



Keep Australia Beautiful NSW Tidy Towns Awards 2023



THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 TIDY TOWNS AWARDS PARTNERS AND SPONSORS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from Joint Patrons - Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales, and Mr Dennis Wilson	3
About the Tidy Towns Awards	4
About Keep Australia Beautiful NSW	4
Message from the CEO	5
Thank you to our Awards Sponsors	5
Awards Categories	6
Awards Judges and Assessors	8
2023 Overall Tidy Towns Award Winner	11
2023 Overall Tidy Towns Population Category Winners and Finalists	12
Category Award Winners	
Biodiversity Conservation	15
Bush Spirit	18
Circular Economy	22
Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation	23
Communication and Engagement	26
Resource Recovery & Waste Minimisation	29
Heritage & Culture	32
Litter Prevention	26
Local Legends	39

Keep Australia Beautiful NSW

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Disclaimer

The information in this booklet has been provided by the Award nominees and referees chosen by them. Every effort has been made to present all the information contained in this booklet as accurately as possible.

Cover image: 2023 Overall Tidy Towns Award Winners - Bathurst



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
SYDNEY

Message from

**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC
Governor of New South Wales
and Mr Dennis Wilson**

Keep Australia Beautiful NSW has been at the forefront of transforming our cities, towns and communities, making them more sustainable and beautiful places to live in, for the past 48 years. An important component in the success of this mission has been the prestigious Sustainable Cities and Tidy Towns Awards.

As Patrons, Dennis and I had the honour of congratulating Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, and its partner organisations - Councils, businesses, industries, schools and local community groups - at this year's 2022 Sustainable Communities Tidy Towns Gala Awards Dinner in Singleton. At this event, and during subsequent conversations, we had the opportunity to hear from those involved about how this program had contributed to healthier, happier and more vibrant communities.

The commitment that Councils and volunteers have made in improving local environments and community health is also seen in an increased number of high-quality Sustainable Cities and Tidy Towns Award entries, making judging both challenging and rewarding.

As environmental issues become ever more critical, and innovative technologies provide expanded possibilities, it is heartening to hear of the initiatives that are being explored by Councils, businesses and industries.

There is always more to be done, but as Keep Australia Beautiful NSW recognises Sustainable Cities and Tidy Towns Award-winners again this year, we can be thankful for the work of its founders, members, sponsors and volunteers over the past five decades to 'keep New South Wales beautiful'.

Congratulations to all Winners and entrants on your outstanding efforts to create sustainable cities and communities.

**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC
Governor of New South Wales**

Mr Dennis Wilson

About the Tidy Towns Awards

Since 1981, the Tidy Towns Program has been rewarding and recognising projects around litter, waste management, recycling, heritage, community spirit and other environmental areas in towns across the breadth of NSW.

Winning the title of the “State’s Tidiest Town” has become a much sought-after honour and is highly contested by small and large towns alike.

All regional towns, councils, community groups, businesses, schools and individuals are invited to take part in this program by submitting an entry in one of the nine categories or the Overall Award. The State Overall winner has the potential to become a finalist for the National Keep Australia Beautiful Awards and may also host the awards weekend for the year following their win.

AWARD POPULATION CATEGORIES

- Population category A: up to 1,500
- Population category B: 1,501 - 5,000
- Population category C: 5,001 - 12,000
- Population category D: 12,001 - 23,000
- Population category E: > 23,000



About KAB NSW



Keep Australia Beautiful NSW (KAB NSW) are the leaders in transforming behaviour to create a less littered and more environmentally sustainable New South Wales.

With a legacy of successful community engagement since 1975, our programs inspire individuals, students, organisations, businesses and government to actively care for their local environment.

Our flagship Sustainable Communities – Tidy Towns and Sustainable Cities awards programs have been running since 1981. They encourage, recognise and reward local communities, councils, businesses and schools for their outstanding efforts to reduce litter, increase recycling and beautify and improve their local environment.

Our Annual Litter Congress is Australia’s only dedicated litter conference that shares successful projects, research, knowledge and best practice in area of litter prevention, management and anti-littering strategies.

Our hugely popular EnviroMentors® sustainability education service is a mobile service to schools, reaching every corner of NSW and covering a full suite of environmental modules.

KAB NSW is an apolitical organisation – we are not activists, we work in partnership with local and state governments, industry, schools and the community to protect and improve our state environment.

We work closely with the NSW Government and partner with them on a range of programs to connect with communities across NSW at a grass-roots level.

Every year the NSW Premier hosts an annual charity dinner for KAB NSW which brings together business, local government, corporates, community groups and industry.

Message from the CEO

The Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Towns Program and Awards has been recognizing and rewarding regional councils and towns, businesses, communities, schools, and individuals that are pioneering the path towards a sustainable future and building stronger rural communities, since 1994. The projects showcased here not only enhance the local environment but improve the standard of living and well-being of regional communities.

The program encourages shared learnings and inspires action at the local level by recognizing and rewarding those efforts.

This booklet profiles the top entries in 2023 and acknowledges their exceptional efforts and commitment to keeping Australia beautiful. In sharing these projects, we hope that others will find inspiration and ideas for new projects and activities that they can utilise in their area.

On behalf of KAB NSW, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the judging panel for their commitment to the unenviable task of selecting the winners and congratulate all who are profiled here for their inspirational work.



Val Southam
Chief Executive Officer
Keep Australia Beautiful NSW

Thank you to our 2023 Tidy Towns Awards Partners and Sponsors



AWARDS CATEGORIES

Biodiversity Conservation



The Biodiversity Conservation Award is for projects which regenerate, conserve, or advance scientific understanding of biodiversity in terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Bush Spirit



The Bush Spirit Award is awarded to communities that successfully demonstrate strong community spirit and inclusion in the face of ongoing challenges. This award is given to communities that refuse to 'give in' when facing a challenge.

Circular Economy



Sponsored by



The Circular Economy Award is for operationally viable projects in the circular economy which do, or could potentially, divert solid materials, fluids or energy from waste streams and return them to the productive economy.

Litter Prevention



Sponsored by



The Litter Prevention Award is for a project or program that reduces or prevents litter, through education, enforcement, infrastructure, clean ups and partnerships.

The Litter Prevention Award has two subcategories:

- Clean Communities - for land-based litter prevention initiatives
- Clean Waterways - for marine-based litter prevention initiatives.

Local Legends

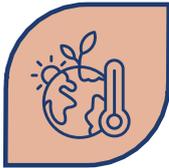


The Local Legends Award recognises individuals, schools or groups who demonstrate outstanding commitment to their environment and show leadership in pursuing environmental outcomes in any of the other awards categories.

The Local Legends Awards has three sub-categories:

- Up to 25 years
- 25 – 65 years
- Over 65 years.

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation



Sponsored by
snowyhydro

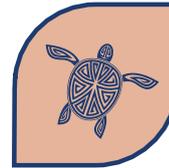
The Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation Award is for projects that strengthen resilience to the impacts of climate change, reduce emissions, or sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

Communication & Engagement



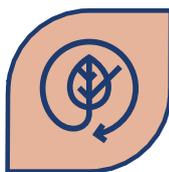
The Communication and Engagement Award is for programs and projects that inspire environmental action through education, media and community engagement campaigns.

