

# MANLY COMMUNITY FORUM

A community-led monthly newsletter for Manly residents

APRIL 2021



There is an underwater forest hidden beneath the sea, and this month's Seaweed Forest Festival aims to celebrate it in all its glory. The festival, which is based at Manly Art Gallery and Museum, includes artworks, talks and events with a focus on education and community participation. Innovative events include workshops for crayweed restoration, cooking with seaweed, and talks including the hero role of seaweed in the fight against climate change.

Tickets are free but numbers are limited, with some events already sold out. The festival runs until 9th of May and has been made possible by a generous grant from the State Government.

Details at [www.seaweedforestsfestival.com.au](http://www.seaweedforestsfestival.com.au)

## AGENDA

- Little Manly Master Plan
  - Location of toilets at Little Manly Reserve Park
  - Future of Council-owned houses at 34 & 40 Stuart St
  - Dinghy storage at 36 Stuart St
  - Little Manly kiosk
- Footpaths & pedestrian ramp at East Esplanade
- Future events in Manly
- Boats at Cabbage Tree Bay
- Post COVID-19 Manly Community Forum meetings

## Brickbats & Bouquets

Brickbats to Council which has still not replaced the Little Manly pool handrail or the sandstone capping next to the kiosk which is falling to bits.

Bouquets to the Federal Government which announced it had halted plans to allow commercial leases over 35 years on Sydney Harbour Federation Trust land. This is a win for the community, and we look forward to the revitalisation of the area with some new leases.

Brickbats to Council and the Traffic Management Committee for the over-the-top pedestrian refuge at Cliff St and Darley Rd. Trucks turning left into Cliff St from Darley Rd have already damaged the new curb.

Bouquets to St Matthews Church which has opened the doors of the new Darley Smith Building. It will be a huge addition to Manly's social scene and is likely to be the site for a mini movie festival using the smart new auditorium and community spaces.

Bouquets to Council for the two raised pedestrian crossings in East Esplanade.

**NEXT MANLY COMMUNITY FORUM ZOOM MEETING IS MONDAY 19TH APRIL 4:30 - 6PM.  
TO TAKE PART PLEASE EMAIL [KANDYTAGG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:kandytagg@gmail.com)**

# Little Manly Kiosk

Thanks to the many residents and visitors who provided feedback on the progress or not of the café renovations at Little Manly Beach. Everyone agrees it is essential to have a café there during the daytime and was looking forward to a smooth transition to the new operator when the lease was up for renewal. We can only sympathise with the new operator who has been messed around by Council with its requirements for various consultation processes and requests for additional reports as well as confusion around the approval process for the installation of the storage and refrigeration at the rear of the building. But the DA was considered and approved with some amendments by the Northern Beaches Local Planning Panel (NBLPP) on 7th of April 2021. No residents attended but four architects did participate in the hearing on behalf of the operator.

These amendments are in relation to the maximum number of seated patrons (32) in accordance with the approved plans to regularise the current use of the café and in recognition of traffic and parking impacts associated with the land use and to mitigate potential impacts on local fauna including the Little Penguin and the Long-nosed Bandicoot. Also, condition 53 states that the sale of alcohol on the premises is not permitted. Now that the DA has been approved, we hope to see the improvements commence and also hope that Council does what it has committed to do for the remainder of the beach park area as well lifting its game with regards to the maintenance of the grass area and surrounding landscaping.

## Rate Harmonisation

Council voted last week to go ahead with the proposed rate rise for Manly Ward ratepayers and a decrease for everyone else. And it won't be phased in. We will all be hit with the up to 26% increase in our next rate bill due at the beginning of the next financial year. On the right is a chart comparing the current rates payable in each former local government area and future rates payable by every ratepayer across the land value ranges in the Northern Beaches Council (NBC).

