:** 1300 722 542

**Email:** council@randwick.nsw.gov.au

**Web:** randwick.nsw.gov.au

**Community Nursery:** 9093 6250

**Lionel Bowen Library, Maroubra:** 9093 6400

**Malabar Community Library:** 9093 6120

**Margaret Martin Library, Randwick:** 9093 6100

**Des Renford Leisure Centre:** 9093 6300

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## Randwick City Council services

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- illegal dumping
- halls for hire
- waste service
- on-call clean ups
- parking
- open space hire
- precinct meetings
- parks and beaches
- rates
- trees
- roads

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**Cover image:**  
Isaac from Hillsdale rock fishing at  
La Perouse. Photo by Mark Bond.



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## From the Mayor **Philipa Veitch**

In mid-April, our community experienced a horrific and unprecedented attack at Bondi Junction that showed the worst of humanity. Our hearts go out to the family of the six people who lost their lives in the tragedy.

Many of our community members have been affected by this event. If you are one of them, I encourage you to reach out to Lifeline on 13 11 14.

On another sad note, it troubles me enormously that despite ongoing education and safety improvements, people continue to die while rock fishing along our coastline. Council has launched its latest safety campaign and we speak with some well-known rock fishers on page 18 to find out more about what can be done.

The cooler temperatures are a perfect opportunity to get out and do one of the many wonderful walks on offer in Randwick City. In this edition of SCENE we do the 2km Randwick Environment Park walk. It's an easy, but interesting walk with lots to see.

And finally, at Randwick Council we are fortunate to have many dedicated and long-term employees. We meet two such staff members on page 16 – Jack and Paul – who aged in their 80s are this year celebrating 60 years' service – and still going strong! We believe they may be the current longest serving Council workers in the country. They are absolute legends and great characters.

Stay safe and I hope you enjoy reading the magazine.

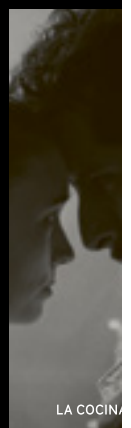
**Philipa Veitch**  
Mayor of Randwick



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## news in brief

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news, projects,  
events and more.

[randwick.nsw.gov.au/enews](http://randwick.nsw.gov.au/enews)



### Alison Park Playground opens

A new playground in Randwick is now open!

Following community consultation in 2022, Council staff facilitated a public vote to choose the preferred play equipment and design.

The winning design, which features a play tower with a 3-metre high twirly tube slide, was then built. The new playground also has a basket swing, run roller, inground trampoline, carousel, swings, musical play, monkey bars and a toddler section.

There is also a new softfall rubber surface, new shade cloth, picnic setting and shelter, water bubbler and additional gate.

**Local kids and families are invited to celebrate the opening of the playground on Thursday 16 May from 3pm – 4.30pm. There will be entertainment and giveaways for kids and parents alike.**

## The future is wild for young writers

Do you know a young writer with a wild imagination? Entries are now open for the Lionel Bowen Young Writers' Award!

The theme for this year's competition is The Future is Wild. Young people from Years 3-12 are encouraged to let their creativity flow and submit their best short story or poem.

The Lionel Bowen Young Writers' Award, named in honour of former Mayor of Randwick and former Deputy Prime Minister Lionel Bowen AC, seeks to uncover the writing talents of young people in Randwick City.

Entries close Sunday 11 August. Visit Randwick Council's website for more details.



### La Perouse Elders Oral History program

The La Perouse Museum is set to begin a multi-year Oral History initiative to record and capture their memories and knowledge of the Randwick Area. The La Perouse Aboriginal community plays an essential role in the complex fabric of the Randwick community and many members have an unbroken connection to country dating back thousands of years. A combination of audio and video recordings will be used.

### South Maroubra Coastal Walkway extension

Council is upgrading the Coastal walkway between Maroubra and South Maroubra Beaches. We will install new signage, bicycle racks and improve accessibility by replacing the existing sandy track leading to South Maroubra Surf Club with a 55-metre-long elevated boardwalk. The works are proposed to be funded in the 2024-25 budget.

### New Randwick plaza opens

A new public space in the heart of the Randwick shopping strip is now open.

Officially opened by Randwick Mayor Philpa Veitch on 4 April, the new space on the corner of Waratah Avenue and Belmore Road provides an outdoor terraced seating area with tables, new trees and garden beds.

"Providing new public spaces for people to gather in existing urban environments is rare. That's why the new Waratah Avenue Plaza is so important," Mayor Veitch said.

The new space was first proposed in 2014 and was developed through community consultation in 2020 and 2021. The construction of the plaza was funded by the NSW Government in association with Randwick City Council.





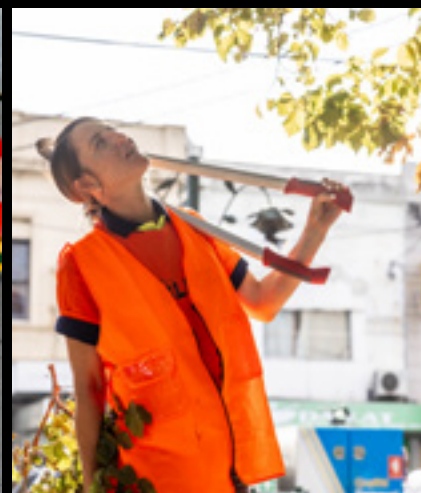
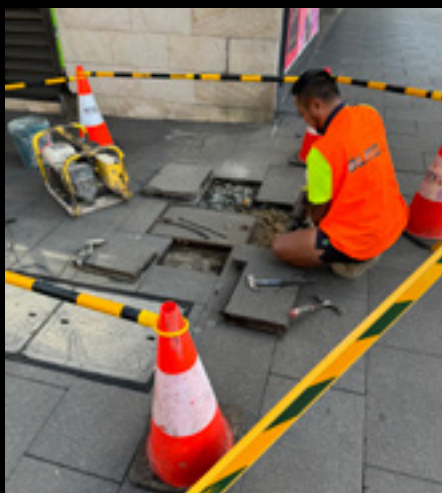
## First Blitz delivers spectacular results

A one-day cleaning and maintenance 'blitz' in the Randwick Town Centre has given the popular shopping strip a sparkling new look. In early April, almost 50 Council staff from different departments coordinated their activities in a single day of intensive work.

This included planting 11 new trees and 324 plants, fixing 220 pavers, laying 19 cubic metres of mulch, fixing 35 maintenance pits, pouring 15 squares metres of concrete footpath, updating 90 street signs, installing 12 new litter and recycling bins and painting 16 seats.

"I'd like to commend all the staff involved in the first Blitz program. The results are sensational and have delivered a significant boost to Randwick businesses and for shoppers," Mayor Veitch said.

The Randwick blitz is the first of many with other town centres scheduled for similar works in the future.



# KOOJAY CORRO BOREE

**FRIDAY 31 MAY**  
**11AM**  
**COOGEE BEACH**

**CELEBRATING NATIONAL  
RECONCILIATION WEEK**

**JOIN US IN MAKING  
CHANGE AND MOVING  
FORWARD AS A NATION.**

**NOW  
MORE  
THAN  
EVER**  
**#NRW2024**



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Council**  
a sense of community



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koojay](http://randwick.nsw.gov.au/koojay)

# news in brief

## HAVE YOUR SAY

### Your Say Randwick

Consultations taking place in May and June 2024:

#### Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2024-25

Our plan for the upcoming financial year is on exhibition throughout May. Find out what projects are planned and what's happening in your suburb.

#### Draft Compliance and Enforcement Policy 2024

Have your say on this policy that guides Council regulatory and enforcement activities.