Heritage and Culture



The Heritage and Culture Award is for community projects that enhance and protect either our built heritage, natural heritage, or indigenous cultural heritage.

Resource Recovery & Waste Minimisation



The Resource Recovery and Waste Minimisation award is for projects or programs that conserve, recycle or minimise wastage of our everyday resources, which include water, food & organic materials, and waste materials.

Overall Tidy Towns



The Overall Award is presented to a metropolitan local government area within Greater Sydney that has successfully undertaken projects or actions in multiple areas of environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

AWARDS JUDGES & ASSESSORS



Doug MacDonald

Doug is an Urban Designer, specialising in the planning, design and building of sustainable and resilient communities.

He brings to the Tidy Towns Competition expertise in environmental management, heritage and architecture, civil engineering, landscape architecture and public sector management.

He has been on 'both sides of the fence', working with specialist consultants, councils and property developers.

Doug particularly enjoys meeting people involved in the program, discussing future projects and especially seeing how well the projects have evolved in later years.



Paula Clasby

Senior Manager, Business Development, TerraCycle ANZ

Paula is a creative, marketing, and business development professional with extensive experience supporting businesses to advance positive environmental and social change. She has worked in various sectors including health, marketing, design, print, hospitality, and over 10 years within sustainability and the built environment. Prior to TerraCycle, Paula worked with GECA (Good Environmental Choice Australia), helping individuals and businesses to advance the circular economy.

Paula prioritises purpose in all her work, drawing on her passion to drive TerraCycle's mission in Eliminating the Idea of Waste®.



Ana Corpuz

Senior Policy Officer, Development Water Infrastructure NSW, DPE

Ana has over 25 years experience in policy, regulatory review, project management, strategic planning, technical analysis, research and reporting, communication, stakeholder engagement, organisational systems, benchmarking and process improvement, governance framework setting and compliance monitoring.

Her areas of expertise include environment and sustainability, water and catchment management, air quality, climate change, waste management, mining and exploration, land use, zoning and redevelopment, transport, contract management and mentoring.



Jeanne-Vida Douglas

Marketing and Communications Manager, TerraCycle ANZ

As an award-winning marketer, business journalist, and author, JV spent the first half of her career advocating for sustainable solutions within software start-ups, the media, and professional services. She transitioned to work directly for companies focussed on sustainability after witnessing the devastation caused by the 2019-20 bushfires.

JV worked in innovative renewable energy companies Nectr and 5B prior to joining TerraCycle, and is passionate about increasing access to, and awareness of, recycling solutions throughout Australia and New Zealand.



Dr Maryam Esfandbod

Manager, Business Development & Global, CSIRO

Maryam is a Soil Biochemist with strong expertise and experience on remediation of contaminated sites, waste management and organic waste recycling. She plays a key role in linking key Australian industries in agriculture, recycling and environmental remediation to researchers and establishing long-term mutually beneficial relationships.

In addition to university research management and strategy development, Maryam's multi-sectoral career has also spanned applied research, public sector policy and investment roles.



Layla McNeil

Waste and Resource Recovery Coordinator, CSIRO

Layla has experience in environmental strategic policy development, project and contract management, program delivery, EMS auditing, stakeholder facilitation.

She has knowledge and expertise in developing and delivering strategic environmental and communication plans, cooperative agreements and contracts with multi stakeholders; educational and behaviour change campaigns; environmental auditing, waste and resource management planning; to creating, implementing, reporting and evaluating a variety of sustainability programs.



Luciano Mesiti

CEO, Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia

Luciano is the CEO of Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia, whose aim is to promote food and fibre education in schools nationally. Prior to his appointment he was a high school teacher, teaching agriculture and technology.

Luciano has extensive experience in curriculum development in agriculture and technology and is a very passionate advocate of Landcare and sustainable land management curriculum in schools. He has been a Tidy Towns judge and assessor for over 15 years and a great supporter of Keep Australia Beautiful.



Lynda Newnam

Principal, Citizen Science Partnerships

Lynda has extensive project management experience in higher education as well as environment and 25 years in volunteering, from environment to heritage and tourism.

She is qualified in primary school teaching, has undergraduate degrees specialising in linguistics, anthropology and politics, a Master's in Environmental Management, and is currently writing a doctoral thesis on the potential role of citizen science within the planning regime.



Tasneem Rangwala

PhD Aspirant, ISF UTS - *Developing Adaptive Planning Framework*

Tasneem is a 2020 National Council of Women NSW Australia Day Award winner for research achievements.

She is a dedicated leader driving change towards environmental enhancements. Her skills include environmental impacts assessments, project management, overseeing strategic regulatory programs, compliance audits and driving efficiency via enhancing quality of processes.

Tasneem has over 25 years' experience working across a range of industries including Environmental Consultancy, State Government Regulatory Authorities and the Biomedical Engineering field.



Matthew Taylor

Owner/Director, Heart HR

As a former CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, Matthew brings over 7 years' experience from his time managing the organisation, including the Tidy Towns program.

Since leaving KAB, Matthew held a number of roles but his passion for the environment has remained.

Currently, Matt runs his own HR consultancy to support small to medium sized businesses - including many not-for-profit organisations.



Dr Trevor Thornton

Senior Lecturer - Hazardous Materials Management, Deakin University

Trevor is currently employed as a Senior Lecturer at Deakin University and also consults widely on processes to develop and implement programs to reduce environmental impacts for a broad range of industry sectors.

Trevor has a wealth of experience, particularly in areas associated with waste management.

Trevor has been working in various aspects of the waste management industry for over 30 years as a regulator and consultant.



Chris Tola

Manager, Skilled Workforce Program, Regional Development Australia & Publisher, Surfing Roadies

Chris has had an active involvement with many organisations including Surfrider Foundation, Take 3, the Australian Coastal Society, the Australian Radioactivity Protections and Nuclear Safety Agency, National Parks and Wildlife and the EPA.

Since 2002, Chris has periodically been the Keep Australia Beautiful Clean Beach Challenge National Assessor and State Judge, and the Tidy Towns Assessor; and was the Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW) Program Manager for Clean Beach Challenge and the Tidy Towns Program (2002 - 2005).

AWARDS JUDGES & ASSESSORS



Kristen Tola
Heritage Consultant
Artefact Heritage Services

Kristen Tola is a Heritage Consultant with experience working in both the commercial and government sectors.

Qualified in archaeology and Cultural Heritage and Museums Studies (Heritage Practice), she has extensive cross-disciplinary knowledge with developed practical skills in research, Aboriginal cultural heritage and archaeological assessments, and is experienced in museum interpretation, cultural tourism, strategy and policy development.



Richard Wiezel
Senior Coordinator Waste
Services, Blacktown City Council

Rick has had a varied career in the registered club industry, community development sector and local government leading Blacktown City Council's public place cleansing programs, graffiti removal and street sweeping programs. Rick currently leads Councils waste operations and is working towards FOGO for the City in coming years. Rick lives in the Lower Blue Mountains with his family and enjoys playing guitar, golf and volunteering for Keep Australia Beautiful NSW.



Nicole Wong
Community Marketing Associate,
TerraCycle ANZ

Nicole Wong is a communication specialist with nearly a decade of expertise in community engagement. She makes a difference by zeroing in on sustainable, for-purpose businesses, such as Soul of Chinatown and 107 Projects, helping them amplify their messages and impact.

