

PARRAMATTA RIVER CATCHMENT GROUP

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



Parramatta River
Catchment Group



**LET'S MAKE OUR RIVER
SWIMMABLE AGAIN BY
2025**

RECOGNITION OF THE RIVER'S TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Parramatta River catchment area and pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. Their lore, traditions and customs have led to the bountiful land and waterways we all enjoy today.

THE PARRAMATTA RIVER CATCHMENT GROUP

The Parramatta River Catchment Group is an alliance of councils, government agencies and community groups, who are working together to improve the Parramatta River and the tributaries that flow into it.

In 2014, we launched the *Our Living River* initiative with a new vision, purpose and mission:



OUR VISION

We believe Sydney deserves a world-class river.



OUR PURPOSE

To make Parramatta River a living river.



OUR MISSION

To make Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025.

Cover image: Parramatta River Changemakers Course participants at the Newington Armory Wharf.

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR



No one could have imagined that the challenges presented by COVID-19 would continue to impact the way we live and work in 2021. So, I congratulate all our member organisations, and particularly the PRCG team, for their considerable efforts to explore new and innovative ways of engaging with our communities and also progress many areas of the Masterplan.

The recommendations paper for the Masterplan, *Step 4 – Standardise the Standards, Planning Reforms to Create Our Living River* was finalised in February. This significant body of work took a deep dive into planning reform and has made considerable recommendations that, if adopted, will positively impact the health of the river and assist us in achieving our mission to make it swimmable again. I encourage all councils to support and promote the recommendations.

We are getting closer to our goal of activating more sites on the river, with Bayview Park and McIlwaine Park due to open in early 2022. In September, Hunter's Hill Council announced a potential new swim site at Bedlam Bay. Work has already commenced on water quality monitoring and sediment testing at the site for a 12-month period to ensure the site is safe for human contact.

In July 2020 we welcomed Jasmine Payget as the new Riverkeeper, whose position is partially funded by Landcare NSW to 2023. A key part of Jasmine's role is to develop programs that improve biodiversity in the Parramatta River catchment and increase community engagement through the expansion of the Riverkeeper Network and other initiatives.

To comply with ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, this year's *Riverfest* was held as a month-long festival that included 30 online and smaller, in-person events and activities. For the first time, we held a series of webinars on different aspects of biodiversity and waterway health. The restrictions provided a unique opportunity for us to trial different forms of community engagement, some of which will be used again for future Riverfest events.

We continue to collaborate with our member councils and other catchment groups on projects such as the *Get the Site Right* campaign, which is now in its sixth year. Our data over this period has shown a steady improvement in compliance rates on building sites, however more work is needed to educate builders and the community on the impact of sediment runoff on our waterways.

The PRCG has worked closely with Greater Sydney Harbour councils on the preparation of a Coastal Management Program. Sydney Coastal Councils

Group, in partnership with the PRCG, has submitted an application for a Stage 2 Planning grant under the Estuary & Coastal Program for a Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program. This is a significant achievement with 20 councils committing to a whole-of-catchment approach to waterway health.

The PRCG was also successful in gaining grant funding under the Metropolitan Greenspace Program, which supports councils to deliver projects that improve regional open space and community liveability. The *Designing with Country* project will develop a design guide to support the development of future interpretive design elements that highlight the connection between Aboriginal culture and the land and waterways in the catchment. It also aims to build relationships with local Aboriginal communities and opportunities for collaboration on future projects.

A key highlight of this year was winning the 2021 Stormwater National Award for Excellence in Strategic or Master Planning. The award reflects the considerable research, planning and engagement that went into the development of the Masterplan, and is a fitting recognition of the significant contribution and collaboration by our member organisations.

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As we work towards our mission to make the Parramatta River swimmable again, I would like to acknowledge the great work achieved this year by Nell Graham and her team and Nerida Taylor and the Delivery Engine to progress the Masterplan. I also especially wish to recognise the superb work done by Nadia Young, our Communications Officer, who has consistently produced outstanding work and helped us reach out to such a wide audience. I also thank Canada Bay Council for hosting the PRCG, Cr Penny Pedersen for her valuable counsel and contribution, and all our member organisations for their continued commitment and support.

Councillor Mark Drury
Parramatta River Catchment Group Chair



CATCHMENT-WIDE PLANNING & RESEARCH

Establishing the pathways to make the river swimmable again through the development of the Parramatta River Masterplan.

The PRCG has collaborated with our member organisations, research partners and community groups to progress the implementation of the Parramatta River Masterplan. The following highlights some of the key projects and initiatives. Information on our other programs and activities can be found in the 'Working Together' section on page 6.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Parramatta River Reference Group

The Parramatta River Reference Group was originally established to provide advocacy, leadership and direction for the development of the Parramatta River Masterplan. The Delivery Engine is now at a stage where it needs to align with other stakeholders to guide the delivery of the Masterplan objectives.

In late 2020 we welcomed several new members to the Reference Group from a diverse range of local and state government organisations and tertiary institutions. The meetings are chaired by both Sydney Water General Manager of Business Development, Chris Gould, and PRCG Chair, Cr Mark Drury, who share the responsibility.

Over the past six months the group has focused on several key areas, including gaining support from the development industry for the planning reforms outlined in the Recommendations Paper for Step 4 – Standardise the Standards, and development of strategic partnerships, such as the potential to develop a river-centric project with the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences at Powerhouse Parramatta.

Designing with Country project

In March 2021 the PRCG was successful in securing a grant under the Metropolitan Greenspace Program to fund a *Designing with Country* project for the Parramatta River catchment. The project aims to bring to life the connection between Aboriginal culture and the waterways and land in the catchment, through interpretive design elements for the community to understand and enjoy.

The PRCG will work closely with an Aboriginal design consultant and a panel of Aboriginal community representatives, local councils and Sydney Water to develop a catchment-wide design guide that specifies standards around the use of language, art, landscaping and other elements. The guide will also identify locations for future interpretive design projects.

A research document on the cultural significance of the waterways and surrounding places will also be produced, based on oral histories and other input in consultation with panel members and their communities.

The Designing with Country project supports the objectives of the Parramatta River Masterplan to recognise the traditional owners of the Parramatta River and their important cultural ties to Country. It also aims to increase Aboriginal leadership in waterway governance by strengthening relationships between local and state government agencies, Aboriginal groups and community members, to facilitate ongoing management and business opportunities.

Above: Bedlam Bay site tour at the March 2021 PRCG Full Group meeting.

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

Standardise the Standards – Planning Reforms to Create Our Living River

The final recommendations paper for Masterplan, *Step 4 – Standardise the Standards, Planning Reforms to Create Our Living River*, was released in February 2021. The paper makes recommendations to amend the NSW Planning Framework, improve governance and reform stormwater funding. It also provides councils with updated wording for their Local Environment Plans and Development Control Plans.

A key initiative from the paper is the creation of a Blue Green Index Tool, similar to BASIX (Building Sustainability Index), which addresses both water quality and blue green infrastructure outcomes in new development.