#### Draft s.7.12 Development Contributions Plan 2024

Our updated plan continues a levy on development to help fund public facilities and infrastructure such as new libraries and community centres, upgrades of parks and playgrounds, environmental initiatives, and traffic and parking improvements.

#### Wills Reserve Playground upgrade, Kensington

Have your say on plans to upgrade some of the old play equipment and install new softfall surfacing.

To find out more about the above consultations please visit [yoursay.randwick.nsw.gov.au](https://yoursay.randwick.nsw.gov.au) or you can view hard copies of exhibition material at Council's Administration Building and Libraries.

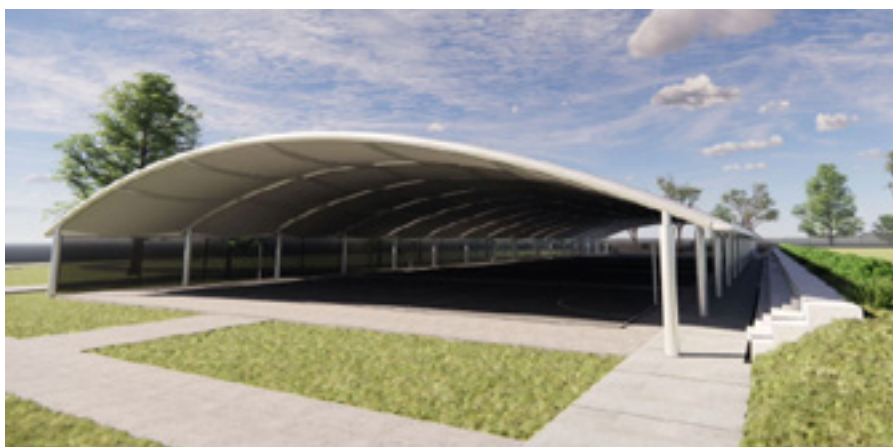
Information correct at time of printing.

## Meet Australia's longest serving Council workers

Two Randwick Council workers Jack Gaskin and Paul Vassarotti are this year marking 60 years of service to the Randwick City community. The two long-term staffers started work for Council in 1964 and have racked up 120 years' service between them. We believe they are likely to be the longest serving council staff in Australia – and still going. Read our feature story on their incredible service on page 16.

## Plans progress for Snape Park upgrade

Concept designs will be prepared for a new indoor cricket and training facility at Snape Park in Maroubra. Councillors resolved in March to commence the indoor cricket facility as part of stage one works. Upgrades to the sports field and public amenities and landscaping will be undertaken in stage two. Council plans to consult with the community on concept plans in late 2024.



## Shady plans for Heffron Park

Construction of a shade structure over six netball courts at Heffron Park in Maroubra is now underway.

Randwick Mayor Philipa Veitch said the new structure is an important addition to Heffron Park – the largest recreational park in the Randwick area.

It hosts training and competitions for several sports including netball, cricket, touch football, cycling, rugby union, rugby league, soccer and Oztag.

"Netball is Randwick City's biggest sport in terms of number of participants, and we get thousands of people attending games every weekend between April and September," Mayor Veitch said.

"The new structure means that players – and all the mums and dads and grandparents who come down to Heffron Park every week to support them – will be able to enjoy games, rain or shine."

## Lifeguard patrols extended at Clovelly

Randwick Council Lifeguards will patrol Clovelly Beach year-round, following a review of the Council's Lifeguard operations.

Previously patrolled between October and April, Council decided to extend patrols year-round following an increase in the number of people visiting the beach throughout the year. Clovelly, Coogee and Maroubra Beaches are all now patrolled year-round.

Last summer, Lifeguards also patrolled Little Bay Beach for the first time and returned to Malabar Beach for the first time in 20 years.

The new patrols follow a number of coastal fatalities and near drownings in that area. The patrols will be reviewed before next summer.





## New beachside markets launch at Maroubra

Monthly markets featuring more than 100 stalls are now being held at Maroubra Beach.

In partnership with well-known markets producer Cambridge Markets, the Council initiative provides community members with a new shopping experience featuring high quality

products, including fresh produce, artisan food products, fashion, homewares, crafts, plants, flowers and art.

“We’re so delighted to bring a monthly market to this beachside location. Markets are such a great way to strengthen community

spirit, bolster local economies and support small business, as well as showcase emerging artisans,” said Cambridge Markets Director, Madelienne Andersen.

**The markets will be held on the first Sunday of the month at Broadarrow Reserve, starting 5 May 2024.**

## Rock fishers urged to ‘make a safe choice’

A new safety campaign is urging rock fishers to consider with new data finding the Randwick coastline to be the most dangerous in Australia for rock fishing fatalities.

In the past 20 years 22 people have died rock fishing along the Randwick coastline, accounting for about 10 per cent of 201 deaths nationally – more than any other LGA.

The campaign includes outdoor advertising across the Randwick area, cinema advertising as well as a multicultural marketing campaign targeting men across Sydney from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Rock fishers are reminded that they should know how to swim, wear a lifejacket and non-slip footwear, and ensure they are aware of conditions. They should go home if conditions are too rough and never fish alone.

“For more experienced fishers, making a safe choice might mean picking a different rock ledge on rough days or being more cautious,” Mayor Veitch said.

“But for newcomers to the sport or those who can’t swim, a safe choice might mean fishing off a beach or from a jetty in the harbour instead.”

See our feature story about rock fishing on page 18.

## Groper fishing ban

Fishing for groper by any means is now prohibited along the NSW coast as part of a 12-month trial by the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

The Eastern Blue Groper is a much-loved fish found along the Randwick City coastline, and ‘swimming with bluey’ is a bucket list item for locals and visitors alike.

Given the fish’s importance to the community, it was made the state fish emblem of NSW in 1998. Gropers are slow-growing, long-living and tend to live in one site. This makes them prone to overfishing with populations taking decades to recover.

Anyone caught taking a blue groper by any method faces a \$500 penalty notice and/or court imposed fines of up to \$22,000 and/or six months imprisonment for a first offence.

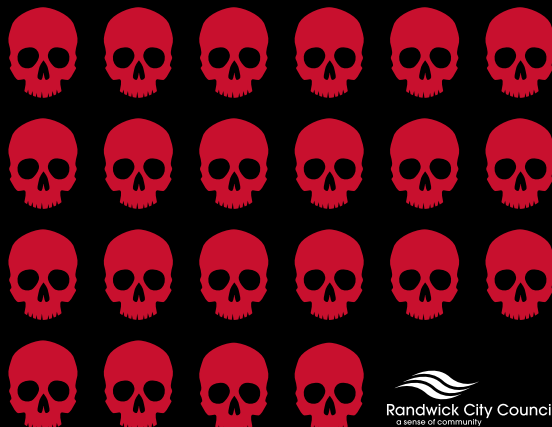


# ROCK FISHING?

## MAKE A SAFE CHOICE

# 22

### DEATHS IN RANDWICK LGA SINCE 2001

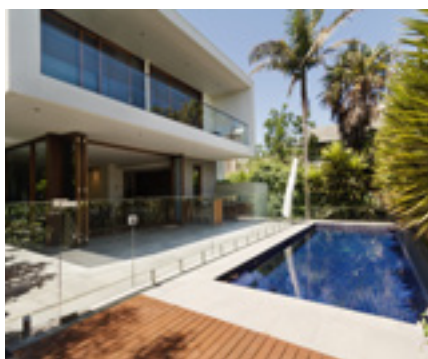


Randwick City Council  
a sense of community



## No smoking means no vaping

It is unlawful to smoke or vape in many outdoor spaces, under NSW law. These include playgrounds, sportsfields, beaches, outdoor dining, swimming pools and bus stops. For the purpose of the law, any 'no smoking' sign also applies to vaping.