Through her dedication and insight, Nicole bridges the gap between companies and communities, fostering relationships that drive positive change. Currently, Nicole spearheads the expansion of a network of recyclers for TerraCycle across Australia and New Zealand.



- ✓ NSW's leading incursion-based environmental education service since 1994.
- ✓ Curriculum-aligned content and hands-on learning for Primary Schools, High Schools, and now, Early Learning Centres!
- ✓ Passionate and experienced educators.
- ✓ Range of modules including litter reduction, diverting waste from landfill, and saving water.
- ✓ Complete package including school communications, scheduling, program delivery, follow-up resources, and a comprehensive report.

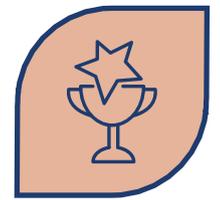
Contact Shani (spatel@kabnsw.org.au) for a quote!



2023 Overall Winner

BATHURST

Population Category E



The Bathurst LGA covers an area of 3,818 sq. kilometres with a population of 44,000 people and 1,000,000 annual visitors. The population is dispersed over the City of Bathurst, nine villages and isolated rural holdings.

Council's vision is to create a vibrant and innovative region that values its heritage, environment, culture, diversity, and strong economy.

The Bathurst community is committed at every level to continue being a resilient, healthy, environmentally, and culturally sensitive community. There is very clear leadership from Council which has earned strong support from the community. Management is inclusive and successful.



2023 Overall Tidy Towns Population Category Winners and Finalists



WINNER

Population Category A

Bowraville

Bowraville is a small town located with the Nambucca Valley LGA, occupying 27.9 sq. kilometres, and supporting a population of 1,122 people.

Council's vision for the overall LGA is to value and protect its natural environment, maintain its assets and infrastructure, and develop opportunities for its people.

Bowraville is a charming heritage town, known as the "Veranda Post Town" with many of the colonial buildings restored and well maintained. The arts are a feature of Bowraville with a number of museums and the historic theatre continues to host performances.

The first inhabitants of the land were the Gumbaynggirr and Ngaku people who now represent 14.8% of the population.

Bowraville is regarded demographically as one of the most disadvantaged towns in NSW. Faced with big social issues, much work is being done by enthusiastic residents to overcome this.

Bowraville is to be commended for the extraordinary effort and success in rebuilding the Nambucca Valley Phoenix, which is a model of community co-operation and information sharing.



FINALIST

Population Category A

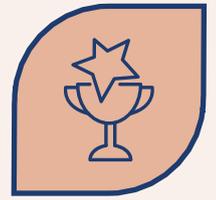
Walcha

The Walcha LGA covers an area of 6,400 sq. kilometres with a total population of 3,100 people dispersed over the Walcha township (1,800) and 5 rural villages.

Council's vision is to create a vibrant and sustainable environment in which people want to live, work and play.

The town, although small and quaint, it is well maintained, featuring clever public artwork, and cherishing a rich colonial history.

Although Walcha is at the start of the sustainability journey, given the small size and population base, it is punching above its weight and should be congratulated for its initiatives so far.



FINALIST

Population Category C

Tilligerry Peninsula

The small coastal peninsula known by some as the 'Tilligerry Peninsula' lies within the Port Stephens LGA. The Gir-Um-Bit State Conservation Area occupies most of the geographical peninsula with the remainder occupied by the small villages of Oyster Cove, Tanilba Bay, Mallabula, and Lemon Tree Passage.

The Tilligerry Community Association is very passionate about protecting and rehabilitating the local environment. The Association is an enthusiastic and well-meaning small group of individuals whose efforts to make their area as environmentally responsible as possible are commendable.



WINNER

Population Category D

Muswellbrook

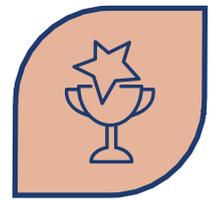
The Muswellbrook LGA covers an area of 3,4052 sq. kilometres with a population of 16,383 people mostly living in the Muswellbrook and townships. National parks cover 43% of the land area.

Council's vision in the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 is to keep community wellbeing at the heart of everything it does, and every consideration made through inclusion, participation, diversity, environmental sustainability, employment, and civic pride.

Muswellbrook is well advanced along the sustainability path, particularly given that it has established a Sustainability Unit which enables clearer communication with a well-defined focus on sustainable outcomes.

Council and the Muswellbrook community is to be congratulated for their sustainability initiatives.

2023 Overall Tidy Towns Population Category Winners and Finalists



FINALIST

Population Category E

Orange

The Orange LGA covers an area of 284.2 sq. kilometres with a population of approximately 63,000 people. The population is dispersed over the City of Orange, 20 towns and villages and rural holdings.

Council's vision over the next 20 years is to maintain the high levels of environmental amenity, liveability and landscape quality that characterises Orange.

The Orange community has, for many years, been practicing the principles of sustainable stewardship for the land and care for its people.

It continues to compete strongly in each of the award categories each year and has been a consistent winner in the Tidy Towns competition.



FINALIST

Population Category E

Cessnock

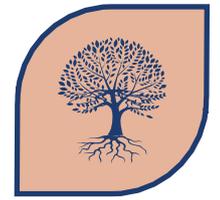
The Cessnock LGA covers an area of 1,966 sq. kilometres with a population of 61,256 people living in the City of Cessnock, 16 towns and villages and isolated rural holdings. Cessnock attracts over one million visitors every year.

Council's community vision contained in the Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2036 is for Cessnock to be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment.

Cessnock has been on the sustainability journey for many years and has a deeply embedded culture of stewardship of the land and one that involves effective engagement with its community.

Cessnock has earned the right to be proud of its achievements and current performance.

Biodiversity Conservation



WINNER

Population Category A



Yuraal Native Community Gardens

Mujaay Ganma Foundation
Aboriginal Corporation
(Bowraville)

Yuraal Native Community Gardens was created to provide a community space for people to connect with traditional Gumbaynggirr plants, foods, and medicine. An extensive nursery was created after the team collected and propagated numerous plants.

The community garden provides guided information on the plants' uses and cultural significance for the regeneration of Country and to pass on knowledge between generations. As a result, the biodiversity of bush food and plants in the area will be maintained, promoting regeneration of the bush block while providing meaningful employment for young people.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category C



Naturally Leafy, Green Tilligerry

Tilligerry Peninsula

After decades of sand mining and other development pressures on the surrounding bushland in the Tilligerry Peninsula area, a decline in koala numbers and tree loss across the peninsula was noted.

From 2022 to present, various stakeholders, including Tilligerry Landcare, Tilligerry Community Association and other community landcare groups continued working on planting koala food trees and local shrubs and grasses to bring back the bush and weed removal across the peninsula.

It is a multi-factor approach to keep the bushland sustainable by working with national parks on the Gir-um-bit SCA, applying to work with crown land on the Lemon Tree Passage Hill site and continuing the planting at Tilligerry Koala Forest.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Biodiversity Conservation

WINNER

Population Category D



Sustainability and Landcare Muswellbrook

Hunter Sustainability Landcare
Team

Muswellbrook's location and predominant mining industry contribute to the perception that sustainability is not important to the community. Council, residents and the Hunter Region Landcare Network worked together to counteract this perception by giving community members a hands-on opportunity to become involved in sustainable projects.