A webinar series was held in March to highlight key aspects of the paper and generate ideas on how the recommendations could be implemented. Work continues on the development of the Blue Green Index Tool, including discussions on piloting the tool within the catchment. The recommendations paper and a short video on the planning reform work are both available on the *Our Living River* website.

Riverwatch Monitoring Program

The Riverwatch Program continues to support councils in activating the planned swimming sites.

Microbial monitoring: more frequent microbial monitoring was conducted at the planned sites from October 2020 with results indicating that all four sites meet the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) guidelines for swimming during dry weather, most of the time. Further intensive monitoring was undertaken during the March 2021 rainfall event to improve our understanding of wet weather impacts and recovery times after significant rainfall. Microbial source tracking was also conducted for samples that exceeded the NHMRC guidelines for swimming.

Chemical assessment of contaminants in sediments and water column: Human Health Risk Assessments (HHRA) conducted by EnRisk and Geochemical Assessments for Bayview Park, Callan Park and Mcllwaine Park have been completed. Results indicate that all three swim sites are safe for recreational use as designed. Sample collection and assessment against the HHRA framework at Bedlam Bay and Putney Park is expected to be completed by early 2022.

Riverwatch website map data: A new predictive water quality model is being developed to indicate the likely level of water pollution at the planned swim sites. The data will be accessible through the interactive map on the *Our Living River* website. Links to Beachwatch data for existing sites and the City of Parramatta for information on Lake Parramatta will also be available. The updated map will go live prior to the launch of the first planned swim site.

Swim site activation

Progress continues on the activation of the three planned swim sites that were identified in the Masterplan: Bayview Park, Mcllwaine Park and Putney Park.

Bayview Park: Upgrades to Bayview Park (pictured below) in 2021 were delayed as a Development Application was required for the site. It is anticipated that the baths will open in early 2022. Amenities will include a new netted enclosure, shower facilities and picnic tables.



Bedlam Bay: In September 2020, Hunter's Hill Council announced Bedlam Bay as a potential new swim site for the Parramatta River. Located at the base of the Gladesville Hospital, and bordered by the Parramatta River Regional Park, the site features a natural sandy beach and scenic outlook.

At the Full Group meeting in March 2021, staff from Hunter's Hill Council and NSW Health took the group on a site tour. They spoke about the site's fascinating history and progress on the Council's plans to open the new swimming baths. Work is expected to commence in 2022, following the completion of site establishment water quality sampling.

Mcllwaine Park: Construction at Mcllwaine Park is expected to commence in the second half of 2021, subject to COVID-19 restrictions. A feature of the site upgrades will be the transformation of the seawall and river foreshore to improve community access for water activities such as kayaking. Other enhancements include an accessible shared pathway, lighting, picnic facilities and the planting of 22 new trees and other native landscaping. The site is planned to open in early 2022.

Putney Park: City of Ryde commenced work on the construction of foreshore steps at Putney Park in 2021 with completion expected later in the year. The stairs will provide access to the river foreshore and beach area at low tide, and the site is planned for recreational water use in the future.



WORKING TOGETHER

Coordinating collaborative efforts across our network to deliver positive outcomes for the river in a more efficient and effective way.

JOINT DECISION MAKING

Masterplan Reference Group: Meetings were held in December 2020 and April 2021 to address issues including the swimmability of the Parramatta River and urban planning reform.

Full Group and Officer Group: Meetings were held quarterly with all PRCG member agencies and community representatives to discuss and agree upon actions and goals for the river and catchment and Masterplan implementation. The September meeting was held only online while the following three meetings were held as both in-person and online events, hosted by City of Canada Bay, Hunter's Hill Council and City of Canterbury Bankstown.

PRCG Executive Committee: Six meetings were held in 2020-21 to determine priorities for the PRCG, make key budget decisions and project proposals to the Full Group.

Stormwater Subcommittee: Managed jointly by the Sydney Water Delivery Engine and City of Parramatta, the subcommittee met eight times over the year to develop and implement their stormwater work plan. Initiatives this year included committing funding for a project to audit the condition of private WSUD assets, and running a two-day Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) capacity building workshop for councils.

Swim Site Activation Technical Working Group:

This expert panel is made up of representatives from the swim site councils, PRCG, Sydney Water Delivery Engine, Beachwatch, NSW Health, NSW EPA, DPIE and UNSW, who oversee the opening of new swim sites in the river. The group meets as required to progress the assessment needed to open the planned swim sites.

Regulatory Subcommittee: Met twice to discuss and plan the *Get the Site Right* education and compliance campaign and opportunities for training. The subcommittee heard presentations on Sydney Water's Wet Weather Overflow Abatement (WWOA) program and discussed the merits of running a compliance campaign on chemical storage.

Education and Biodiversity Subcommittee:

Following the appointment of the new Riverkeeper in July 2020, the subcommittee was re-established and met three times during the year. Projects discussed included the development of a Citizen Science app to enable community-based biodiversity monitoring in the Parramatta River catchment, riparian mapping, the Parramatta River Changemakers Course and an RSPCA grant to target education, behaviour change and incentives for desexing cats and protection of wildlife.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Rapid assessment of riparian habitat workshop:

In November 2020 the PRCG and Cumberland City Council hosted a Local Land Services Landcare Rapid Assessment of Riparian Habitat workshop to learn more about determining the ecological condition of riparian habitats using a range of indicators.

Regulatory staff training and education: As part of the *Get the Site Right* campaign, Regulatory staff from all participating catchment councils were invited to attend an online webinar, hosted by Georges Riverkeeper on the environmental impacts of sediment runoff on waterways. Georges Riverkeeper Aquatic Ecologist, Marion Huxley, presented on the harmful effects of runoff on habitat, including fish kills, weed spread and other serious environmental issues. The EPA also provided training to PRCG council officers on chemical storage assessment practices.

AUSMAP training: The PRCG organised and subsidised AUSMAP (Australian Microplastics Assessment Project) training for council officers and Riverkeeper Network volunteers in November 2020. Participants learned about the scientific method for collecting and reporting on microplastics in the environment, the results of which feed into the Australian Marine Debris Institute database. The PRCG purchased an AUSMAP kit which has been loaned to the Riverkeeper Ambassadors for ongoing monitoring of microplastics.

FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committees:

In August 2020, the PRCG Coordinator presented to the City of Parramatta Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee on the Parramatta River Masterplan as well as opportunities for ongoing engagement and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural perspectives.

In April 2021, the Coordinator presented to the Inner West Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee regarding their involvement in the Metro Greenspace grant *Designing with Country* project for the Parramatta River. A background information sheet regarding the project was also distributed to Cumberland City Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee.

Murama Healing Space: The PRCG met with the Murama Healing Space to develop a funding application for a program that could provide employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal youth in river and catchment management. A funding outline was developed and presented to the funding body, but was not progressed to the next stage.

Landcare NSW Conference: The PRCG is a host organisation and coordinator of the Landcare NSW Program. In June 2021, the PRCG Coordinator and

Riverkeeper attended this year's conference that was held in Dubbo. The conference included a series of practical workshops and sessions that allowed participants to share their experiences and strengthen working relationships. The Greater Sydney Landcare region took this opportunity to reflect and review the region's priorities.