## Renewed calls for a bed levy and cap on Airbnb properties

Short-term rental accommodation through websites like Airbnb and Stayz could be subject to a levy and a three-month cap. Council has reiterated its view through a submission to the Department of Planning on their Short and Long Term Rental Accommodation Discussion Paper. The submission calls for the maximum number of nights that properties can be let to be reduced from 180 days to 90. It also calls for a levy or tax on leased properties to fund additional infrastructure to help offset the impact of increased visits. There are currently 1,962 short term rental properties in Randwick City.

## Local Government elections reminder

Local Government elections for many NSW councils – including Randwick – will be held on Saturday 14 September 2024. Voters enrolled in Randwick will elect 15 Councillors – three for each of our five Wards. Mark the date in your diary – remember voting is compulsory! More info: [elections.nsw.gov.au](https://elections.nsw.gov.au)

## Calls for strict environmental checks and safeguards on Bundock Street housing redevelopment

A Department of Defence proposal to build 62 new homes along Bundock Street in Randwick should be subject to stringent environmental checks and safeguards, according to a Randwick Council submission. Councillors endorsed the submission at their March Council Meeting calling for a Human Health Risk Assessment, Interim Asbestos Management Plan and a Remediation Action Plan as well as compliance with a range of transport and engineering requirements.




# LOCK IT OR LOSE IT

## PREVENT VEHICLE AND PROPERTY THEFT



8/10 homes are entered by car thieves via unlocked doors or windows.  
**LOCK IT OR LOSE IT.**

Where are your keys right now?  
8/10 cars are stolen using the owner's keys.  
**LOCK IT OR LOSE IT.**

50% of vehicles stolen are left unlocked with a remote to the garage inside.  
Don't give thieves access to your home.  
**LOCK IT OR LOSE IT.**

70% of thieves enter homes while victims sleep upstairs.  
**LOCK IT OR LOSE IT.**

If your wallet is stolen, thieves can use your cash and your identity.  
Don't give thieves access to your car or your home.  
**LOCK IT OR LOSE IT.**

When at home lock your doors and windows, do not leave keys, wallets or other valuables visible from outside your home or near entrances.

Lock your vehicle and always remove and take your ignition keys and garage remotes. Take everything of value from your vehicle each time you leave it.

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For non emergencies.


**Crime Stoppers (1800 333 000)**  
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## ***New Matraville hall now open***

A new multi-purpose building on Knowles Avenue is now open for bookings!

The Matraville Youth and Cultural Hall, which was originally built in the 1950s, was in need of a full makeover.

Following detailed design work and community consultation, the former building was demolished in early 2023 and a brand-new facility constructed.

The new facility includes a hall, covered outdoor space, kitchen, bathrooms and landscaping. It's the perfect place to book for birthday parties and events or to host community activities or sports.

To celebrate the new building, Council is hosting a range of free onsite activities from Wednesday 8 May to Monday 13 May. To book and experience this new hall for yourself please visit our website.



Mural by Re-Right Collective.



# BEACH BREAKS 2024



## Sunday 21 July

## 11am – 4pm

## Maroubra Beach

Celebrate the proud and  
colourful surfing history and  
culture of Maroubra Beach.

Live music, entertainment  
and kids activities.





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SURFING  
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Find out more:  
[randwick.nsw.gov.au/  
beachbreaks](https://randwick.nsw.gov.au/beachbreaks)

# Check out our draft plan for Randwick 2024-2025

**Every year Randwick City Council asks the community for their views on our plan for the financial year ahead. This year's Draft Operational Plan and Budget sets out our proposed activities between July 2024 and June 2025, and how we plan to pay for them.**

Each one-year Operational Plan is informed by the community's long-term vision for a strong and inclusive Randwick, as reflected in our 10-year Community Strategic Plan.

Now is your chance to further shape our work to deliver facilities, services, public spaces and transport infrastructure. Your feedback will also inform the way we respond to climate change, support our local economy, and build a safe and resilient community.

## **Delivering facilities for community**

Next year we propose to spend \$42 million on capital works projects, building or upgrading a range of community facilities, including Surf Life Saving clubs, libraries, public toilets and art centres.

We will open the upgraded Clovelly & Carrington Road Pocket Park to the public, complete construction of a new rescue shelter in Randwick to support WIRES to rehabilitate injured and sick wildlife, and complete upgrades to netball courts at Heffron Park.

Some exciting projects are planned to begin construction too, including:

- a BMX Pump track to support an emerging sport in Randwick;
- a dedicated creative space for artists, as we transform heritage-listed Blenheim House in Randwick;
- a new façade for the much-loved Lionel Bowen Library;
- major streetscape upgrades to Maroubra Junction and Matraville town centres;
- refurbishment of the Malabar Memorial Hall and Community Library entrance to ensure greater accessibility; and
- improvements to the Malabar Lifeguard Tower to support the new Lifeguard patrols.





Council has also budgeted to complete the design of the new Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club, and to continue the design process for improving the Coogee Beach amenities, bus shelter and kiosk on Arden Street.

Check out the full plan to find out more about these projects, and what else is in the pipeline.

### **Budgeting for fun!**

Next year, we plan to upgrade five playgrounds! The playgrounds are located at: Shaw Reserve, Kingsford; Fred Williams Reserve, Phillip Bay; Hurley Reserve, Matraville; Wills Reserve, Kensington; and Finucane Reserve, Matraville. In Maroubra, we will progress designs for the Ocean View Playground.

### **Supporting our local economy**

Council will continue to provide support to our local economy through our streetscape and public domain improvements, capacity building and networking programs and signature events.

We are committed to working in partnership with local businesses and the State Government's 24-Hour Economy Commissioner to build a vibrant, inclusive, and safe nighttime economy in Randwick. We are also trialling initiatives such as monthly Sunday markets at Maroubra.

During the next year we plan to streamline the application and approval

process for footway dining and develop a Food Truck Policy.

We'll also assess the feasibility of using the Council-owned Rainbow Street property in Kingsford for a new community hub that includes retail, commercial, residential and community development, as well as new offices for Randwick Council administration staff.

### **Responding to climate change**

Responding to climate change remains a key priority for Council. We will complete the planting of 2,000 new street trees and 5,000 native plant and shrubs this coming year, increasing canopy cover and delivering significant long-term benefits to our community.

Our highly successful environment and sustainability programs are proposed to continue, including the Eco Living Festival, the Marine and Coastal Discovery program, and our essential dune restoration and water saving work.

New initiatives proposed include the installation of five ultra-fast electric vehicle chargers for public use, and research into new ways to save

water, including blackwater reuse and reedbed irrigation facilities in Randwick Environment Park.

### **Supporting our community**

Council plans to continue to work with providers to deliver community services at Lexington Hub and to support our community through \$650,000 in grants for community partnerships and programs.

In response to the housing affordability crisis, we will review our housing policy, proposing to increase affordable housing in Council properties.

### **How it affects ratepayers?**

Council's total rates revenue is proposed to increase by 4.9% – the amount set by NSW's Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

The annual domestic waste management charge is proposed to rise by \$26.55 (4%) to \$689.90.

Council has also applied to IPART for approval to continue and make the Environmental Levy permanent which has been part of Council rates for 20 years. A decision is expected in May 2024.

### **Have your say today!**

Scan to read and provide your feedback on both the Draft Operational Plan and Budget and the Draft Fees and Charges.