The Hunter Sustainability Landcare Team formed and continues to successfully achieve positive results through the leadership of the committee and dedication of its members. The result has proven that Muswellbrook is a great town with many great people dedicated to a sustainable future.

In the future, the group will seek more independent advice on the best ways to coordinate activities and attract new volunteers.

WINNER

Population Category E



Tuggerah Lakes Foreshore Rehabilitation

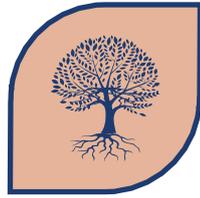
Central Coast Council

A transformative four-year effort was undertaken to restore biodiversity in the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary and its catchment.

A total of 53 hectares of wetlands were rehabilitated, specifically to protect the critically endangered Swift Parrot, as well as 12.98 hectares of Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest and 18 hectares of salt marshes.

The project also collaborated with experts to assess and map the habitats of endangered syngnathids, such as the White's Seahorse.

In fostering partnerships with local communities, Indigenous groups and academic institutions, this endeavour provides a model for sustainable biodiversity conservation while safeguarding the estuarine ecosystem.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



Conservation Volunteer Program

Bathurst Regional Council

In 2008, Bathurst Regional Council launched a well-established volunteer program to promote environmental conservation and habitat rehabilitation as part of the Bathurst Region Vegetation Management Plan.

In the past year, community and school volunteers have planted over 1,800 native trees, shrubs, and ground covers across 12 planting days.

With 431 community and school volunteers contributing 1,279 hours to improving biodiversity in the region, the program has increased environmental engagement and knowledge by restoring and rehabilitating almost half a hectare of degraded riparian vegetation and threatened ecological communities.

Special Commendation

IN RECOGNITION OF
MORE THAN 60 YEARS
OF UNWAVERING
COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY
SERVICE IN ORANGE

Edna Sharp

An inspiration at 92



Meals on Wheels has been serving the Orange community since 1963. Edna Sharp volunteered to take the meals around to community members from the beginning.

Sixty years later she is still helping out with the assistance of her two daughters and great grandson as well as her sister. Edna, after delivering tens of thousands of meals, still has the same passion she had all those years ago.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Bush Spirit

WINNER

Population Category A



Spring Hill - The Little School That Could

Spring Hill Public School

“One In: All In” is the informal motto of Spring Hill Public School, a small rural school with a big Bush Spirit.

A “can do” attitude by staff and students, a focus on inclusion, art, physical activity, community and sustainability has re-energised and reconnected a small village community to become an antidote to drought, COVID and flood which have severely tested community connection and resilience.

The school’s creative approach, which ensures no one misses out, has become infectious and inspiring. Attendance, health and wellbeing have increased and NAPLAN results are above the state average. From the Breakfast club to robotics and Boccia, Waste as Art and even a SteamPunk Learning Cow, Spring Hill shows the power of inclusion as a pathway to collective action towards a sustainable future.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category A



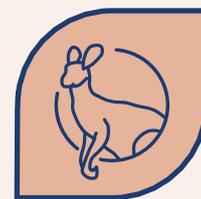
Phoenix, Together We Rise

Nambucca Valley Phoenix

Following the Black Summer bushfires and a failed merger, Nambucca Valley Phoenix set out to rebuild and create an inclusive organisation that could support the needs of the local community while achieving its charitable purpose of creating support, employment, and training for people with disability.

The project has been implemented in stages, to date offering a number of programs and services that support the organisation financially while providing social outcomes for people in the region, including employment, training, tourism, social and wellbeing support.

Additionally, Nambucca Valley Phoenix has rolled out infrastructure upgrades to improve the facilities and increase a sense of civic pride, community and inclusion.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category A



Bev Betts Rose Garden Walcha Council

The former Walcha & District Beautification and Tidy Towns Advisory Committee had an idea to create a centerpiece Rose Garden in Walcha.

Construction of the garden commenced in May 2021, and following months of planting and cultivating, the Walcha Rose Garden has become an attractive and popular new landmark for the town.

In March 2023, additional works were commissioned to complete the original vision, with federal grant funding applied to construct ornate rock walls, archway and rustic garden borders.

Following a consultation process with the community, the finished garden is named the Bev Betts Rose Garden.

WINNER

Population Category B



Community Skate Park **Project Braidwood**

Braidwood Youth Performing Arts Association & Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Braidwood residents have been advocating for a new skate park since the mid-1980s. Securing the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) grant realised this dream.

The design was achieved through workshops with local youth and collaboration with top skateboarding designers and builders. The entire community banded together to create this space, led by the Braidwood Youth Performing Arts Association (BYPAA), the Braidwood Community Association (BCA) and Revoked Skateboarding.

The new skate park is an achievement for Braidwood in defining their town spirit in working collaboratively to achieve a much desired outcome for Braidwood families and young people, and in their advocacy for design and civic development encouraging new beginnings.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Bush Spirit

WINNER

Population Category C



Where There's A Will

Where There's A Will (Scone)

In 2016, the Upper Hunter community united to form Where There's a Will (WTAW), a charity that supports and funds local schools, Early Learning, Family Day-Care, Day-Care Centers and remote Travelling Toybox.

Where There's a Will sought to undertake an enormous all staff training project, empowering their educators to learn, live, teach and embed Positive Education and Wellbeing initiatives in their daily teaching practices and lives.

This project is the largest Cluster Model of Positive Education in schools globally. Solid foundations for creating generational cultural change have been built in the Upper Hunter community to address the declining mental health in our rural communities.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category C



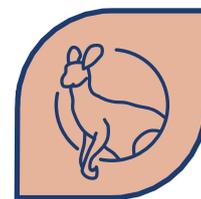
TilliFest22 - Back to Normal?

Tilligerry Community Association

For 12 years, the TilliFest was run by the Tilligerry Community Association, until COVID put the event on hold.

Reigniting the festival – Tillifest22 – after COVID proved to be a rocky road, which meant that the organising committee needed to find a new and an innovative approach to hosting the event in 2022, including gaining sponsorship for the event from local businesses.

The learnings gained from 2002 are setting fertile ground for TilliFest23, with fresh ideas and new opportunities abounding.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category D



The Great Cattle Dog Muster Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Muswellbrook is undergoing significant economic transitional change as it moves away from its traditional industries of mining.

The Great Cattle Dog Muster is a regional event that injects significant economic inputs from the visitor economy. Stakeholders included many local business and Muswellbrook Shire Council who supported the event, plus many locals who volunteered.

The 2022 event saw 5,500 visitors attend and attracted people from all over Australia and international visitors from Canada, South Africa, France and the United States, teaching the value of such events: not just economic but also the pride it brings to the community.

The event was such a success, it will become a regular signature event for the town. The 2023 event is expected to attract 7,000 visitors.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



Hampers of Hope Griffith Meals on Wheels

The Griffith Meals on Wheels mission is to rescue edible and nutritious food headed for landfill and redistribute it to people in need in the community.

Currently, Hampers of Hope have collected 91,000kg of food in the last 12 months and redistributed over 12,500 hampers per year. These hampers go directly to disadvantaged members of the community including homeless, women and families in crisis, youth at risk, aged individuals, indigenous communities, asylum seekers and new arrivals.