Transport for NSW: Transport for NSW was formally invited to join the PRCG as a financial member, which will commence in the 2021-22 financial year. The Maritime Services division has been actively participating in the Stormwater Subcommittee and Litter Prevention Strategy Committee.

University partnerships: Macquarie University student Nivedita Singh conducted initial research for the citizen science app, including investigations on the urban biodiversity of the riparian zone on Duck River which she hopes will inform her final Masters project. Nivedita planned to commence her research in 2021 but had to postpone it until 2022.

Habitat planting: The PRCG partnered with Greater Sydney Landcare Network and Carnarvon Golf Club to plant 300 trees as part of the Landcare NSW's 'Creating Canopies' program, which aims to extend the local habitat corridor.

Image (top left): PRCG and Delivery Engine teams with other participants on an Aboriginal cultural tour of Parramatta.



INDUSTRY AWARDS

2021 National Stormwater Australia Awards

The PRCG was thrilled to win the 2021 National Stormwater Australia Award for the Parramatta River Masterplan. The award reflects the considerable research, planning and community engagement that went into its development. It also recognises the significant contribution by former PRCG Coordinator, Sarah Holland Clift. Congratulations to everyone who contributed to the Masterplan.

Citizen science app: The PRCG Coordinator collaborated with Dr Eren Turak from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on the development of a catchment-specific biodiversity app using CyberTracker. Dr Turak analysed and compiled the results of sound recordings and camera traps around Lake Parramatta to determine species located in the local area. The app is currently being tested and will ultimately be made available for volunteers to record and monitor our five iconic species as well as other flora and fauna and habitat features across the Parramatta River catchment.

1 Million Turtles: In December 2020, PLC Sydney launched their new turtle hatchery as part of the 1 Million Turtles project. The PRCG continues to work with the girls' school and Dr Ricky Spencer from Western Sydney University on progressing the breeding program and sourcing suitable wetland areas to place the turtles after they reach the required level of maturity.



Duck Creek kayaking tour and clean-up (Image courtesy of Cr Penny Pedersen).

ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITIES

Riverfest 2020: The program ran from 6-31 October and offered more than 30 online and COVID-safe events and activities (see full report on page 20).

Duck Creek litter kayaking tours: The PRCG Coordinator joined two concerned local residents on a kayaking tour of Duck River and Duck Creek to assess the significant amount of litter being washed into the waterway. A second kayaking tour was arranged for councillors and community group representatives to raise awareness of this serious issue and advocate for a coordinated clean-up of the area.

Keep Australia Beautiful Award: Nominated by the PRCG, Hannah Chalmers received a Keep Australia Beautiful 'Young Legends Award' for her work as a Riverkeeper Ambassador and production of a video highlighting the Parramatta River and the importance of protecting water quality.

Western Sydney Women 2020 Award: The PRCG nominated Riverkeeper Ambassador Kellie Darley from ParraParents for this award to acknowledge her work in promoting the Parramatta River and organising regular litter clean-ups along the foreshore at George Kendall Riverside Park.

Conservation Volunteers Australia: Staff from the PRCG, Conservation Volunteers Australia and City of Parramatta met with Riverkeeper Ambassador Kellie Darley to address several litter hot spots in the catchment, including Duck Creek.

COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

Parramatta River Masterplan: The Masterplan Dashboard reports on the progress against all steps of the Masterplan and is updated quarterly.

PRCG and Sydney Water Delivery Engine teams: Meet regularly to plan and coordinate the implementation of the Masterplan.



COLLABORATING ACROSS CATCHMENTS

Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program

The purpose of the Coastal Management Program (CMP) is to establish a long-term strategy for the coordinated management of the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment, to mitigate the potential adverse impacts of population growth, climate change (including sea-level rise) and catchment runoff.

The PRCG joined the program's Steering Committee and Project Team in 2020. The Steering Committee assists in guiding the governance arrangements, cost sharing and development of the grant for the Greater Sydney Harbour CMP. It includes various state agency members, the Sydney Coastal Council Group (SCCG), Greater Sydney Commission, Transport NSW and Sydney Water. The project team consists of members from DPIE, NSW Coastal Council and SCCG.

Over the past 12 months, the PRCG, in partnership with the SCCG, drafted a stage 2 planning grant application for the Coastal and Estuary Grants Program that will address the impact of urban stormwater discharge on receiving waters. This project involved securing the support of 20 councils in the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment for the grant application. The SCCG will submit the application on behalf of all councils during the next round of funding in July 2021.

The PRCG contributed to the production of an educational video to engage stakeholders in the development of the CMP and input into conceptual

models, produced by Sydney Water, for dry and wet weather scenarios for the Greater Sydney Harbour. We also collaborated with SCCG, CSIRO and PRCG on a Smart Places Acceleration Program grant.

Regional Litter Prevention Strategy for Greater Sydney Harbour

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) and Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) were successful in securing a grant from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to fund the development of the Regional Litter Prevention Strategy (RLPS) for the Greater Sydney Harbour catchment.

The strategy will create a unified and coordinated approach to litter prevention across the Greater Sydney Harbour catchments, which aims to reduce litter to Greater Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers by 50 per cent over the next five years.

In March 2021, Suji Jadhav was appointed as the Strategy Coordinator. A Project Steering Committee was also established, comprising representatives from the three pilot councils, Inner West, Parramatta and Willoughby, community members and industry.

A catchment-wide survey exploring community views on litter and how it is managed is in development and planned for release in August 2021. RLPS framing sessions will also be scheduled with each pilot council. The strategy is set to be completed by March 2022.



COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

At the June 2020 PRCG Full Group meeting we acknowledged our PRCG community representatives for their three years of service and significant contribution: **Annie Nielson** (Blacktown and District Environment Group Inc), **Frank Breen** (Ryde Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society), **Kellie Darley** (ParraParents), and **Zoe Kapetangiannis** (City of Canada Bay Environmental Advisory).

We also welcomed our incoming community representatives and look forward to working with them over the next three years: **Frank Breen** (returning), **Dr Mark Clarton-Skinner** (Burwood Canada Bay Climate Action Group), **Kellie Darley** (returning), **Teresa Gustowski** (Conservation Volunteers Australia), **Christina Rojas** (Keen to Clean Sydney), and **Julia Strykowski** (The Plastic Pluckers).

Above (from left): Dr Mark Clarton-Skinner, Teresa Gustowski, Cr Mark Drury, Christina Rojas, Julia Strykowski.



TEN STEPS TO A LIVING RIVER

Established in February 2019, the Masterplan Delivery Engine is a cross-agency group coordinated by Sydney Water that drives delivery of the Masterplan. The Delivery Engine team meets regularly with the PRCG team to plan and report on the progress of the Masterplan implementation.

1: GET SWIMMING



Upgrades to Dawn Fraser Baths progressed during 2020-21, however the planned reopening in October 2020 was delayed due to challenges with supplying water to fire hydrants and sprinklers. It is anticipated that the baths will reopen to the public later in 2021.

