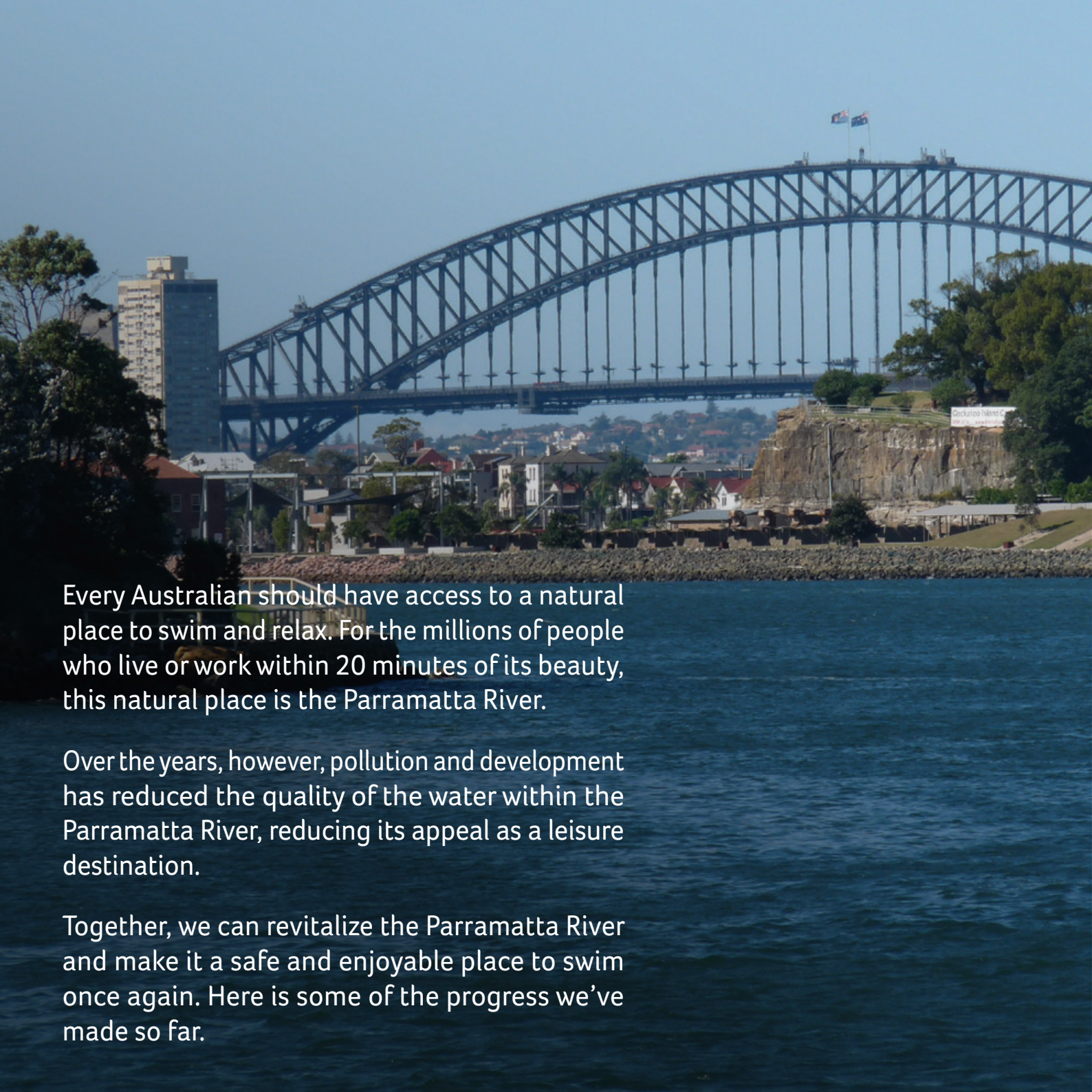


# OUR PROGRESS TO A WORLD CLASS RIVER



PARRAMATTA RIVER CATCHMENT GROUP



Every Australian should have access to a natural place to swim and relax. For the millions of people who live or work within 20 minutes of its beauty, this natural place is the Parramatta River.

Over the years, however, pollution and development has reduced the quality of the water within the Parramatta River, reducing its appeal as a leisure destination.

Together, we can revitalize the Parramatta River and make it a safe and enjoyable place to swim once again. Here is some of the progress we’ve made so far.

# WHO IS THE PARRAMATTA RIVER CATCHMENT GROUP?



The Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) is an alliance of councils, government agencies and community groups. Together, we are working to improve the Parramatta River and the creeks that flow into it.

In 2014, we launched an initiative called Our Living River - an initiative to make the Parramatta River a place for Sydney-siders and visitors to swim in by 2025.

Financial members of the PRCG include the following councils and State government agencies:







# THE PARRAMATTA RIVER: THE LIFEBLOOD OF SYDNEY

Back in the 50s, the Parramatta River was a thriving hub for swimmers and a hot spot for social events. During the 1960s and 70s, a lack of regulation and rapid industrial development led to substantial pollution and degradation of the river's water quality.

Today, around three quarters of Sydney's residents live, work in, or visit the area along the Parramatta River. Now, more than ever, it is crucial that this gem of Sydney is restored to a healthy and swimmable place for all to enjoy. This will have positive local economic impacts, and help sustain and attract local biodiversity.

By 2050, it is anticipated that 4 million+ individuals will be living in the river's surrounding suburbs. A healthy Parramatta River will be paramount to the livelihood of these residents, and for following generations.