The group has also provide assistance to school breakfast programs, canteens and individual referrals from other community services, all free of charge.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Circular Economy

Award category
sponsored by:



WINNER

Population Category C



Green Seed Grocer Bec Kennedy, Scone

Green Seed Grocer (GSG) is championing the introduction of the circular economy to the Scone region. Bec, the founder and owner of GSG, began with a simple philosophy of 'sustainable and affordable'.

GSG has implemented a range of innovative strategies that underpin the circular economy concept by sourcing and informing the community about sustainable products and choices, and by creating a space for people to engage and learn.

WINNER

Population Category E



Queanbeyan FOGO - Feeding the Soil

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Council recognised that food and garden organics (FOGO) could serve as a great opportunity to not only reduce waste to landfill but also serve as a valuable resource that could be turned into compost.

Although faced with a challenge of finding a local processor or land to build a FOGO processing centre, after many years of searching, researching and stakeholder and community engagement, council rolled out the FOGO program to the Queanbeyan Community in December 2022.

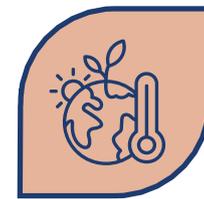
Removing food scraps and garden organics from landfill bins and making them into compost that is used for agriculture or home gardens is a simple and perfect example of circular economy.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Award category
sponsored by:

snowyhydro



WINNER

Population Category A



Wirraminna's Climate-Adaptive Haven

Petaurus Education Group
(Burrumbuttock)

The climate resilience gardens and seed storage established at the Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre have increased the Burrumbuttock community's capacity to adapt to a changing climate and preserve local biodiversity.

To prepare for forecast climate changes in the local area, including shifting rainfall patterns and higher temperatures, this community-driven project has established five woodland vegetation communities with carefully selected species from surrounding regions with similar projected conditions. Seed collection, storage and propagation processes also provide local sources of climate-suitable plant stock.

The gardens provide an educational experience for the community and visitors from the wider area about the potential impacts of climate change on local ecosystems, inspiring all to take a proactive approach to protect biodiversity into the future.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category A



We Love Our River

Nambucca Valley Landcare

River restoration is a complex issue, especially in the Nambucca Valley where there is over 170km of river system to manage.

The project aims to improve and protect habitat for wildlife with the changing climate pressures that are occurring, as well as improve farming practices and stabilise the Nambucca River banks and prevent more erosion in the changing flood patterns. Additionally, the projects sets out to encourage mangroves and saltmarsh establishment which will increase fish diversity and populations

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Award category
sponsored by:



WINNER

Population Category D



Eco Burn Education

Mid Coast 2 Tops Landcare
Connection (Forster)

Following the 2019/20 bushfire, Mid Coast 2
Tops Landcare identified a need for fire ecology
education that quickly overwhelmed agency
resources.

In response, the group designed and delivered
a community capacity building program of
workshops, aimed at reframing bushfire as
both a tool for asset protection and biodiversity
conservation on private land.

Engaging 15 communities throughout the Mid
Coast with a workshop centred around education
and community connection, in addition to an
annual fire skills expo, in partnership with Mid
Coast Council and RFS, the Eco Burn Education
has supported over 400 community members,
developed 194 fire property management plans
and now seeks to extend the program to offer
on-ground demonstration burns for confidence
building.

WINNER

Population Category E



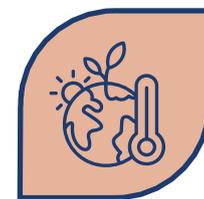
Greening and Cooling the Tamworth Region

Tamworth Urban Street Tree
Advisory Committee

The Urban Street Tree Advisory Committee was
formed four years ago by the Tamworth Regional
Council. Membership consists of Arborists,
Horticulturists, Councillors, Senior Council and
technical Staff and passionate community
members.

The group was formed to advise, discuss and
problem solve tree planting and maintenance
strategies within the Tamworth Regional Council
Area. The group started with a monthly meeting
planning what to plant, where to plant and when
to plant.

The members worked together to produce the
Urban Street Tree Management Plan (USTMP) in
an attempt to increase the street tree canopy in
the region to 40% by 2040.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



Wade Park - Net Zero Sports Precinct

Orange City Council

Orange City Council is a leader in climate change mitigation and adaptation through its actions. This is exemplified at Wade Park sports ground, with recent energy upgrades creating a net-zero precinct.

Council worked with the community and key stakeholders to ensure a sustainable outcome could be achieved, with the project including the implementation of solar PV, Battery Energy Storage Systems, LED sports field lighting and electric hot water heaters. The results exceeded Council's expectations, with reduced carbon emissions and operational costs enabling an increase in community participation at the precinct.

The site demonstrates to the community pathways in mitigating the impacts of climate change and provides Council with the necessary knowledge to support similar future projects throughout the region.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



Cessnock Climate Change Resilience Plan

Cessnock City Council

Cessnock's Climate Change Resilience Plan outlines actions to build resilient Council operations and local communities in response to climate change impacts.

The Plan focuses on building sustainable change in Council operations including greenhouse gas mitigation from Council's operations.

Actions represent an initial foundation for Council's sustainability journey and commitment to net zero emissions by 2050. The Plan includes a suite of actions where Council can assist the community to transition to a low carbon environment and build community resilience to climate change impacts.

Communication & Engagement

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category A



Up-Cycling Reducing Textile Waste

Murrurundi Landcare Tidy Towns Committee

Following the closure of the local Op Shop in Murrurundi in 2022, community members were concerned about how to dispose of unwanted textiles and clothing. In addition, Council conducted an audit of red bins which revealed that more than 40% of items in red bins could have either been composted or recycled. This included textile waste.

Members of the Landcare Tidy Towns group, in partnership with the Murrurundi CWA, organised the first Up-cycling event on World Environment Day 2022, which was followed up with events held in each of the libraries across the Upper Hunter including Scone, Aberdeen, Merriwa and Cassilis.

WINNER

Population Category B



Waste to Art in Murrumbidgee Murrumbidgee Council

The inaugural Waste to Art Competition and Exhibition proved an outstanding success in promoting sustainable waste practices through art and design. It was highly effective at challenging attitudes about things that may have otherwise been thrown away.

By collaborating with key organisations, the project was brought to life by involving waste educators, waste partners, artists and art bodies.

The project coincided with the overhaul of the way waste was managed in the area. As a flagship communication tool, it positively impacted environmental and waste management education, artistic and cultural excellence and community cohesion. It proved a positive and all-inclusive vehicle to foster change.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category B



Environmental Envoy Outreach Program

Rotary District 9705 –
Environmental Envoy Team
(Berry)

An international group of Rotarians – the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG) – identified the need for Rotary international to motivate Rotary clubs to undertake projects to protect the environment, including addressing increasingly important climate change issues.

The District 9705 Environmental Envoy Outreach Program (EEOP) was established in 2021 to launch the new Rotary International Area Focus “Protecting the Environment” to all the Clubs in District 9705 and to encourage and assist them to implement worthwhile and significant environmental projects.

The initiative has been successful with 57 of the 71 District 9705 Rotary Clubs (80%) participating in 121 environmental projects in 2022/23.

Special Commendation FOR BEING INSTRUMENTAL IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH OF CESSNOCK TIDY TOWNS SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1983

Alison Davey
*Founder of
Cessnock Tidy Towns*



Alison Davey founded Cessnock Tidy Towns in 1983. Alison was the Secretary of that group for 39 years and remains the Treasurer today.