City of Parramatta Council's lifeguards count visitor attendance at Lake Parramatta when they are on duty. Over the previous summer more than 33,000 people swam at Lake Parramatta. This is significantly less than previous years, most likely due to a wet summer and COVID-19 restrictions.

2: KEEP WATCH



Throughout most of 2020-21 intensive water quality monitoring was conducted at each of the planned swim sites. The data will be used for the predictive model on wet weather impacts and recovery, which will be accessible on the *Our Living River* website interactive map. The map will go live prior to the first site activation, allowing swimmers to check daily water quality conditions.

Human Health Risk Assessments (HHRA) for Bayview Park, Callan Park and Mcllwaine Park have been

completed with results indicating that all three swim sites are safe for recreational use as designed. Sample collection has commenced at Bedlam Bay and Putney Park, and is expected to be completed by early 2022.

3: CREATE NEW SWIMMING SPOTS



In September 2020, Hunter's Hill announced **Bedlam Bay** as a potential new swim site for the Parramatta River. Work on the site is expected to commence in 2022 following the completion of site establishment water quality sampling.

Community consultation for **Bayview Park** was held online in September 2020. Development of the site was delayed as a Development Application was required, and the baths are expected to open in early 2022.

Upgrades to **Mcllwaine Park** are expected to commence late in 2021. Site improvements include the transformation of the seawall and river foreshore, improved pathways, lighting and native landscaping.

Construction of the stairs at **Putney Park** is progressing and should be completed by late 2021. The site is planned for recreational water use in the future.

Above: Dawn Fraser Baths (Image courtesy of Inner West Council).

4: STANDARDISE THE STANDARDS



The final recommendations paper for *Step 4 – Standardise the Standards, Planning Reforms to Create Our Living River*, was released in February 2021. The paper sets out three broad areas for planning reform:

1. Simple updates to councils' Local Environment Plans (LEPs) and Development Control Plans (DCPs), for Councils to adopt as they update their plans.
2. Developing, piloting and adopting two new frameworks for improving waterway health outcomes in new development:
 - a Blue Green Index Tool for assessing development applications
 - a Blue Green Grid for riparian mapping.
3. Working with our project partners and stakeholders to strengthen and support waterway health considerations in all planning approval pathways.

To support the implementation of the recommendations paper, the Delivery Engine made a number of technical submissions, on behalf of the PRCG, for major developments, policies or infrastructure works that could impact the river. The team also worked with DPIE to better facilitate cross-catchment stormwater planning through changes to a range of planning policies, tools and legislation.

A short video was developed to support the release of the paper. In March 2021, three webinars were held to share the key recommendations in the paper and generate ideas on how the recommendations could be implemented. The video and webinars are available to view at: www.ourlivingriver.com.au/planningreform.

Work continues on the development of the Blue Index Tool, including discussions on piloting the tool within the catchment.

5: REDUCE RUNOFF



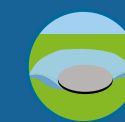
The Stormwater Subcommittee includes representatives from all member councils, Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) and Transport for NSW (Maritime Environmental Services), and is focused on delivering best practice Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) management principles in the private and public sectors.

The Committee met regularly throughout the year to progress key aspects of the work plan that included:

- Council nomination of projects to be funded under Sydney Water's Waterway Health Improvement Program (Tranche 2).
- Development of a draft funding paper to analyse how councils and the NSW Government can sustainably fund WSUD infrastructure in the future.
- Scoping of a Coastal and Estuary grant to fund implementation of the workplan.



6: IMPROVE OVERFLOWS



Sydney Water continues to investigate issues and undertake repairs to the wastewater network in the upper and mid-Parramatta River catchments, to

reduce the impacts of wet weather overflows on the river and our swimming sites. The program is being undertaken in three program stages:

Stage 1: (inflow reduction) inspections of 81 emergency relief structures (ERSs) in the upper catchment is complete and there is an ongoing delivery of backflow prevention valves to a further 98 ERSs in the mid-catchment.

Stage 2: (infiltration reduction) works have included the inspection of 29km of sewer mains and 563 manholes in the upper catchment, with concept designs for repair works, including relining of pipes, now nearing completion. Construction is expected to be finalised by June 2022. Design work for the mid-catchment will commence in June 2021.

Stage 3: (private properties) further progress on this stage has resulted in the submission of an internal business case to commence inspection and smoke testing of private properties in the upper catchment. This will include 26 commercial areas, four industrial sites, 31 education sites, five hospital/medical sites, and 8,125 residential properties. Inspections will commence in July 2021. The team is yet to commence planning for Stage 3 works in the mid-catchment.

Image courtesy of Paul and Ann Thorton.

Step 5: Reduce Runoff (continued)

- Commitment of funding by PRCG for a project to audit the condition of private WSUD assets.
- A two-day WSUD capacity building workshop for council staff in June.

Focus projects for the remainder of 2021 include the finalisation of 2021-22 workplan and roll-out of the catchment-wide audit of private WSUD.

The audit aims to understand the status and condition of privately held WSUD assets across the Parramatta River catchment. The subcommittee has appointed a specialist consultant to carry out the audits and provide recommendations. The consultant is expected to present on their findings at the PRCG Full Group meeting in early in 2022.

7: INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY



Joint community education initiatives to help reduce source pollution in stormwater runoff continue through campaigns such as the *Get the Site Right* erosion and sediment control campaign, which is now in its sixth year. (For more details on last year's campaigns, see the report on page 14).

The *Love your Waterways* (formerly River Aware) campaign has been expanded to include Sydney's other catchment groups and their waterways. The campaign encourages people to take up five simple actions to reduce litter, pet waste, gardening materials, chemicals and other pollutants from entering our waterways. The campaign will be rolled out in July 2021 and feature an Instagram photo competition.

The first Changemakers Leadership Course for the Parramatta River was held from April to June 2021. Twenty-two passionate volunteers completed the eight-session course which enabled them to develop knowledge and skills in running community-based projects to raise awareness of issues affecting waterway health.

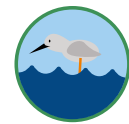


Nell Graham, Jasmine Payget and Cr Penny Pedersen at the Ryde Sustainability Festival.



Kissing Point clean-up run by FITA (Fraternity in Truth Assoc.).

8: BRING IN NATURE



The catchment-wide Citizen Science app is in development with the assistance of the Senior Scientist at Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE). Data for the app was initially researched by a Macquarie University research student at Lake Parramatta. The app has been further improved by DPIE and is being tested by PRCG.

The Biodiversity and Education Subcommittee is a forum to share initiatives that improve habitat and catchment health. Topics covered this year included: Blacktown City Council's catchment and riparian prioritisation method, reports on icon species, education events and Sydney Olympic Park Authority's (SOPA) community survey of shorebirds. SOPA staff also conducted a tour of their shorebird habitats in March 2021.