# Randwick Environment Park Loop

***Nestled within the bustling precinct of Randwick lies a tranquil haven awaiting exploration. The Randwick Environment Park loop offers an immersive experience, with each step revealing a tapestry of our city's natural wonders. Hit the trail and learn more about the local fauna and flora that await.***

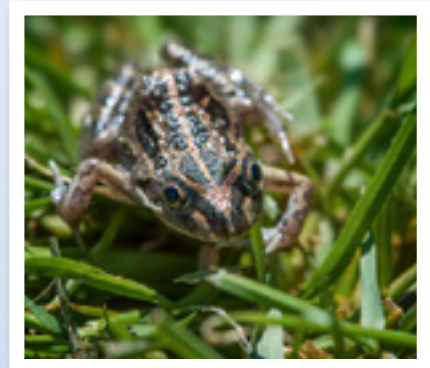
## **Getting started**

The Randwick Environment Park loop begins and ends at the Randwick Community Centre off Munda Steet in Randwick. We started the walk on the trail next to the Community Centre, but you can always wander through the centre to begin (more on that later).

The Loop is an experience for the whole family, with plenty of opportunities for kids to learn and explore the sounds and sights of our city—plus the boardwalk makes the Loop wheelchair, pram and bicycle-friendly.

## **300m**

The trail starts near the Randwick Community Centre and takes you across a boardwalk. Here, you'll encounter the remarkable and endangered Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub species. Keep your eyes peeled for wildlife like blue-tongue lizards, brushtail possums and snake-necked turtles. As you stroll, you'll notice the first of 20 bird cut-outs placed around the park. You can scan the QR codes to learn more about each bird. Depending on the weather, the water level in the area varies, so sometimes the scrub might be wet while other times it's dry.



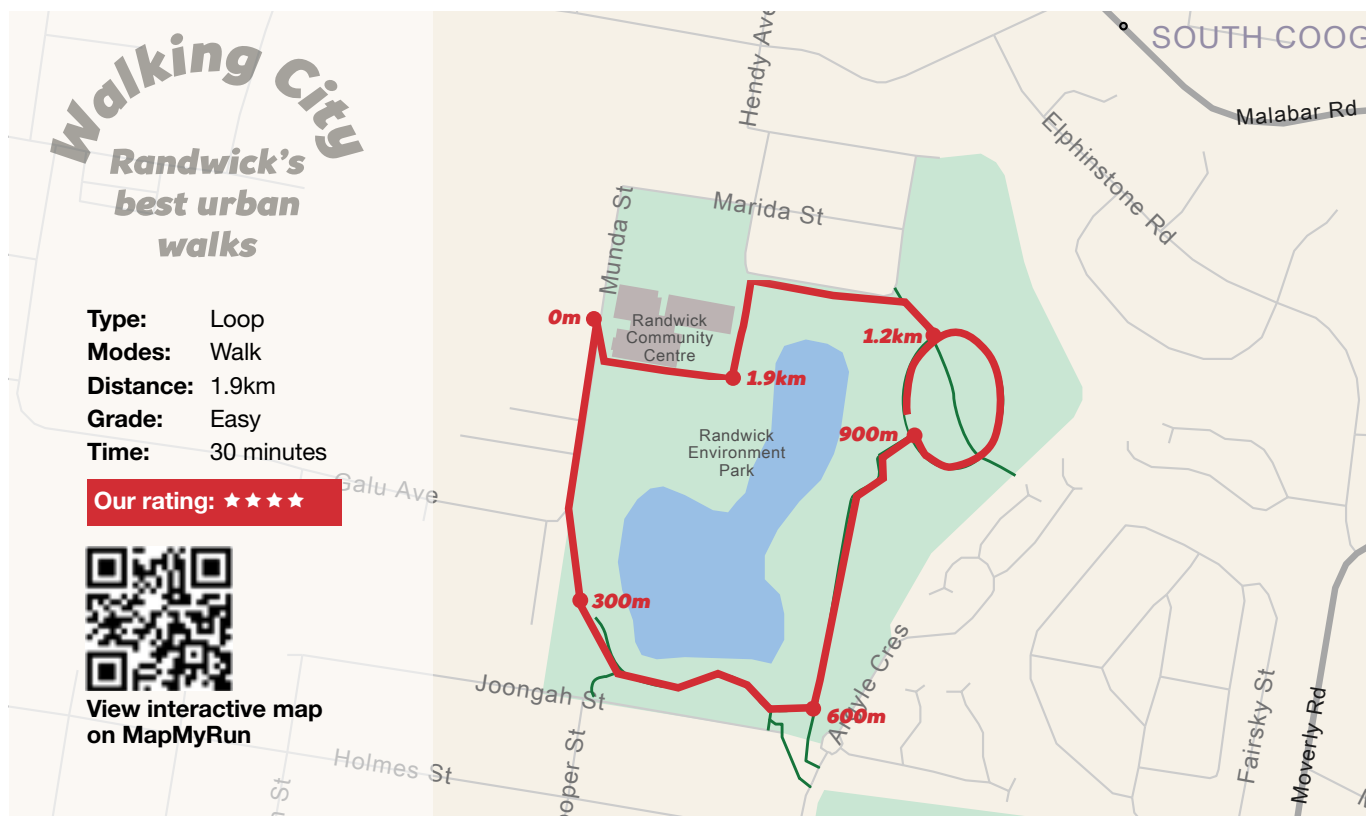
The Common Eastern Froglet is one of the residents in the park.

## **600m**

Keep following the trail to reach the second lookout, where you can take in the expansive wetlands. The mix of amber and green shrub looks particularly incredible against the setting sun and provides an amazing view of the local flora. Curve along the path and keep an ear out for the chorus of frogs. The area has allowed the frog population to flourish, and many species call the Randwick Environment Park home. Species range from the tiny Common Eastern Froglet to the larger Striped Marsh Frog.







### 900m

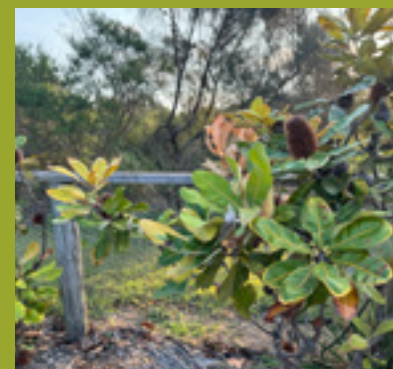
Continue straight and enjoy the beauty of Wallum Banksias and the endangered Sunshine Wattles, before finding the second lookout. Take a moment to enjoy the serenity and check out the sprawling view of the Environment Park. Here you can also read about the Environment Park's fire management systems. Many of our native plants adapt and regenerate after burning, and you can find out more about how we are working to reinstate some Indigenous fire management processes.

### 1.2km

With so much to see and experience along the trail, here you can take a much-deserved break and enjoy the open grassy area. There's space to sit and relax, as well as undercover BBQ and picnic areas. After enjoying a rest, follow the bend and begin the final leg of your journey.

### 1.9km

Take the steps up to the final lookout and get up close and personal with the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub before venturing through the Randwick Sustainability Hub. The hub is home to a Permaculture Interpretive Garden, an open grassed area and more spots for BBQs and picnics. The Sustainability Hub is also home to our monthly Saturday Circle, where we offer different sustainability activities.



### What is the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub?

Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub is a critically endangered diverse plant community, which grows on 100,000-year-old wind-blown dune sand on sandstone. It is present in Randwick Environment Park and our Bushcare team is working hard to preserve and bring back the scrub.