She was not afraid to get her hands dirty and happily got stuck into the physical labour as well as the administrative side of running the Committee.

Alison and her husband, Brian (now deceased), were the driving force behind many community initiatives in the Cessnock LGA.

Communication & Engagement



WINNER

Population Category E



Water - Let's Make It Last! Bathurst Regional Council

From 2019 to 2021, the Bathurst Region was gripped by one of the worst droughts on record. As a result, Bathurst Regional Council implemented enforced water restrictions in a bid to conserve drinking water for use by residents, businesses and agriculture.

Preserving water for more than 40,000 residents heavily reliant on agriculture and manufacturing for employment was a challenging and complex task. The 'Water - Let's Make It Last' program sought to educate and engage the community to drive down water use and was incredibly effective.

The program has continued to sustain water savings long after the drought. It is evident that this program has delivered ongoing behaviour change which puts the region in the strongest position possible as it enters another a dry period.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

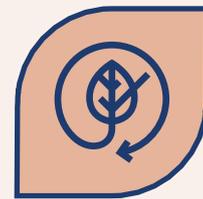
Population Category E



DO-DO the Right Thing AlburyCity

In 2022, AlburyCity launched a community behaviour change initiative that rewarded dog owners for picking up after their pooch. 'DO-DO the Right Thing' was borne from a desire to keep Albury's shared public spaces clean, tidy and safe for all users.

Picking up after your dog is important to keep your city clean, reduce bad smells, and make sure other people aren't accidentally stepping in your dog's business. It also reduces the risk of pests, parasites and diseases being spread to native fauna and even humans along with protecting natural areas from pollution and disease.



WINNER

Population Category A



Cobargo Folk Festival Zero Landfill Project

Cobargo Folk Festival –
Yuin Folk Club

The project addressed the issue of too much waste going to landfill by adopting a new approach of removing all red-lid landfill bins from the festival grounds and staffing the bin stations with volunteers to guide patrons in effectively sorting their unwanted materials into either FOGO or recycling bins.

Vendors providing food and beverages were required to use only compostable or recyclable packaging, with all festival patrons given bag kits, offered education and encouraged to avoid single-use plastic packaging.

The project reduced waste to landfill to 770 litres or the equivalent of just three wheelie bins.

WINNER

Population Category B



Another Moving Feast

Rotary Club of Bungendore

From two natural disasters good things have come: Bushfires and hailstorms caused enormous damage but they also brought communities together to help one another.

From the Australian National University (ANU) to two Rotary Clubs, construction and transport companies, along with two charities, members worked out a way to take the roofing materials from the ANU, transport them to bushfire affected communities and allow them to rebuild farm outbuildings.

Communication was key to success, as was knowing the right people (or those who did) and having people willing to help people enabled the project to deliver to date about 10,000sqm of materials to be reused.

Resource Recovery & Waste Minimisation

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category B



Recycling and Waste Transfer Station

Lachlan Shire Council

The installation of the Community Recycling Centre (CRC) and Waste Transfer Station responds to Council's delivery program of a modern waste management system and to developing initiatives to rationalise its waste management facilities.

Lachlan Shire Council was successful in obtaining grant funding for the Community Recycle Centre project through the NSW Environmental Trust – Waste Less, Recycle More Grant Program.

The success of this project was due to a coordinated approach between the working group which incorporated internal staff, consultants, the grant funding body and involved research at other waste facilities within regional NSW.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category B

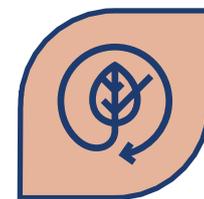


Eco Rangers Waste and Biodiversity

Quirindi Public School

The Eco Rangers waste and biodiversity program aims to reduce the amount of waste that is sent to landfill and to improve the biodiversity in and around the school.

The school's Eco Ranger Committee and the Youth Environmental Council work to implement many waste reducing activities and projects across the school including a waste audit and an environmental review, installing worm farms and compost tumblers, implementing a scheduled recycling sorting and hosting a sustainability day in conjunction with the Warrambungles EEC to promote biodiversity to students from Quirindi Public School and surrounding schools.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category D



Green Team

Muswellbrook South
Public School

Muswellbrook South Public School's goal was simple: To educate staff and students on sustainable behaviours whilst being involved in hands on learning.

The challenging part was raising funds but with the help of the P&C and local businesses the school was able to purchase and install a variety of products including five drink bottle refill stations, two water tanks and pumps, 27 classroom composting kits, two compost tumblers, four worm farms and nine water saving Vegepods gardens.

These items have enabled composting, recycling and gardening programs that reduce town water usage and divert approximately 1,110 11 litre buckets of scraps and 60 garbage bags of can and bottles from landfill each year.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



Business Soft Plastic Recycling Trial

AlburyCity

Albury City Council partnered with Plastic Forests to reduce the amount of Commercial & Industrial soft plastic waste going to landfill.

Council have worked closely with local small to medium businesses, recyclers and other Councils to source, separate, process and manufacture items made from 100% recycled content.

At the conclusion of the trial, Council will look at the viability of extending Soft Plastic Recycling across the Riverina and Murray region to further progress towards NSW diversion targets and support a local circular economy.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Heritage & Culture

WINNER

Population Category A



The Aunty Sue Project Walcha Central School

Walcha Central School developed Aunty Sue's Project to provide students with authentic learning opportunities.

To achieve this, staff dedicated time to developing a project that would provide students with the opportunity to contribute to a community legacy. School staff approached Aunty Sue Green, an elder in the Walcha community, to share her story.

In a 42-page illustrated book they created over a year, the students retold part of Aunty Sue Green's story, building on this experience with a sculpture garden and yarning centre.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category A

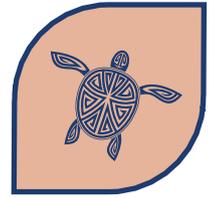


The Mural Project Bowraville NSW Mid North Coast Local Health District

To provide space for community health and a GP practice in the town, NSW Health decided to renovate an old Verandah Post building. This created a further opportunity to highlight the connection between NSW Health and the local First Nations community, as well as enhance the aesthetic of the Centre.

Through consultation and engagement of all community members, it was decided that the medical practice should be accessible to all, with the local Gumbaynggirr community feeling confident in expressing their opinions about their cultural approaches to health and well being.

The final result is a mural that is a proud testament of local stories and local artists.



WINNER

Population Category B



Digging Deep Time Megafauna Project Project Zone (Wellington)

Megafauna was first discovered in Australia in Wellington Caves in 1830, and its impact was international. But what use is this when the Wellington community suffers high unemployment, high youth crime rates and such high ice addiction that its nickname is The South Pole?

Digging Deep Time sought to refresh the community's pride by reexploring its natural and social heritage via the megafauna discoveries.

Students met Wiradjuri Elders to learn origin stories, interviewed palaeontologists to get an Earth science angle and produced short films to explore and retell the multicultural history of megafauna discoveries. This content will promote the town's treasures and build tertiary and vocational pathways into tourism and media industries.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category B



Preserve and Retain History - Greta Camp Hall Branxton Community Hall

The Greta Migrant Camp operated between 1949 and 1960, with an estimated 100,000 migrants passing through it. Much of its history was lost after the Australian Army sold the site at an auction in 1980, with many of the buildings distributed around the Hunter Valley.