9: REPORT BACK REGULARLY



Progress on each of the Parramatta River Masterplan steps is updated regularly on the Masterplan Dashboard, located on the *Our Living River* website. The PRCG and Delivery Engine team also provide a report on the Masterplan delivery and other initiatives at the Reference Group, and PRCG Full Group and Officers' meetings that are held throughout the year.

10: CREATE CLEAR LEADERSHIP



The PRCG has been awarded a Metropolitan Greenspace grant to fund a Designing with Country project. The project involves the development of an Aboriginal Design Framework, in line with Designing with Country guidelines, that may lead to future interpretive design projects across the catchment for the community to experience.

The project supports the objectives of the Masterplan to recognise the traditional owners of the Parramatta River. It also aims to increase Aboriginal leadership in waterway governance by strengthening relationships between local and state government agencies, Aboriginal groups and community members, to facilitate ongoing management and business opportunities.

ADVOCACY AND SUBMISSIONS

Joint advocacy with our partners on issues affecting the river and catchment helps provide a united voice for our communities and waterways.

During 2020-21, the PRCG made submissions on the planning of future policies impacting the environment and waterways, and advocated for funding to implement the Parramatta River Masterplan:

TECHNICAL SUBMISSIONS

- Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA): Draft Marine Estate Education Strategy. The submission was prepared as a joint submission by the Sydney Coastal Councils Group, Cooks River Alliance, Georges Riverkeeper and the Parramatta River Catchment Group.
- Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment (DPIE): submission for the review of Local Infrastructure Contributions Plans.
- DPIE: Carter Street Masterplan.
- DPIE: Rhodes Precinct Plan.
- DPIE: Explanation of Intended Effect for the new Design and Place State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) was made highlighting the need for reform and the development of a Blue Green Index tool.
- DPIE: Greener Places Design Guide.
- Sydney Metro West: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- City of Parramatta: Parramatta CBD Planning Proposal.
- The Hon. Rob Stokes MP: submission letter on the Draft Callan Park Landscape Structure Plan.
- The Hon. Matt Kean MP and The Hon. Adam Marshall MP: combined submission from the Sydney Coastal Council Group, Cooks River Alliance, Georges Riverkeeper and PRCG on the Marine Estate Management Act: Five-Year Statutory Review.
- Upper House Parliamentary Enquiry: Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrade regarding effects of contaminated sediment in water column in swimmability of the Parramatta River.
- Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program: letter of support and partnership from the PRCG for the Stage 2 grant application.
- Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program: letters of support and financial commitment of \$5,000 for Stage 2 grant application received from 10 PRCG councils.
- PRCG Member Councils: letter from PRCG to encourage the inclusion of the Blue Green Index Tool in council submissions on the new Design and Place State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP).
- Regional Community Litter Prevention grant: submission for \$90,000 from NSW EPA's 'Own it and Act' grant program was received in partnership with the Sydney Coastal Councils Group.
- Metropolitan Greenspace grant: submission for \$115,000 (total project funds \$240,000) was received for the *Designing with Country* application.
- Sydney Olympic Park Authority: formal letter of invitation to become a financial member of the PRCG.
- Transport for NSW: formal letter of invitation to become a financial member of the PRCG.

OTHER NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

- The PRCG Coordinator accepted an invitation from Dr Swapan Paul at Sydney Olympic Park Authority to join the Sydney Wetland Institute Advisory Panel.
- The PRCG and Sydney Water Stormwater advocated on behalf of the Carnarvon Golf Club in Lidcombe to Transport for NSW to maintain and upgrade stormwater devices on Joseph Street, which impacts their dam and greens.
- Winner of National Stormwater Australia 2021 award for Excellence in Master Planning for *DUBA, BUDU, BARRA Ten Steps to a Living River – The Parramatta River Masterplan*.
- City of Parramatta Lord Mayor Minute tabled by the Lord Mayor at the April 2021 Council Meeting, celebrating the PRCG National Stormwater Australia Award achievement.
- PRCG became a member of Landcare NSW as part of the NSW 2019-2023 Landcare Program, which funds the PRCG Riverkeeper position through the Landcare NSW Coordinator program.
- Report to City of Parramatta's Regulatory staff regarding litter overflowing from a property on Duck River. Action and clean-up was undertaken and the issue was resolved by Council staff.

ADVOCATING FOR FUNDING

- Sydney Olympic Park Authority: letter of support for their Environmental Trust Education grant application for the Park Care Community Engagement Program.
- Cooks River Alliance: letter of support for their Environmental Trust Education grant application for the 'Adopt a Wetland' program.



COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Building support from the local communities that live, work and move through the catchment to help make Parramatta River swimmable again.

Throughout 2020-21 the PRCG continued to connect with our diverse audiences and communities through a range of in-person and online events and campaigns:

Clean Up Australia Day

The PRCG team supported several council Clean Up Australia Day events, including Kissing Point Park, Mitchell Reserve in Blacktown and Bayview Park in Concord. At Cumberland City Council's event in

Merrylands (pictured), the PRCG Coordinator met with Mayor Steve Christou to demonstrate the 'ORC' vacuum.

Clean-up events were also held by two of our Riverkeeper Ambassadors, Plastic Pluckers Clean Toongabbie Creek (Julia Strykowski) and George Kendall Riverside Park at Ermington (Kellie Darley).

World Environment Day

The PRCG took part in two World Environment Day events: The ParraParents foreshore clean-up at Ermington was supported by more than 50 volunteers who collected 21, 50-litre bags of litter.

Cr Penny Pedersen joined the PRCG team at the City of Ryde's Sustainability Festival, and chatted with locals about the relationship between sustainability and waterway health.





Three of our Changemakers Course groups, Greener Gatherings, Parra River Heroes and The Lollipop Ladies, used the events as an opportunity to launch their pilot projects (see full report on page 18).

Love Your Waterways litter awareness campaign

The *River Aware* campaign has been renamed to *Love Your Waterways* and expanded to include the other catchment groups in Sydney and their waterways (Cooks River Alliance, Georges Riverkeeper and Sydney Coastal Councils Group). Promotional and social media assets were developed by the PRCG for use by the other catchment groups.

The campaign will be launched online in July 2021 and promoted at clean-up and other community events.

KEY RESULTS

-  20+ community events
-  18 media items
-  \$110,000+ media ASR (Advertising Space Rate) equivalent
-  2371 followers across social media channels; 37 posts/tweets per month (averaged); 5.9% average engagement rate per post
-  1050+ e-newsletter subscribers
-  Our Living River website: 36,531 page views and 14,895 sessions by 19,137 users
-  167 Riverkeeper Network Facebook followers
-  4 Riverkeeper Ambassadors
-  6 Affiliate Organisations



Get the Site Right campaign

Following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in late 2020, regular inspections of building and construction sites returned in time for the one-day *Get the Site Right* blitz in October.

Twenty-one councils across Sydney and the Hunter Coast took part and inspected almost 600 sites for sediment and runoff controls. Results showed a compliance rate of 74%, the highest achieved to date since the campaign began in 2016. A total of \$97,897 in fines was issued to non-compliant sites with offences ranging from poorly stabilised site access to unapproved concrete pours.