# The birds and the buzz of Saturday Circle



**The neighbourhood is alive with the first bird songs for the day. Kookaburras bellow a chorus of welcome laughs in the distance, and a raven lets out a sorrowful croak. There are several other songs, familiar but unrecognisable.**

Seven people have signed up to today's community birding group at Randwick Environment Park to discover more about the different bird species in the eastern suburbs. Bird expert and ecologist Renée Ferster Levy is leading the group which is part of several environment and sustainability focused workshops and activities offered through Randwick City Council's Saturday Circle program.

After a brief round of introductions, Renée sets up a huge spotting scope, which looks like a telescope for outer space, and several members of the group whip out binoculars.

Birds can be identified through a myriad of ways, says Renée, not only their body shape, size, colour and behaviour but also their voices. Listen carefully. "Bird calls can tell us so much," Renée says. "For example, lots of lorikeets squabbling in one area might indicate a flowering tree, and a whole lot of noisy miners giving strident calls from a big area will be warning each other about a bird of prey."

Randwick resident Anne-Marie Viguier, who has joined the group

with her partner, says: "We often hear birds before we see them, so it's useful to learn how to identify them through their calls."

It is the couple's first birding group in Randwick. "We do some birding activities a little bit further away from home, but this activity was a chance to discover the Randwick Environment Park and watch birds close to where we live," Anne-Marie says.

The group has barely started their walk when a small body with a patch of brilliant blue flickers and flashes through the bushes and emits a series of fast, high-pitched tweets. It's a superb fairy-wren, one of the smaller birds in the area, only weighing around 10 grams.

A little further along, a couple of New Holland honeyeaters can be seen high up on the branches of a tree. With long, elegant tails and bright yellow patches on their wings, New Holland honeyeaters are a delight to the eyes.

The noisiest of the lot, however, are the aptly named noisy miners. These native honeyeaters are fiercely territorial, often exhibiting aggressive behaviour towards other birds and can take over entire areas. "It's interesting," Renée says. "There are a lot of noisy miners in Randwick Environment Park, yet there are still many small birds." Renée believes the density of the bushland in the park keeps the smaller birds safe. "They have shelter to hide and nest safely."

Over the past decade Renée has identified at least 70 bird species at Randwick Environment Park.

"The data of bird numbers and species can tell us a lot about the health of a habitat," she says. "What's special about Randwick Environment Park is that it's surrounded by urban buildings and it's quite far from the ocean and dense green areas, such as the national parks to the south and the Botany Wetlands to the west."

"It's really an island of biodiversity that is incredibly valuable. There's just so much in this tiny area, and it's well used by people, but the biodiversity seems to remain."

The walk comes to a bittersweet end after two hours. The group has identified a total of 13 bird species with the help of Renée, who unpacks a delicious banana cake for everyone to share. Several members of the group share they will be back for the next birding group meeting. "I loved it," Anne-Marie says. "Renée is super knowledgeable and shares a lot of information especially about the bird calls. It was very useful."

Learn how to fix and maintain your bike at the Saturday Circle.





## A stitch in time

While the community birding group are flying the coop, the buzz of several other Saturday Circle workshops and activities is only just beginning.

Back at Council's Randwick Community Centre, several people are huddled together learning the ins and outs of bicycle maintenance, while another group are getting ready to learn how to take creative photos in nature.

Inside the centre, a clothes 'swap' is well under way and dozens of people are wandering around tables of garments, looking for a new favourite outfit. Elsewhere, in a small airconditioned room, a group of people learn to mend textiles. Some people have brought along their old jumpers and shirts; a couple have come with hats; others are there just for the company. Words like 'blanket stitch' and 'running stitch' are thrown around as the group share stories and advice about sewing and embroidery.

Randwick resident John Hamilton has brought along a big carpet. It's a special item from Turkey, he explains, where he and his wife Denise met.

The couple have had the carpet for 40 years and the edges have started to fray. John wants to know how he can fix it. Vera, the facilitator of the textile mending workshop, suggests a stitch and John gets to work. "It's good to have reassurance on what to do," he says.

Coogee resident Karen Hutchinson has brought along a hat with a small hole. She attends a weekly craft group that does a lot of "sewing, knitting and unpicking," and generously helps others with less experience to fix their holey items.

"I really believe in fixing and reusing things rather than throwing them out," Karen says.

Randwick resident John Hamilton fixing his carpet in the textile mending group.



## Saturday Circle calendar of events

### Climate Fresk (climate change)

8 June, 10am-1pm

Cost: Free

### Lego Build

8 June, 10am-12pm

Cost: Free

### Library Storytime

8 June, 10am-12pm

Cost: Free

### Toy Swap

13 July, 10am - 12pm

Cost: Free

### Textiles Mending Group

8 June, 10am-12pm

Cost: \$5.50 + BF

### Phone Photography in Nature (two-day workshop)

8-9 June and 13-14 July

Saturday 10am – 1pm

Sunday 10am – 12pm

Cost: \$125, or \$75 for Randwick Council residents.

### Bike maintenance

8 June, 10am-12pm

Cost: \$5.50 +BF

### Community Birding Group

8 June and 13 July, 8-10am

Cost: Free

### Clothes Swap

8 June and 13 July, 10am-12pm

Cost: Free

### Saturday PermaBee

8 June and 13 July, 10am – 12pm

Cost: Free

### Growing Food for Wildlife Project

8 June and 13 July, 10am -12pm

Cost: Free

**Saturday Circle workshops and activities are held every second Saturday of the month at Randwick Sustainability Hub, 27 Munda Street Randwick. The next workshops are on Saturday 8 June and 13 July.**

Scan to find out more about the workshops and activities on offer, or book your spot now.



Bird expert and ecologist  
Renée Ferster Levy.



# Jack & Paul

**Council staff members Jack Gaskin and Paul Vassarotti are this year celebrating a combined 120 years of service to Randwick City Council. We caught up with the two legends to find out what keeps them going.**

## JACK

While darkness and silence still envelope Randwick City, and residents are fast asleep, Jack Gaskin is busy at work, keeping our streets and walkways clean. He starts his workday at 3.45am and drives a sweeper truck that whirls, sucks, and brushes away waste, debris and leaves on the ground.

For several hours of most mornings of the week, Jack, aged 80, can be found sweeping through Clovelly, Maroubra and Coogee. The ghostly hours of the night are the best time to work, he says, because there's no one around. "You've got to be careful. You've got to watch everything around you. Sometimes dogs run in front of you."

The footpaths at Clovelly Beach are the hardest to clean because they are very narrow. However, in all his years of sweeping, Jack's never had an accident.

The only thing he's hit working with Randwick Council is an impressive 60 years of service. He marked this milestone in February this year. Jack was born and grew up in Sydney's eastern suburbs and began working at Council in the 1960s. He started "in the gardens", laying turf on top of the old tram tracks at Maroubra Junction, before earning his bronze medallion and becoming a Lifeguard.

His dreams had always been set on garbage though. "I wanted to get

into garbage because you got more fit there," Jack says. "You had to run around all the time. We used to run and pick up the garbage bins and throw them up on top of the trucks. There were no machines back then. It was hard work and you had to run for miles."

Collecting garbage not only kept Jack fit, but it also led to lifelong friendships. "I worked with a great mob of blokes," Jack says. "All my friends have come from Council."

**For several hours of most mornings of the week, Jack, aged 80, can be found sweeping through Clovelly, Maroubra and Coogee.**

Jack and his mates can be found at Malabar playing golf on their days off. Their social club has evolved over the years with people coming and going but, overall, it's a close-knit group.



**Jack Gaskin, 80, is the second of four generations of Gaskins to work for Randwick Council.**



**Paul, 81, marked  
60 years with  
Council in April.**



For Jack, Randwick Council is literally family – not only because his colleagues have become the best of mates but because he is the second of four generations of Gaskins to work at Council. Jack's father, Jack Senior, was also a garbage collector, and Jack's son, Jason, is a business analyst with Council's department of Infrastructure Services. For a brief time, Jack's grandson also worked at Council.

