

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**28 September 2020**

## **Riverfest 2020 highlights importance of caring for the Parramatta River catchment**

As Sydneysiders make the most of our green spaces during COVID-19, this year's *Riverfest* is a timely reminder of the need to take care of the Parramatta River and its tributaries.

Celebrating the Parramatta River and surrounding catchment, Riverfest showcases some the diverse and interesting ways that people can connect with the river and help make a difference.

Organised by the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG), this year's event will run from 6-31 October and offer a wide range of online and COVID friendly in-person events and activities.

Each week will focus on a different 'theme' or aspect of the river:

- The natural world in our catchment
- Get involved to protect nature and the river
- Stormwater awareness
- Let's get swimming.

People can choose from webinars, online workshops, wildlife talks, river foreshore clean-ups, cycling tours, and a nature photography competition. They will also have the chance to learn more about the four new swim sites currently being planned for the Parramatta River and the Riverwatch monitoring program that will ensure the water quality is safe for swimming.

PRCG Chair, Cr Mark Drury, said that there has never been a more important time to focus on improving water quality in the Parramatta River.

"The past six months have highlighted the need to create more green spaces across Sydney for people to exercise and relax," Cr Drury said.

"Our plan to open more natural swim sites along the river will offer considerable health, social and economic benefits for the community."

“This year’s Riverfest offers some new and different ways for people to engage with the river and will hopefully encourage them to get involved and help us achieve our mission to make it swimmable again.”

Riverfest was launched in 2016 as a single event at Putney Park, hosted by the City of Ryde. It has since expanded across the Parramatta River catchment offering the community a wide range of events and activities to learn more about the Parramatta River and support its conservation.

This initiative has been made possible by the NSW Landcare Program; a collaboration of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW Inc. supported by the NSW Government.

View the Riverfest 2020 program of events: [www.ourlivingriver.com.au/riverfest](http://www.ourlivingriver.com.au/riverfest)

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### **About the Parramatta River Catchment Group**

The Parramatta River Catchment Group is an alliance of local councils, state government agencies and community groups that are working together on the mission to make the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025.

Our current financial members include:

Blacktown City Council, Burwood Council, City of Canada Bay, City of Canterbury Bankstown, City of Ryde, City of Parramatta, Cumberland City Council, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Hunter’s Hill Council, Inner West Council, NSW Environment Protection Authority, Sydney Water.

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