The May 2021 campaign focused on the impact of runoff on waterways and the environment, following a survey conducted by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) that showed the community's increasing reliance on natural spaces for recreation and enjoyment due to the COVID-19 pandemic¹.

Twenty-one councils inspected 762 sites with 67 per cent of those found to be compliant, down 7 per cent from the October 2020 campaign. A total of \$383,167 in fines was issued to non-compliant sites. Offences included significant sediment tracking off the site and building supplies stored on public land.

In addition to joint inspections with some councils, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) inspected four co-regulated sites with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and 15 concrete batching plants within the Sydney basin. Inspections generally found plants to be operating in a manner that prevents water pollution occurring. A small number of plants required improvements to their practices such as upgrades to the enhancement of stormwater capture and treatment.

In April 2021 Georges Riverkeeper hosted an online webinar for councils: *Clogging up our creeks – the environmental impacts of sediment runoff on waterways*. Georges Riverkeeper Aquatic Ecologist, Marion Huxley, presented on the harmful effects of runoff on habitat loss, fish kills, weed spread and other serious environmental issues.

Now in its sixth year, Get the Site Right continues to be well-supported by the Cooks River Alliance, DPIE, Georges Riverkeeper, EPA, Sydney Coastal Councils Group, local Sydney councils and Lake Macquarie Council. Our Regulatory Subcommittee meetings, held twice a year, and regular cross-catchment group meetings provide opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing between agencies. To improve the campaign, a short survey will be distributed to councils in July 2021.

We look forward to continuing our work with all participating agencies to keep the issue of sediment runoff to our waterways at the forefront of the building and construction industry.

¹www.greater.sydney/greater-use-of-public-open-and-shared-space.

KEY RESULTS



1300+
Sites
inspected



74%
Compliance rate
(Oct 2020)



\$481,064
Fines
issued



Riverkeeper Program

The Riverkeeper Program supports and connects community and council activities across the catchment. The Riverkeeper is employed by the PRCG and the role is partly funded by a Local Land Service NSW grant. Projects and activities help deliver Steps 7 and 8 of the Masterplan.

Key projects and events held throughout 2020-21 included:

Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition Workshop

The PRCG, together with Cumberland City Council, hosted a Local Land Services Landcare Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition Workshop on 21 November 2020 at the Auburn Community Picnic Area. This approach assesses the ecological condition of riparian habitats using indicators that reflect functional aspects of the physical, community and landscape features of the riparian zone.

More than 20 participants attended the full-day workshop that included a practical session to apply the Rapid Riparian Assessment along Duck River. The workshop was held as a capacity-building workshop for Landcare coordinators, volunteers and council officers.

AUSMAP training

The PRCG organised training for council officers and Riverkeeper Network volunteers in the Australian Microplastics Assessment Project (AUSMAP). The Citizen Science project trains volunteers on the scientific method for collecting and reporting on microplastics in the environment, the results of which feed into the Australian Marine Debris Institute database. The event was held on 27 November at Kissing Point Park with Concord and Ryde Sailing Club providing the venue. Eleven places for volunteers and staff from member groups were sponsored by the

PRCG. The PRCG purchased an AUSMAP kit which has been loaned to the Riverkeeper Ambassadors for ongoing monitoring of microplastics.

Parramatta River Litter Vacuum

In early 2021 the PRCG purchased a litter vacuum to assist with the removal of styrofoam and other small, lightweight items at clean-up events. 'ORC' (Our River Cleaner) was named by the community through an online naming campaign. The litter vacuum was officially launched and demonstrated at various Clean Up Australia Day events across the catchment. A separate demonstration was also organised with Maritime Services.

ORC's distinctive blue colour and ability to collect litter in a fraction of the time it would take to pick manually, has generated much interest with volunteers of all ages. Further testing of the litter vacuum on different terrains will continue at future clean-up events.

The Riverkeeper also took part in the following events:

- Shale Sandstone Ecological Endangered Communities workshop for Western Sydney (Oct. 2020).
- Landcare Greater Sydney Community of Practice monthly sessions.
- Landcare NSW Conference, Dubbo (June 2021).
- Local Lands Service Greater Sydney Workshop at Cockatoo Island (May 2021).
- Organised an excursion in collaboration with Riverkeeper Ambassador Charlene Bordley for Arthur Phillip High School Year 11 Geography students to observe the condition of a local ecosystem. Streamwatch and Sydney Wildlife Rescue also presented sessions on aspects of water health and biodiversity.

Above: AUSMAP training at Kissing Point Park.

Riverkeeper Ambassadors

Our current Riverkeeper Ambassadors are very active supporters of our mission to make the Parramatta River swimmable again, and work tirelessly to educate and inspire people through their own community initiatives:

Charlene Bordley

Charlene Bordley from Addventagious continues to run her free, weekly *Our Living River* community discovery tours along the Parramatta River. The guided cycling program encourages participants to learn more about the biodiversity in the river and along its banks, and other aspects of waterway health.

During Riverfest, Charlene also ran five, free cycling tours along the Parramatta River, teaching bird observations and identification. These sightings were recorded in the Birdlife Australia's *Aussie Backyards Bird Count*.

Kellie Darley

Kellie Darley from ParraParents continued to raise awareness about the impact of litter on our waterways through her regular foreshore clean-ups. In late 2020, Kellie turned her focus to highlighting the poor state of Duck Creek, organising clean-ups with staff from the Sydney Turf Club. She has also advocated for local and state government agencies to work together on a coordinated approach to addressing this neglected part of the catchment.

Over the last 12 months Kellie and her dedicated volunteers have collected more than 430 bags of litter, equivalent to almost 1.8 tonnes – an impressive achievement.

Julia Strykowski

We were delighted to welcome Julia (Julz) Strykowski as our newest Riverkeeper Ambassador. During 2020-21 Julz held 10 litter clean-ups at locations along Toongabbie Creek and its tributaries with the support of her *Plastic Pluckers* volunteers. The group removed 116 bags of litter, weighing 1152kg plus several, large dumped items.

Julz works as an environmental educator with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and was a recipient of the 2020 Government Environmental Educator of the Year Award from the NSW Australian Association of Environmental Education. She is passionate about stopping litter at its source and is also an organiser for Boomerang Bags Parramatta and Plastic Free Parramatta.

Hannah Chalmers

In November 2020, Youth Riverkeeper Ambassador and PLC Sydney student Hannah Chalmers won the Young Legends Environment Award category of the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW Sustainable Cities Awards. The PRCG nominated Hannah in recognition of her enthusiasm and efforts to raise awareness of stormwater pollution in our waterways through her educational video, *Down the Drain*.

Hannah also won the primary school division of the Australian Water Association Sustainable Water Prize for her project, *Stormwater, it bugs me* in the Science Teachers' Association of New South Wales Awards.



Charlene Bordley (third from left) with the PRCG team and other participants in the *Our Living River* cycling tour.



Kellie Darley (far left) with staff from the Sydney Turf Club at the Duck Creek clean-up.



Julz Strykowski (far right) with the Plastic Pluckers at the Toongabbie Creek clean-up.