A lot has changed in the 60 years he's been with Council, says Jack, but the biggest transformation has been the introduction of new machinery and computers. "It was pretty hard for me to understand it all at first," says Jack, who only recently got a handle on the mobile phone that his son Jason bought him. "I know how to ring and hang up," he laughs.

## PAUL

Paul Vassarotti's first memory of Jack was in 1964, when the two had just started working with Council.

"I was building a pump house at Pioneers Park in Malabar and I remember seeing this very fit guy," Paul says. "He was hard at work, running, putting in these irrigation lines for sprinkler systems. It was Jack.

"It's funny that something like that stays in your mind." Paul was in construction at the time – where he worked for the

next decade – before becoming a survey assistant. "It was adventurous," Paul says of his work in the early days.

Paul, aged 81, is this year also celebrating 60 years of service. Although senior in age to Jack, he started at Randwick Council two months after Jack and marked his 60th year in April.

Like Jack, Paul is reluctant to share the details of the stories he's accumulated over the decades working at Council. "We lived in another world," is all he says. "We lived in a different time and place. Council progressed and we progressed with it."

He shares stories of several stand-out bosses and leaders who influenced and helped to shape him professionally though. "The engineer that used to lead the projects I was working on was a very good person to have in charge because there was nothing he couldn't do. He set the pace for us to do the work.

"I value the opportunities and the experience I got from working under this gentleman. He'd always come out in a white shirt and tie, and at the end of the day his shirt would be completely dirty, but he was just that type of person."

## A rare disease

There was only one time when Paul almost left Council. A job working on

a dam project in New Guinea came up and he was about to take it when his father became unwell. Paul ended up staying in Australia to be with him. "Then the lady of my life, Maryse, came along," Paul says.

The rest is history. Paul got married and started a family and, like Jack, went on to develop close friendships at work. It's what has kept him going. "I've stayed at Council because of the people," Paul says. "It's like you're in a family. You share the hard days and the bad days, as well as the good days."

Today, Paul undertakes a wide range of duties at Council as senior survey officer, from interacting with Council contractors to managing security keys. The job keeps him on his toes. "I'm never bored," he says.

Are either Paul or Jack planning to retire soon? Not just yet. Paul's going to assess things year by year, and Jack has succumbed to the "rare disease" that keeps him going. "I like going to work," Jack says. "I love what I do."

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*Jack currently holds the Randwick Council record for the longest-serving employee, having started at Council just two months before Paul. We also believe they may be Australia's current longest serving local government employees.*

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# The most dangerous sport in the world

**Every year thousands of people wet a line along the Randwick City coastline in the hope of catching the big one. While most return home safely, tragically some never make it. SCENE looks at why the Randwick coastline has a reputation as the most dangerous place to rock fish in Australia.**

In the pre-dawn darkness of a warm Autumn morning, there's a large gathering of cars on a usually quiet coastal street.

Eager fishers, mostly men, hurriedly gather up bags, buckets and rods from car boots and head off into the darkness, head torches beaming streaks of light into the glistening distance.

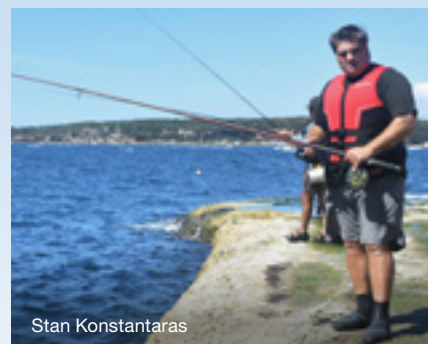
It's a tricky scramble across the nearby golf course, over broken boulders and along a well-worn track that leads to the infamous Julieanne's rock ledge. Fishers bustle along, their cleats clinking on the sandstone as they walk.

As the darkness starts to fade the scene becomes clearer. There's already about a dozen rock fishers on the ledge – standing shoulder to shoulder. More keep arriving but there's no room, so they search out a different ledge.

This is a scene repeated on rock ledges up and down the Randwick and greater Sydney coastline most weekends. It's estimated that one in people in Australia go fishing and about 1.2 million will rock fish every year.

It's an appeal that Stan Konstantaras knows all too well. "What can be better than getting outdoors and putting the freshest of fish on the table? A whole bream, grilled with olive oil, lemon and oregano is just about the best feed you can have at a minimal cost."

Stan is an eastern suburbs local, keen rock fisher and Chair of the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW.

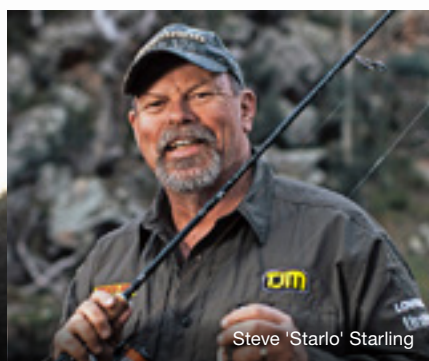


Stan Konstantaras

"Rock fishing gives you the opportunity to catch up with friends and at certain times of the year when the whales are constantly putting on a show, what else could you ask for?"

Another well-known rock fisher is Steve 'Starlo' Starling. "I think the greatest appeal of rock fishing is its easy accessibility to anyone living near the coast, combined with the broad array of target species on offer, and the variety of tackle and methods that can be used to pursue them."

Steve's name will be familiar to many from the iconic 90s TV show Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures where Steve was a presenter. He's written more than 20 books on fishing and thousands of articles and has his own YouTube channel.



Steve 'Starlo' Starling



Alex Bellissimo



“Our rock ledges and headlands are also ruggedly beautiful environments, with great appeal for many of us,” he says.

Rock fishing is a sport that both men acknowledge comes with a substantial risk.

Tragically in the past 20 years there have been 201 deaths recorded nationally, including 22 along the Randwick coastline.

“I put it down to access,” says Stan. “The Randwick coastline is easy to access, it has many rock platforms to choose from, deep water and parking is still free in many areas.”

Steve believes the deaths are often due to either inexperience or complacency.

“A lot of these relative newcomers to the sport also come from non-English-speaking backgrounds and may simply not have been exposed to information concerning rock fishing’s dangers or how to ‘read’ the ocean.

“At the opposite end of the spectrum, we also see too many fatalities and near-fatalities amongst much more experienced ‘old hands’ who’ve become complacent and believe that it could never happen to them.”

Both men believe that more education is an important part of the solution.

“We need to educate more and legislate less,” says Stan. “When you buy a fishing licence in NSW you should also have to complete a simple online tutorial covering basic safety information.”

Randwick Council recently put its support behind the idea of requiring all retailers of bait and tackle to display



## ROCK FISHING? MAKE A SAFE CHOICE

- 4 LEARN TO SWIM
- 4 WEAR A LIFEJACKET
- 4 WEAR APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR
- 4 CHECK CONDITIONS
- 4 NEVER FISH BY YOURSELF
- 4 GO HOME IF TOO ROUGH

compulsory safety information about rock fishing at the point of sale.

It’s an idea proposed by rock fishing survivor Hasti Masoumi who lost her husband and son at Little Bay on 31 January 2022. The family purchased their fishing rods and tackle the day before they went rock fishing – unaware of the dangers. Had they known the risk, Hasti believes things may have been different.

One person who knows more about educating newcomers to the sport of rock fishing than most is professional rock fishing guide Alex Bellissimo.

Alex has been taking people onto the rocks for 18 years and is Sydney’s – and likely Australia’s – only specialist rock fishing guide.