The Branxton Community Hall is the closest remaining structure to the camp site and was identified as being important in preserving the memory and history of the site and the people who passed through the camp.

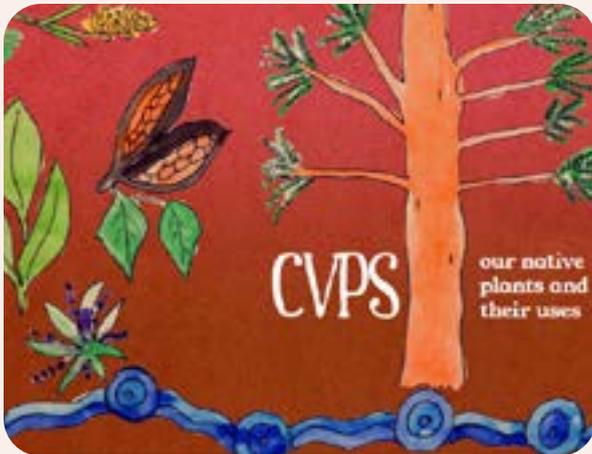
After painstaking research and collaboration with Cessnock Council, a photo gallery was created in the foyer of the hall providing a visual history that commemorates life at the camp.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Heritage & Culture

WINNER

Population Category C



Zine Tour of Native Gardens

Cudgegong Valley Public School
Aboriginal Education Committee

The Zine Tour of Native Gardens was created to educate Aboriginal children and broader school community on the native plants in the school and the ways that the local Wiradjuri people used them in cooking, medicine and living.

The children were taught by a local Wiradjuri elder and teacher, Mrs Michele Roberts. The children spent a year learning about the local native plants and turned the information into a zine book, which was distributed during educational tours to the rest of the school and families attending the tours.

An Indigenous native plant garden has also been created to include a meeting place for all to gather and investigate.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category C



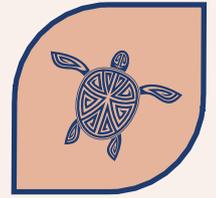
Rosy Futures

Richmond Landcare (Alstonville)

Richmond Landcare is collaborating with landholders and partners to protect Rosewood Mistletoe (*Amyema plicatula*), restoring its subtropical rainforest habitat at Duck Creek, Alstonville.

Endangered at state and commonwealth levels, Rosewood Mistletoe is under-researched and at threat of anthropogenic climate change, loss of host trees, weed invasion and biodiversity decline.

This project is undertaking recommended site-specific management activities including baseline ecological survey, mitigating threats to known Rosewood Mistletoe population, restoration of 8.5 hectares of suitable adjacent and protection from agricultural impacts. Field days will build awareness and help landholders, land-carers and school students see through rosy-tinted glasses and act to help secure the species' future.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category C



Chinese Tribute Garden Renovations

Hilltops Council

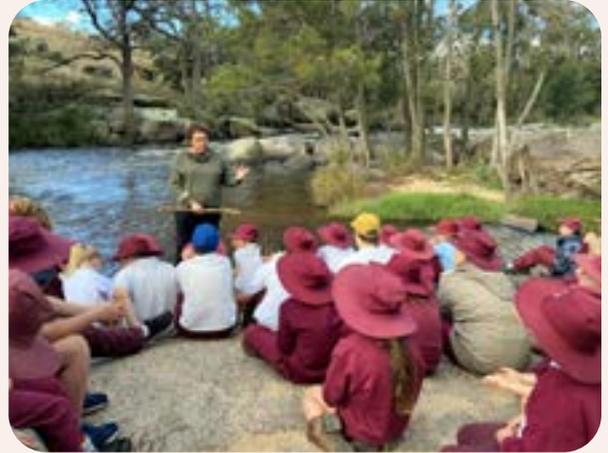
The Lambing Flat Chinese Tribute Garden was created to recognise the contribution made by the Chinese community to the settlement of Young. The garden has been historically known as Chinaman's Dam, with the term "Chinaman" being generally used to dehumanise Chinese immigrants and needing to be changed.

Council identified the need to incorporate authentic design and worked with its Sister City, Lanzhou, in the design of the garden and provision of cultural expertise.

The tranquil cultural space is now frequented by community members and has provided a tourism boost to the region. Council learned to tap into rich the Chinese culture present in Australia today, sourcing materials nationally.

WINNER

Population Category E



River Connections

Bathurst Regional Council

River Connections is a nature-based education and cultural experience program that connects primary school students with the Macquarie Wambuul River.

Over the past year, the program has been delivered to seven different schools and over 300 students. It includes a program of activities to learn about the river from a range of perspectives, including Wiradyuri culture, science and arts.

Council partnered with the Wiradyuri Elders and Traditional Owners of Wiradyuri Traditional Owners Central West Aboriginal Corporation, who deliver the cultural education sessions. The program is designed to align with curriculum, in particular the cross-curriculum priorities of Sustainability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Litter Prevention: Clean Communities

Award category
sponsored by:



WINNER

Population Category C



Tidy Tilligerry

Tilligerry Peninsula

Over the years, Tilligerry Peninsula has been a dumper's paradise, with litter strewn across various areas, including surrounding bushland.

To deal with the litter problem, the Tilligerry community decided to implement a multi-factor approach ranging from Clean Up Australia events, targeted weed program, graffiti removal, cleaning up the town entry point, starting a small rubbish program – Take 3 for the Sea – and organising a planned demolition of a derelict shopping centre.

These initiatives not only improved the state of the area but also serve as a deterrent for littering.

WINNER

Population Category D



Trash Free Tuesday - Litter Prevention

Cudgegong Valley Public School

The Trash Free Tuesday project aims to reduce the amount of rubbish from the Cudgegong Valley Public School going into landfill.

With the large school having no recycling bins, the students did not have an understanding of recycling and what rubbish went in what bins.

The school students and teachers, as well as the wider school community, recognised that children needed to be educated on recycling before they could recycle correctly. The impact of the litter prevention program has been a cultural change for students and a mind shift on how the waste problem is tackled. The children know that they can have ownership and a hand in how they can make real change in the world.



WINNER

Population Category E



Banishing Bathurst Butts Beyond the CBD

Bathurst Regional Council

A partnership project between Bathurst Regional Council and Bathurst Base Hospital has reduced cigarette litter by 85% throughout hospital and suburban sites.

Banishing Bathurst Butts Beyond the CBD is the next stage of Council's successful cigarette litter prevention project. The first Banishing Bathurst Butts project increased binning rates by 87.9% and decreased Bathurst CBD cigarette litter by 93.7%.

Following this success, Bathurst Hospital contacted Council requesting assistance to tackle their challenging cigarette litter issue. Due to smoke-free environment legislation and hospital policy constraints, the installation of compliant cigarette centric infrastructure was difficult. An adaptive and innovative litter prevention methodology was implemented to tackle the problem.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



Plastic Free Cafés

Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance

Plastic Free Cafés is reducing the litter and waste created by single use coffee cups by encouraging the community to choose reusable alternatives.

The project aims to ultimately remove the source of litter by changing the behaviour of café staff and their customers to switch away from single use plastic items. Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers engaged with 71 local cafes to offer good quality reusable cups to their customers at a subsidised price of \$2.