Hannah Chalmers with the PRCG team at the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW Sustainable Cities Awards.



Parramatta River Changemakers Course

The PRCG held its first Changemakers Course for the Parramatta River from April to June 2021. Based on a program run by Cooks River Alliance, the free course provided an opportunity for local residents to connect with like-minded people to create projects that contribute to restoring catchment and waterway health. Twenty-two participants, ranging in age from 17 to 80 years, completed the full program.

The course commenced with a full-day catchment 'crawl' that included site visits to a diverse range of ecosystems to highlight some of the challenges and solutions for managing waterway health: Blaxland Riverside Park, Duck River, Blacktown Creek, Toongabbie Creek, Lake Parramatta, Baludarr Wetlands, George Kendall Reserve and Putney Park.

Over the following two months, participants took part in seven evening workshops that were held at the Shepherds Bay Community Centre in Meadowbank. Changeology facilitator Les Robinson ran initial project engagement and accelerator sessions to help participants establish and progress their pilot projects.

Throughout the course, the group heard presentations on various aspects of waterway management, biodiversity and community engagement. Guest speakers included: Judy Harrington from Birdlife NSW (link between shore birds and ecosystem health), Youth Riverkeeper Ambassador Hannah Chalmers (science communication projects), and Dan Bradley from Sydney Water (Riverwatch Monitoring Program).

Information sessions were also provided by Liz Locksley from Thrive Story on storytelling skills and the PRCG team on aspects of the Masterplan, sustainable water management and effective communications. The Riverkeeper Ambassadors

not only took part in the course but also shared their considerable knowledge and expertise in running community-based initiatives.

Six projects emerged from the pilot phase, several of which were launched in June at community events across the catchment:

- **Greener Gatherings** – promoting sustainable alternatives to single-use plastics for family riverside gatherings, particularly children's birthday parties.
- **Map Hack** – using open source mapping to deepen the understanding of the catchment (in development).
- **ParrAware** – raising awareness of the *Our Living River* initiative and ways the community can get involved.
- **Parramatta River Heroes** – focusing on the Parramatta River iconic species and their ecosystems.
- **The Diggers** – mapping and promotion of community gardens in the catchment for the interactive map on the *Our Living River* website.
- **The Lollipop Ladies** – reducing littering of plastic lollipop sticks and advocating for biodegradable alternatives.

These projects demonstrate the success of the Changemakers Course in building the skills and confidence of the participants, and helping to create a pathway for them to take meaningful action.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the Changemakers Course finale was postponed and will be rescheduled later in the year. Course participants plan to present their projects at future community events.

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make the course such a success, and particularly the City of Ryde for providing the workshop venue.



Site visit at Duck Creek in Auburn.



Exploring the mangroves along the foreshore at Ermington.



Course participants workshop their project ideas.



Charlene Bordley and Cosmica Donna-Aroon.



Amy Lai presents *The Diggers*' project ideas.



The Lollipop Ladies at the Ryde Sustainability Festival.



ParrAware at Cabarita Ferry Wharf.



Greener Gatherings at the Ryde Sustainability Festival.



Riverfest 2020

In meeting the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions, this year's Riverfest was a particularly special celebration of the Parramatta River catchment. The program ran from 6-31 October and offered more than 30 online and COVID-safe events and activities, such as webinars, workshops, wildlife walks and foreshore clean-ups.

Each week of Riverfest was devoted to a theme that aligned with our Masterplan:

- The natural world in our catchment (Step 8)
- Get involved to protect nature and the river (Steps 7 & 8)
- Stormwater awareness (Step 5)
- Let's get swimming (Steps 1, 2 & 3)

For the first time, the PRCG offered a series of webinars on different aspects of waterway health. Topics included sustainable water management practices, progress on the planned swim sites for the Parramatta River and a presentation by research scientist Leroy Gonsalves on the Southern Myotis. The webinars are available to watch on the *Our Living River* YouTube channel.

We also organised two on-site events, featuring talks by Birdlife NSW experts Dr Beth Mott on the Powerful Owl at Arthur Walker Reserve in Concord and Judy Harrington on the Bar-tailed Godwit at Halliday Park in Five Dock.

Various events were also organised by our member councils, Riverkeeper Ambassadors and local bushcare coordinators, including: Inner West Council's 'Spring Photo Call Out' and Water Sensitive Design webinar, 'Cycling by the River' tours led by Charlene Bordley from Addventagous, and a small bird habitat bushcare workshop run by Social Canvas and City of Parramatta Bushcare.

In November, the PRCG team held an evaluation session with the Riverkeeper Ambassadors to improve on events, planning and promotion for next year. We plan to run smaller, locally-based activities in the future to engage more closely with individuals and community groups who are interested in wildlife conservation.

A huge thank you to the many organisations that supported Riverfest 2020, and for their continued commitment to help us raise awareness of the important work being done to make the Parramatta River swimmable again.

Images (clockwise from top left): Dr Beth Mott leads a guided walk on the Powerful Owl; ParraParents foreshore clean-up at George Kendall Riverside Park; Webinar with our Riverkeeper Ambassadors who spoke about their community projects; Judy Harrington from Birdlife Southern NSW talks about the Bar-tailed Godwit.



MONITORING AND REPORTING

PRCG FINANCIAL REPORT (2020-21)

INCOME	\$
Carryover funds 2019-2020	163,490
Annual membership fees	274,638
2020-2021 Grant Funds (Local Landcare Coordinator)	53,915
Carryover – Community Landcare Grant (River Aware)	5,120
Community Landcare mini grant (Citizen Science app)	3,500
Metro Greenspace Grant – (\$140,000) first payment	23,000
Total income	\$523,663

EXPENSES	\$
Salaries and on-costs (Coordinator 1.0 FTE & Comms 0.6 FTE)	240,063
Salaries and on-costs (Riverkeeper 0.8 FTE)	82,549
Materials (printing, signage)	23,973
Riverkeeper Program	9,213
Contracts (WSUD Audit Project) allocated from carryover funds	16,425
River Aware grant expenditure	4,243
Metro Greenspace Grant	0
Community Landcare mini grant – Citizen Science app development	587
Total expenses	\$377,053

NET OPERATING RESULT	\$146,610
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The PRCG reports regularly on the progress of our Masterplan and other initiatives to our stakeholders and community through our website, Masterplan Dashboard, e-newsletter, social media channels and meetings.