Sydney deserves a World Class river, and our goal is not too far away. Together with the support of locals, community groups, governments, councils and business, we have made clear strides towards a swimmable, healthy river.



MISSION:

## A SWIMMABLE PARRAMATTA RIVER BY — 2025 —

# THE ROLE OF PRCG

To turn our mission into a reality and enable Sydney-siders to once again enjoy the waters of this iconic river, we are driving the following strategic actions:



## PLANNING & RESEARCH

Activities within the catchment area will determine the health and overall swimmability of the river.

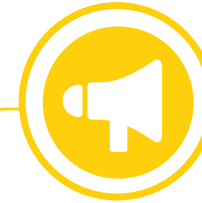
*The PRCG are driving catchment-wide planning and research to make the river swimmable again.*



## COORDINATION

There are a huge number of organisations that are responsible for managing land and water in the catchment.

*The PRCG is coordinating collaboration across these organisations to deliver positive outcomes for the river in a more efficient and effective way.*



## ADVOCACY

Joint advocacy on issues affecting the river and catchment is better done together than individually.

*The PRCG work with their partners to spread advocacy and work together to achieve the goal.*



## MONITORING AND REPORTING

Reporting as one entity on the state of the river makes it easier for our partners and the broader community to see the bigger picture of what's been achieved already and next steps.

*The PRCG are working to establish a coordinated monitoring program for swimming in the river.*



## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Raising awareness and engagement of the PRCG's mission amongst the burgeoning population that live and move near the catchment is critical.

*The PRCG are continuing to build support from the community and stakeholders to connect them to the river and build the capacity needed to make it swimmable again.*





Image: Rosie Nicolai

# OUR PLAN FOR THE RIVER

It may not come as a surprise that to achieve a swimmable Parramatta River by 2025 requires extensive planning, collaboration and resourcing. As a result, we're currently developing a Masterplan to help see our mission through. These are the main focus areas shaping our plan:



**1** BUILD  
SUPPORT



**2** SET TARGETS &  
WRITE PATHWAYS



**3** IDENTIFY  
ISSUES



**4** REPORT  
SUCCESS



# OUR GROWING NETWORK

We are all custodians of the river and have a role in making it swimmable again. The PRCG brings together key decision makers for the river under the shared mission to make the river swimmable again by 2025.

Our Riverkeeper program is actively recruiting and connecting volunteers and volunteer groups to support river cleanup activities.

The active contribution and support from our growing list of partners is paramount to achieving our shared mission to make the river a healthy and safe place for swimming.



## PUBLIC AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

Public support is critical to achieve and maintain a swimmable river. Since the beginning of this project, we've seen a huge increase in public awareness of the Parramatta River and its biodiversity. This includes popular support for swimming in the river and improving biodiversity:



**5,000**  
VOTES

were made by the public for their favourite plant or animal to become a river mascot.



**5,500**  
VOTES

were made by the public to determine the best swim sites along the river.



**12,000**  
VISITORS

swam in Lake Parramatta during the opening year after it was announced fit to swim in for the first time in 70 years!



**20 +**  
PUBLIC EVENTS

of varied scale have been hosted along the river, engaging with broad audiences and communities.



**1,300**  
FOLLOWERS

across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and the Our Living River e-newsletter.



## LAKE PARRAMATTA 1942

later closed for swimming  
due to poor water quality.



## LAKE PARRAMATTA 2015

reopened for public swimming  
for the first time in 72 years.





WHAT IS A SWIMMABLE RIVER?

A swimmable river means more than just swimming. We have worked with our partners and community to identify the following key elements of a swimmable river.



CLEAN, CLEAR WATER

that is safe and supports life in the river.



QUALITY FACILITIES

for events, leisure, recreation and family fun.



EASE OF ACCESS

through improved public transport and connected cycleways and walkways.



AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY

that loves and cares for their waterways.



BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

enabling thriving local businesses due to the river's popularity.



HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

in the river, the catchment and natural creeks.

We are now in the process of setting our targets and writing the pathways to address each of these elements of a swimmable river.



# SWIMMING SITES

We asked the community and local foreshore councils to identify several potential sites where people want to be able to swim along the Parramatta River.

This initial selection was performed based on community interest and willingness of land owners to activate and manage the sites.

These sites will be targeted and managed based on the issues we have identified as key elements of a swimmable river.





# OUR MASTER PLAN

To achieve our mission of making the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025, we are developing a Masterplan that identifies the pathways that will make it happen and establishes the most feasible geographical areas to target.

To inform our Masterplan, we are undertaking a series of research projects to:



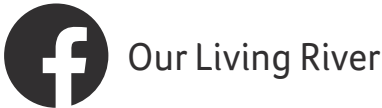


STAY UP TO  
DATE WITH  
OUR PROGRESS

We continue to monitor our progress towards our ambitious goal for 2025.

It is very important that we measure and report progress publicly and celebrate our successes so that we can maintain support to achieve our mission. Our website, e-newsletter and social media platforms will regularly update our partners, supporters and followers so that everyone can see the progress being made.

Connect with us to keep up-to-date with the progress of the River:



REGISTER TO RECEIVE OUR E-NEWSLETTER AT [OURLIVINGRIVER.COM.AU](https://ourlivingriver.com.au)



Image: Greg Holland



# ARE YOU READY TO SWIM IN THE RIVER?

If you want to find out more about making the Parramatta River  
swimmable or pledge your support visit:



[ourlivingriver.com.au](http://ourlivingriver.com.au)