The project distributed 2,050 reusable coffee cups, preventing an estimated 20,000 single use cups from ending up as litter or landfill. The education campaign helped to create a positive community norm around reusable cups, especially to correct the increase in single use that accompanied COVID

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Litter Prevention: Clean Waterways

Award category
sponsored by:



WINNER

Population Category E



Inland Fishers Tackle Litter Ozfish

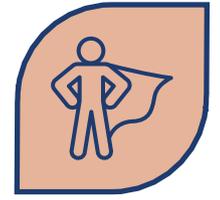
The OzFish litter prevention business case for the Dubbo LGA has identified local litter issues and hotspots, outlining the impacts of litter in the Wambuul-Macquarie River.

It identified many opportunities to address local litter issues, as well as organisations who could play a role in implementing these or similar initiatives.

To address litter prevention in the local area, the next step is to bring these elements together so that local organisations are enabled to take action. OzFish circulated the findings from this project to the national audience of recreational fishers and to the national program of initiatives to reduce the impacts of litter

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Local Legends: ≤ 25 Years



WINNER

Population Category A



Young Legend Wurinda Gill

Mujaay Ganma Foundation
Aboriginal Corporation
(Bowraville)

Wurinda Gill is a proud young Gumbaynggirr woman born and raised 'on Country'. During her childhood the Elders noticed her natural interest and respect for Country and culture.

As a trainee Project Coordinator for Mujaay Ganma Foundation, she promotes the Yuraal Native Food Community Garden project and provides a connection point to Country for the Nambucca Valley people.

Since joining the Foundation, she has acquired skills in promotion, marketing and graphic design. She has completed a TAFE course in Business Services (Certificate II in Workplace Skills) and has been engaged in recruitment and management of staff, co-facilitating workshops and organising fundraising events.

The Nambucca Valley Community benefits greatly from Wurinda's determination and passion to maintain ties to Country.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category E



James Sheahan and Community Regeneration

James Sheahan Catholic
High School (Orange)

The James Sheahan & Community Regeneration project is an ongoing project initiated by students and staff with the aim of beautifying and restoring an eco system to a healthy habitat, which allows native flora and fauna to thrive.

It was recognised that a section of approximately 6,000sqm of an agricultural land adjoining the school, including approximately 150 metres of creek bed, was not being utilised in manner conducive to the environment.

The project provides a learning opportunity to students about the importance of natural habitats, as well as restores an area to a more aesthetically pleasing appearance.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Local Legends: 26 - 65 Years

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category B



Coolamon Lions Club Meeting Our Needs

Coolamon Lions Club

As the local living legends, members of the Coolamon Lions Club are dedicated to serving others.

They champion kindness in the community and actively work to improve the lives of others.

They are a shining example to youth and education, in leadership, health and fitness, the environment and sustainable living with community involvement at the Annual Shirley Tulk Regional Swimming Carnival; assisting at the Coolamon heritage Fire Engine Muster; organising the Light Up Christmas; the New Years Eve Fireworks at the Coolamon Main Street Party; Clean Up Australia and maintaining a Recycling Centre Return and Earn base in Loughnan Street.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category C



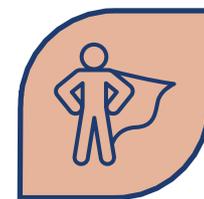
Terri Blott

Tilligerry Peninsula

Following the pandemic years, a challenge of engaging the community in events and finding mentors for community action was identified.

Terri Blott, a new addition to the town, presented the Tilligerry Community Association with an idea to run a movie night that could bring a whole town together to reconnect.

From this meeting, she became an active member of the community, standing at the AGM and working towards broadening the relationships between the Worimi peoples, youth and local population.



WINNER

Population Category D



Rebecca Daniell

Environmental Education
Teacher, Cudgegong Valley
Public School

Rebecca Daniel's mission in life is to continue to educate and pass on her passion for the environment and to help the community.

Throughout her 26 years of teaching, she has been a key organiser of clean up, tree planting and other environmental programs and for the last four years has been a member of the Eco Schools program.

Now, Rebecca teaches sustainability through the entire school – enabling her to deliver environmental education and embed sustainability principles in the K-6 student cohort, reaching 620 students each week and encouraging our next generation to be passionate about and care for our environment.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category D



Creating Inclusive Sustainable Community

Warrior Disability Services
(Muswellbrook)

The Creating Inclusive Sustainable Community initiative developed and run by Warrior Disability Services (WDS) aims to address the challenge of promoting sustainability and inclusivity in the community and to create a more accessible and environmentally friendly space for everyone.

To address this challenge, WDS implemented a range of measures such as awareness campaigns through social media, which created heightened environmental awareness, reduced waste generation, improved accessibility and increased community engagement.

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Local Legends: 26 - 65 Years

WINNER

Population Category E



Lake Mac Tiny Forest

Anna Noon,
The Groundswell Collective

Lake Macquarie faces the complex, intertwined challenges of climate change and accelerated urban growth. Increases in the local population are driving the need for new housing, resulting in land clearing, putting urban nature at risk and exacerbating biodiversity loss.

The Lake Mac Tiny Forest project was proposed as an innovative, evidence-based, community lead response to support local biodiversity, protect and enhance the local environment and build community connections. By employing the Miyawaki planting method, a 340sqm Tiny Forest – a complete, yet small ecosystem – was constructed on community land, consisting of a dense pocket of 750 native plants (from 23 different species).

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Local Legends: > 65 Years

WINNER

Population Category A

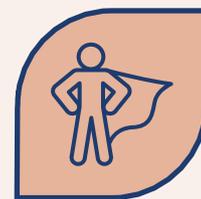


Walcha Men's Shed

Walcha

The Walcha Men's Shed first formed for the purpose of improving the health and wellbeing of men in the Walcha community by giving them a safe place to make friends, share meaningful activities, talk and access health information and resources; but what it has grown into over time is much more.

These men create items from recycled timber that would otherwise be sent to landfill; grow plants and sell to the Walcha community at the local monthly farmers markets; repair and restore watches, furniture and other items using second hand tools and machines that have been donated by individuals and business's to reduce consumerism; hold information sessions from health professionals and tradesman to share and gain knowledge.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Population Category B



Steve and Maureen Lind North Rothbury Tidy Towns

Steve and Maureen Lind have been proactive members of the North Rothbury community and intricate members of the North Rothbury Tidy Towns organisation since its re-institution in the early 2000s.

They are long-serving committee members who provided hours of service to improve the look, feel and inclusion of the village and its residents. They are instrumental in delivering a number of project outcomes, including the Ayrfield Memorial Park, which Steve spent countless hours painstakingly hand-watering.

The park provides shelter, upgraded play equipment, grassed area, sheltered BBQ with tables, seating, toilet facilities and adjoining tennis court and basketball hoop for residents and tourists alike.

WINNER

Population Category E



Graham Johnston Clean4Shore

Graham is the driving force behind Clean4Shore, a program that uses school, social and community groups to remove litter from local waterways. He is a local hero who demonstrates exceptional commitment to the Central Coast's environment and leadership in marine-based litter prevention.

Over ten years, the program has removed 500-tonnes of waste from Central Coast waterways, exposing younger generations to environmental stewardship and empowering them to take actions against marine debris.

Graham's dedication to Clean4Shore and marine litter prevention is outstanding, and his efforts have made a significant impact in preserving the Central Coast's natural beauty and ecosystems.



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