OUR REPRESENTATIVES

PRCG CHAIR

Cr Mark Drury – Inner West Council
(Nov. 2017 – present)

PRCG VICE CHAIR

Cr Penny Pedersen – City of Ryde
(Nov. 2017 – present)

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES

- Blacktown City Council: Cr Susai Benjamin, Cr Kathie Collins
- City of Canada Bay: Mayor Angelo Tsirekas, Cr Charles Jago
- City of Canterbury Bankstown: Cr George Zakhia
- City of Parramatta: Cr Phil Bradley, Cr Patricia Prociw
- City of Ryde: Cr Penny Pedersen
- Cumberland City Council: Cr Glenn Elmore, Cr Ross Grove
- Hunter's Hill Council: Cr Ross Williams
- Inner West Council: Cr Mark Drury, Cr Marghanita Da Cruz

PARRAMATTA RIVER MASTERPLAN REFERENCE GROUP

- Cr Mark Drury – Co-chair, Parramatta River Catchment Group
- Chris Gould – Co-chair and General Manager Business Development, Sydney Water
- Steve Beaman – Director, Waste & Resource Recovery at NSW Environment Protection Authority
- Jim Bentley – Chief Executive, Water, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- Phillip Birtles – PRCG Executive Committee Member and Urban Water and Waterways Strategist, Sydney Water
- David Borger – Director, Business Western Sydney
- Steve Gal – Director, Partnerships and Operations, Aboriginal Affairs
- Nell Graham – Coordinator, Parramatta River Catchment Group
- Lara Kirchner – A/Director, Central River City Transport for NSW
- The Hon. Dr (Geoff) Geoffrey – Member for Parramatta
- Tracy Mackey – Chief Executive Officer, NSW Environment Protection Authority
- Andy Marks – Director, Centre for Western Sydney, Western Sydney University
- Peter Poulet – Central City & South Districts Commissioner, Greater Sydney Commission
- Prof Emer Bruce Thom – Chair, Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program (CMP) Steering Committee, University of Sydney
- Katrina Wall – A/Manager, Water Unit, Environmental Health, NSW Health
- John Warburton – Executive Director, City Assets & Operations, City of Parramatta

STAFF REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBER AGENCIES

(Includes staff participating in the PRCG Full Group, subcommittees and technical groups)

- Blacktown City Council: Tahina Ahmed, Katrina Brown, Craig Bush, Clarissa Davis, Camila Drieberg, Mark Gibson, Kristy Good, Amanda Or
- Burwood Council: Pablo Barreto, Andrew McClure, Oliver Ellis, Tai Trinh, Ryan King
- City of Canada Bay: Ju'eta Amir, John Earls, Joe Elkoury, Kylie Burrows, Petrina Nelson, Jane Peacock, Robbie Rigo, Daniel Wood
- City of Canterbury Bankstown: Catarina Fraga Matos, Nasi Laveta, David Lowery, Dean O'Mara, Asad Suman, Robyn Young
- City of Parramatta: Eric Brandao, Paul Graham, Paul Hackney, Glenn Haskins, Lisa Kollaras, Helen Papatthanasiou, Stuart Pike, Bernadette Riad, Steven Ross
- City of Ryde: Katie Helm, Kylie McMahon, Ryan Moore, Sandra Payne, Tom Ramsey, Sean Simpson
- Cumberland City Council: Frances Hamilton, Joshua Hayden, Tim Nugyen, Stuart Nunn
- Department of Planning and Environment: Sally Anderson, Alfarid Hussain, Pheobe Laing
- NSW Environment Protection Authority: James Boyle, James Goodwin, Kieran Henry, Nathan Hale, Giselle Howard, Lisa Power, Benn Treharne, Bernie Turner
- Hunter's Hill Council: Bec Ho, Joanne Taranto, Jacqui Vollmer
- Inner West Council: Pilar Angon, Gwilym Griffiths, Sarah Kamarudin, Helen Knowles, Bang Le, Deborah Lennis, James Ogg
- Sydney Water: Phillip Adams, Phillip Birtles, Daniel Bradley, Leanne Niblock, Nerida Taylor

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND KEY CONTRIBUTORS

- Birdlife Southern NSW: Judy Harrington, Dr Beth Mott
- Department of Primary Industries: Josi Hollywood
- Cooks River Alliance: Sue Burton, Thomas Sinclair
- Georges Riverkeeper: Beth Salt, Kirsten Spry
- Greater Sydney Local Land Services: Madeleine Florin
- Greater Sydney Coastal Management Program Chair: Prof Emer Bruce Thom
- Greater Sydney Landcare Network: Bev Debrincat
- Macquarie University: Dr Peter Davies
- Murama Healing Space: Mike Bartlett, Verity Corr, Roberto Giunta, Dr John Hunter
- Office of Environment and Heritage: Daylan Cameron, Meredith Campey, Peter Freewater
- Parramatta Park and Western Sydney Parklands Trusts: David Kirkland
- Sydney Coastal Councils Group: Suji Jadhav, Sarah Joyce, Jacqui McLeod, Ana Terrazas, Kate Vitnell

- Sydney Olympic Park Authority: Mike Bartlett, Kerry Darcovich, Tina Hsu, Jenny O'Meara, Swapan Paul
- Transport for NSW (Maritime Services): Wayne Cartner, David Copley, Lara Kirchner, Elizabeth Mildwater, Andrew Mogg, Elisha Pearce
- University of Sydney: Dr Cameron Webb
- Western Sydney University: Dr Ricky Spencer

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

- Frank Breen – Ryde Hunter's Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society (continuing)
- Dr Mark Clarton-Skinner – Burwood Canada Bay Climate Action Group, Canada Bay (new)
- Kellie Darley – ParraParents (continuing)
- Teresa Gustowski – Conservation Volunteers Australia, Bankstown (new)
- Zoe Kapetangiannis – City of Canada Bay Sustainable City Committee (outgoing)
- Annie Nielsen – Blacktown and District Environment Group Inc. (outgoing)
- Christina Rojas – Love your Place & Keen to be Clean, Canada Bay (new)
- Julia Strykowski – The Plastic Pluckers, Parramatta (new)

OUR LIVING RIVER AMBASSADORS

- Dr Peter Davies – Macquarie University
- A/Prof Stuart Khan – University of New South Wales
- A/Prof Gavin Birch – University of Sydney
- Dr Ian Wright – Western Sydney University

RIVERKEEPER AMBASSADORS

- Charlene Bordley – Addventageous
- Kellie Darley – ParraParents
- Julia Strykowski – The Plastic Pluckers
- Hannah Chalmers (Youth Riverkeeper Ambassador)

PRCG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Phillip Birtles – Sydney Water
- Craig Bush – Blacktown City Council
- Paul Hackney – City of Parramatta
- Sarah Kamarudin – Inner West
- Kylie McMahon – City of Ryde
- Petrina Nelson – City of Canada Bay

SYDNEY WATER DELIVERY ENGINE

- Nerida Taylor – Delivery Engine Manager
- Phillip Adams – Strategic Stormwater Planner (Nov. 2019 - Dec. 2020)
- Daniel Bradley – Riverwatch Coordinator
- Leanne Niblock – Waterways Lead

PRCG STAFF

- Nell Graham, PRCG Coordinator
- Jasmine Payget, PRCG Riverkeeper
- Nadia Young, PRCG Communications Officer



OUR THANKS

Thank you to all our members and supporters for their considerable efforts and commitment over the past year to make the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025.

FINANCIAL MEMBERS (2020-2021)



ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND OTHER KEY CONTRIBUTORS





www.ourlivingriver.com.au



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[Ourlivingriver](https://twitter.com/Ourlivingriver)



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