“People seek me out for a whole range of reasons. I’ve had some customers hire me to teach them because a family member has died rock fishing. Others are more experienced, but want to learn a new technique or catch a particular species.”

Like Stan and Steve, Alex believes education is important. But he

also believes rock fishers should be the ones educating fellow rock fishers on the dangers.

Alex says that while fatalities remain a huge concern, he thinks safety has come a long way.

“Back in the 1980s and even earlier there was a much higher fatality rate – particular amongst new migrants. In those days the fishing was more prolific, there were no bag limits and many fishers sold their catch. This encouraged more risk-taking.”

Steve says that even after all these years rock fishing he still always has a plan B if something should go wrong.

“If you or someone else on the rocks slipped in, or were washed into the sea, what is your immediate game plan? How would you react, and what steps would you take?”

“I do this simple mental exercise every single time I fish from the rocks, even on dead calm days,” he says. “Be willing to ‘pull the pin’ without even wetting a line if you have any doubts. It’s just not worth your life.”



# Beyond the backyard: your guide to safe dog ownership

**From using off leash parks to carrying doggie bags, microchipping to calming anxious pups... Here's what it takes to be a responsible dog owner.**

A grassy plain bathed in afternoon sunlight, set behind cliffs overlooking the rollicking sea below – Burrows Park in Clovelly is undoubtedly one of the most scenic dog parks in Sydney.

Doting owners chat in groups of two or three while their dogs dart, chase and roll freely; with people and pooches alike relishing the salty seabreeze.

Among them is Randwick local Hannah Carter and her three-year-old beagle cross border collie, named Rooster.

“It’s a gorgeous spot,” says Hannah, admiring the outlook. “It does get a bit

a leash at all times and failing to comply could result in a minimum \$330 on-the-spot fine.

Along with dogs roaming off leash, Council has received a spate of complaints about owners failing to pick up their dog’s faeces or dogs coming within 10 metres of a children’s playground – both of which are illegal under the Companion Animals Act (1998).

Manager of Ranger Services, Duncan Scott, believes that while most people want to do the right thing, further education and awareness is needed.

“Some people may have phobias or they may have some kind of aversion due to a previous incident, where they don’t like dogs. And in that case, even a friendly dog can create issues for them.”

Other issues may also arise when one dog is on a leash and another is roaming free (when they’re meant to be leashed). Leashed and unleashed dogs can sometimes react unpredictably.

Also some owners may decide to keep more difficult dogs permanently leashed – meaning an unleashed dog approaching them can be a recipe for trouble.

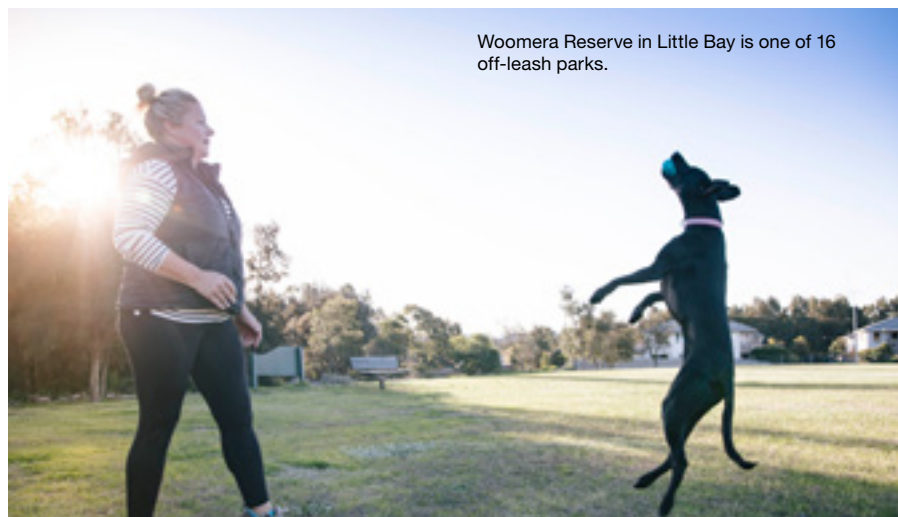
## Two steps to safekeeping

Being a responsible dog owner also means properly microchipping and registering your dog through a two-step process.

By 12 weeks, owners must have their animal implanted with a microchip, which can be done by a vet or accredited implanter. They will also fill out a Permanent Identification form and then forward it on so the animal is entered onto the NSW Companion Register. Owners will then be sent a Certificate of Identification.

By six months, owners must complete a lifetime registration form and send it to Council along with their copy of the certificate of identification. Once processed, owners will be sent a certificate of registration.

Each year, more than 150,000 dogs and cats are lost or stolen across the state. Duncan says that ensuring your dog is microchipped and registered with up-to-date details is “the biggest difference between getting a positive outcome [for a lost dog] or having to take the poor thing out to our animal care facility”.



Woomera Reserve in Little Bay is one of 16 off-leash parks.

tedious walking Rooster on the leash, but at least here he can just run around and play with other dogs.”

Burrows Park is one of 16 off leash dog exercise parks throughout the Randwick City Council area. Everywhere else, dogs must remain on

He and his team have been out and about in problem hotspots, handing out leashes and doggie waste bags to ensure owners are across the rules.

Duncan says that although some people insist their dog is harmless, it’s important to remember that public places are for everyone.



If your dog has been a vocal opponent of your return to the office in the years following Covid lockdowns, it's likely they're experiencing separation anxiety. It's an involuntary panic response to being left alone that may involve barking, whining, crying and howling, scratching, destroying furniture, digging out under fences and defecating or urinating uncontrollably.

Jenny Harlow, a certified anxiety trainer for dogs, says that while owners may feel overwhelmed by the issue, it can be resolved.

"Dogs do get better. We teach a dog that, 'When I walk out the door, you are safe.' Often that means we start with walking out the door for a couple of seconds, and then come back in. If the dog's doing well with that, we might go for five seconds and come back in."

While it can be frustrating as a neighbour, Jenny says the best thing to do is pop a short note in the letterbox to let the owner know, as they may not even be aware.

"It's very easy to label a dog as a problem, as a nuisance and as a pest, but what's happening with separation anxiety is the dog cannot do anything other than what they are doing. It's a panic response.

"Separation anxiety is a condition that doesn't resolve of its own accord, so if your dog is struggling with being left alone the best thing you can do is get some help."

### **Off-leash dog areas:**

1. Baker Park, Coogee
2. Bangor Park, Coogee
3. Bardon Park, Coogee
4. Trenerry Reserve, Coogee
5. Blenheim Reserve, South Coogee
6. Emily McCarthy Park, South Coogee
7. Burrows Park, Clovelly
8. Ella Reserve, Malabar
9. Pioneers Park, Malabar
10. Nagle Park, Maroubra
11. Coral Sea Park, Maroubra
12. Snape Park, Maroubra
13. Broadarrow Reserve, Maroubra
14. Kensington Rotary Reserve Park, Kingsford
15. Paine Reserve, Kingsford
16. Woomera Reserve, Little Bay

Council Rangers John and Joe with local residents Tim and Elizabeth with their dog Digby.



## COMMUNITY PROFILE

# I swam from Newcastle to Sydney



***Randwick's pristine coastline is home to many ocean swimming groups and some of Sydney's destination swim events. We spoke to Coogee local legend and Australian record-holder, Dean Summers, about the explosion in the sport's popularity, and what marathon swimming has taught him about life.***

A keen advocate for Australian swimming, Dean is quick to point out that before the crowds of wetsuit-clad newbies, Australia had long been “the epicentre” of the sport.

