

MEDIA RELEASE

11 October 2019

Masters NSW Open Water Swim at Lake Parramatta to kick off this year's Riverfest

The Parramatta River Catchment Group's (PRCG) premier, annual community event *Riverfest* will be launched on Saturday, 19 October from 8.00am at the Masters Swimming NSW (MSNSW) trial open water swim at Lake Parramatta.

The 2km race will be started by City of Parramatta's Lord Mayor, Bob Dwyer. PRCG's Chair, Cr Mark Drury, will blow the whistle for the 1km course.

Now in its fourth year Riverfest is a celebration of the Parramatta River and its surrounds, offering people a wide range of fun and interesting ways to connect with Sydney's most iconic waterway.

This year's festival will run from 17-27 October and features more than 20 tours, workshops and activities across six local government areas, including: City of Canada Bay's 'Spring Clean' at Rodd Point, City of Ryde's Granny Smith Festival, 'bat spotting' night walk at Darling Mills Creek, kayaking bushcare volunteer work day, Parramatta heritage tour, river foreshore clean-up at Rydalmere Wharf and Eric Primrose Reserve, plus much more!

PRCG Chair Cr Mark Drury said that Lake Parramatta was a fitting location to launch this year's Riverfest.

"In 2014 we worked with the City of Parramatta to re-open Lake Parramatta for public swimming after being closed for 72 years. It has grown in popularity over the last few years to attract more than 80,000 in 2018, highlighting the community demand for natural swimming spots closer to where people live," Cr Drury said.

"As we implement the Masterplan to open more swimming sites along the Parramatta River, Lake Parramatta stands as a clear example of what can be achieved when councils and the community collaborate to deliver improvements for the health of our local waterways and quality of life for our residents."

City of Parramatta Lord Mayor Cr Bob Dwyer said the Parramatta River has and always will play a significant role in Sydney's west.

"The Parramatta River is an iconic part of our City and provides our residents and visitors with an area for recreation, exercise, and leisure," Cr Dwyer said.

“Riverfest is a great way to bring the community together to celebrate the Parramatta River and share future plans for the river with those who enjoy it the most.”

“I am looking forward to seeing this important waterway be revitalised under the new Masterplan. This will not only improve the area for both current and future communities, but will help support the ecosystems that live in and around the river.”

The Parramatta River Catchment Group is an alliance of councils, state government agencies and community groups with the mission to make the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025. Riverfest was launched in 2016 as a single event hosted by the City of Ryde at Putney Park. It has since expanded across the Parramatta River catchment to offer the community a wide and diverse range of ways they can engage with the Parramatta River and help make a difference.

For more information on other Riverfest events, visit: www.ourlivingriver.com.au/riverfest2019

Note to editors:

- Images available on request.
- On Saturday, 19 October at the Riverfest launch interviews, photos and other media opportunities can be arranged upon request.

Launch run sheet:

8.00 am: Acknowledgement of Country
8:05 am: Cr Bob Dwyer – Lord Mayor, City of Parramatta
8:10 am: Cr Mark Drury – Chair, Parramatta River Catchment Group
8:15 am: Kerryn Blanch – President, Masters Swimming NSW
8:20 am: Photo opportunities
8:30 am: Start of 2km race
8:40 am: Start of 1km race

Media enquiries:

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