He counts Susie Maroney OAM, and Randwick resident and giant of Australian marathon swimming, the late Des Renford MBE, among his heroes.

The latter earned his moniker – “the King of the Channel” – after swimming the 21-mile distance across the English Channel 19 times. At just 17 years old, Maroney became the fastest woman to swim across the Channel and back again in 1991, then the first person to swim between Cuba and Florida.

In March 2024 Dean earned his own ‘first’ – swimming unassisted from Newcastle to Sydney, a feat both his heroes attempted and failed, albeit without the technology available in 2024.

It is hard to imagine that Summers only “found swimming again” a decade ago. After finishing his first eight laps of a pool feeling “exhausted”, he joined VladSwim, a daily squad that trains in city pools and in the open water off Coogee beach.

Squad founder, Vlad Mravec, was coaching 10 people to attempt the

Channel – it piqued Dean’s interest. “His positivity is infectious” says Summers, “and his training sessions leave everyone feeling invigorated.”

Just two years later, Dean had swum the English Channel, met his future wife and fellow swim fanatic, Kylie, and moved from Sydney’s inner west to Coogee Beach.

With this, he started a new chapter in a remarkable life. A life forever bound to the ocean.

Reflecting on his record-breaking swim, he recalls the moment the sun set. He admits, “there’s never a great time to be swimming by yourself, 10km off the coast in the middle of the night. But just like in life, when you’re faced with adversity, you just have to keep going.”

“I remember thinking to myself, ‘I’m ready for it. It’s time to dig in.’”

What happened next was magic. Dean was plunged into “beautiful darkness”, the faint red glow of the kayak ahead, his only guide.

The Milky Way appeared above him with a brilliance he had never before seen. It lit up the night sky and the surface of the water, its reflection making the horizon almost impossible to detect.

As he reached forward – over and over – catching armfuls of water, propelling himself forward, the ocean around him began to ignite. At each point of contact, blue-green bioluminescence danced around his hands and arms, softly exploding against his goggles.

The underwater light show seemed to merge with the stars above – “I was swimming through the universe” he recalls poetically.

The swim wasn’t all cosmic fireworks though – his neck is still scarred from what he estimates to be 60 to 70 bluebottle stings.

One of his most cherished memories of the swim was his daughter Michelle – who had recently recovered from a life-threatening illness – diving off the support boat to swim the final 200 metres to the finish line – “just like in life, what you think is going to be the worst part sometimes turns out to be the best.”

Dean encourages people to join Randwick’s ocean swimming community. “It’s simply the best sport, and there’s so much support around”.

“It’s the most egalitarian environment you could imagine... perhaps it has something to do with the fact you’re wearing nothing but your speedos and goggles,” he jokes.

“No matter who you are, everyone’s so interesting and so supportive – we celebrate and share in each other’s achievements. We’re bound together by our love of the water.”



# What's on

May to August 2024



For more information  
on events scan or visit  
[randwick.nsw.gov.au](http://randwick.nsw.gov.au)  
or call 1300 722 542.

## MAY

### RANDWICK STORIES – EXHIBITION

Open until Oct  
Community Galleries,  
La Perouse Museum

### JOE TIMBERY: WORLD CHAMPION BOOMERANG THROWER - EXHIBITION

Open until Sep  
Collection Galleries,  
La Perouse Museum

### SEND OFF: LA PEROUSE – EXHIBITION OPENING

Sat 4, 2pm  
Bayview Gallery, La Perouse Museum

### MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sun 5 May, 8am – 2pm  
Broadarrow Reserve



### MATRAVILLE YOUTH & CULTURAL HALL - OPENING CELEBRATIONS

Wed 8 – Mon 13 May  
Knowles Avenue, Matraville

### RANDWICK LOCAL PLANNING PANEL MEETING

Thu 9 May, 1pm – 3pm  
Online via Microsoft Teams

### PLANT WITH US

Sun 12 May, 8.30am – 1pm  
Heffron Park, Maroubra

### ALISON PARK PLAYGROUND OFFICIAL OPENING

Thu 16 May, 3pm – 4.30pm  
Alison Park, Randwick

### LET'S CHAT - NORTH WARD

Sat 18 May, 10am – 12pm  
Randwick Literary Institute

### SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL: KERRI SACKVILLE IN CONVERSATION

Sun 26 May, 1pm  
Margaret Martin Library, Randwick

### COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 28 May, 7pm – 11.30pm  
Council Chambers, 1st Floor  
Randwick Town Hall

### KOOJAY CORROBOREE

Fri 31 May, 11am  
Coogee Beach



## JUNE

### MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sun 2 Jun, 8am – 2pm  
Broadarrow Reserve

### RECYCLE CENTRE TOURS FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Sun 2 Jun, 8.45am – 2pm  
Randwick Recycling Centre

### PERMABEE COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

Fri 7 Jun, 9am – 12.30pm  
Randwick Sustainability Hub

### CHEMICAL CLEANOUT

Sun 9 Jun, 9am – 3.30pm  
Clovelly Beach Car Park

### RANDWICK LOCAL PLANNING PANEL MEETING

Thu 13 Jun, 1pm – 3pm  
Online via Microsoft Teams

### LET'S CHAT – SOUTH WARD

Sat 22 Jun, 10am – 12pm  
Little Bay shops

### COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 25 Jun, 7pm – 11.30pm  
Council Chambers, 1st Floor  
Randwick Town Hall

### POP-UP COMMUNITY SUPPORT HUB

Thu 27 Jun, 11am – 1pm  
Eastern Beaches Salvos

## JULY

### MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sun 7 Jul, 8am – 2pm  
Broadarrow Reserve

### RANDWICK LOCAL PLANNING PANEL MEETING

Thu 11 Jul, 1pm – 3pm  
Online via Microsoft Teams

### COMMUNITY BIRDING GROUP

Sat 13 Jul, 8am – 10am  
Randwick Sustainability Hub

### BASTILLE DAY

Sun 14 Jul, 9.30am  
La Perouse Headland

### SURFING WALK OF FAME AND BEACH BREAKS

Sun 21 Jul, 11am – 4pm  
Maroubra Beach



### COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 23 Jul, 7pm – 11.30pm  
Council Chambers, 1st Floor  
Randwick Town Hall

### DUNNINGHAM RESERVE BUSHCARE

Thu 25 Jul, 9am – 11am  
Adjacent 5-7 Major Street, Coogee

## AUGUST

### MAROUBRA BEACH MARKETS

Sun 4 Aug, 8am – 2pm  
Broadarrow Reserve

### GORDONS BAY BUSHCARE

Sun 4 Aug, 9am – 12pm  
Access via the UNSW Cliffbrook  
Campus, 45 Beach Street Coogee

### RANDWICK LOCAL PLANNING PANEL MEETING

Thu 8 Aug, 1pm – 3pm  
Online via Microsoft Teams

### COMMUNITY BIRDING GROUP

Sat 10 Aug, 8am – 10am  
Randwick Sustainability Hub

### PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY IN NATURE

Sat 10 Aug, 10am – 1pm  
Randwick Sustainability Hub

### ALISON ROAD PARKCARE

Thu 22 Aug, 1pm  
Corner of Alison Road and Beach  
Street Coogee

### COUNCIL MEETING

Tue 27 Aug, 7pm – 11.30pm  
Council Chambers, 1st Floor  
Randwick Town Hall



CAMBRIDGE MARKETS

PRESENTS

# MARROUBRA BEACH MARKETS



First Sunday of  
the month

8AM TO 2PM

Broadarrow  
Reserve



Randwick City Council  
a sense of community



1300 722 542  
[randwick.nsw.gov.au](http://randwick.nsw.gov.au)