Land Value Range	Former LGA	Number of ratepayers	Current rates	Proposed rates	Difference	
< \$600,000	Manly	7887	\$861.00	\$968.00	\$107.00	26% increase
	Warringah	20,040	\$1023.00		-\$55.00	3% decrease
	Pittwater	5551	\$932.00		-\$36.00	3% decrease
\$600,001 - \$700,000	Manly	705	\$861.00	\$1,002.00	\$141.00	26% increase
	Warringah	1335	\$1064.00		-\$63.00	3% decrease
	Pittwater	1331	\$1034.00		-\$33.00	3% decrease
\$700,001 - \$800,000	Manly	548	\$919.00	\$1156.00	\$237.00	26% increase
	Warringah	4424	\$1228.00		-\$73.00	3% decrease
	Pittwater	2462	\$1193.00		-\$38.00	3% decrease
\$800,001 - \$900,000	Manly	306	\$1041.00	\$1310.00	\$269.00	26% increase
	Warringah	10,442	\$1392.00		-\$82.00	
	Pittwater	3222	\$1353.00		-\$43.00	
\$900,001 - \$1,000,000	Manly	424	\$1164.00	\$1464.00	\$300.00	26% increase
	Warringah	6840	\$1556.00		-\$92.00	
	Pittwater	3495	\$1512.00		-\$48.00	
\$1,000,001 - \$1,250,000	Manly	1583	\$1378.00	\$1734.00	\$356.00	26% increase
	Warringah	5790	\$1842.00		-\$109.00	
	Pittwater	3358	\$1790.00		-\$57.00	
\$1,250,001 - \$1,500,000	Manly	2583	\$1684.00	\$2119.00	\$435.00	26% increase
	Warringah	2944	\$2052.00		-\$133.00	
	Pittwater	1260	\$2188.00		-\$69.00	
\$1,500,001 - \$2,000,000	Manly	2292	\$2144.00	\$2697.00	\$553.00	26% increase
	Warringah	1453	\$2866.00		-\$169.00	
	Pittwater	1237	\$2785.00		-\$88.00	
\$2,000,001 - \$3,000,000	Manly	1069	\$3062.00	\$3852.00	\$790.00	26% increase
	Warringah	818	\$4094.00		-\$242.00	
	Pittwater	1101	\$3978.00		-\$126.00	
\$3,000,001 - \$4,000,000	Manly	176	\$4287.00	\$5393.00	\$1106.00	26% increase
	Warringah	223	\$5732.00		-\$339.00	
	Pittwater	318	\$5569.00		-\$176.00	
\$4,000,001 - \$5,000,000	Manly	88	\$5512.00	\$6943.00	\$1422.00	26% increase
	Warringah	32	\$7370.00		-\$435.00	
	Pittwater	87	\$7561.00		-\$227.00	
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	Manly	38	\$9187.00	\$11,557.00	\$2370.00	26% increase
	Warringah	33	\$12283.00		-\$726.00	
	Pittwater	155	\$11934.00		-\$178.00	
\$10,000,001 - \$20,000,000	Manly	3	\$18373.00	\$23,114.00	\$4740.00	26% increase
	Warringah	6	\$24565.00		-\$1452.00	
	Pittwater	8	\$23869.00		-\$755.00	
\$20,000,001 - \$30,000,000	Manly	1	\$30622.00	\$38,523.00	\$7901.00	26% increase
	Warringah	2	\$40942.00		-\$2419.00	
	Pittwater	0	\$39781.00		-\$1258.00	
\$30,000,001 - \$40,000,000	Manly	0	\$42,871.00	\$53,932.00	\$11,061.00	26% increase
	Warringah	0				
	Pittwater	1	\$55,694.00		-\$1,762.00	



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# Community Safety Committee

The Northern Beaches Community Safety Committee meets six times a year and advises Council on community safety and crime prevention on the Northern Beaches including the security of open spaces and public areas, lighting, transport and event safety, plus putting forward initiatives for community safety and crime reduction, and prevention and detection. A meeting was held on 18th of February 2021 in response to recent resident concerns regarding the East Esplanade precinct, and the challenges experienced in this area by Council, police and residents were discussed.

East Esplanade has been of concern since the inception of the (previous Manly Council) Community Safety Committee in 2012. A high level of activity and concerns have been noted this summer, however it is likely the increase in activity is a response to COVID-19 restrictions. With the significant increase in Council ranger patrols, statistics have shown a major increase in preventative actions. Staff experience has shown that the majority of problems has been with adults, not youth. Council has the capacity to continue this level of ranger patrol service before 8 pm, Police and rangers work together to monitor the Alcohol Prohibited Area (APA) which has proven successful. The re-introduction of the reserve sprinkler system being activated after 8 pm has assisted groups to move on and will be refined to improve crowd disbursement. It is anticipated that patrons will return to licensed venues once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. This will alleviate the pressure of crowds in public spaces. Police advise crime in this area generally relates to antisocial behaviour rather than serious crime. Police met with Council representatives last week and discussed sprinkler timing and the installation of toilet location signage. Roadside fencing was also suggested to decrease access to private residences and guide crowds toward toilet facilities.

General excessive consumption of alcohol was discussed. Northern Beaches Local Drug Action Team (LDAT) and Community Drug Action Team (CDAT) are investigating further strategies to address community attitudes towards

# Community Safety Committee Continued...

alcohol use.

A commitment at the February Safety Committee meeting was made to meet with stakeholders to discuss these and other issues. After much delay, the commitment by senior staff to meet stakeholders was finally kept and the group walked through East Esplanade. The group felt that they should have met during a busy period, however it did allow the Police Executive, the Council Executive and three Councillors to hear all the concerns, AGAIN.

The resident community representatives living in the immediate vicinity gave an excellent summary of what they are putting up with and it was clear that something must be done to stop the antisocial behaviour; the abusive response residents get when asking park users to stop using their property as a toilet; the increase in drug deals; noise from amplified music and huge numbers of party goers with no control over excessive drinking.

Ideas were discussed including a complete management of the park by Council with fenced off areas and entry management similar to the licensed premises. East Esplanade Park is the only park/reserve/beach in the Northern Beaches that legally allows drinking. However, the elephant in the room remains the push for Council to declare the trial of allowing alcohol at East Esplanade finished and reinstate the alcohol ban. It may take 6 months to affect, but we would have our park back under control for next summer. This was clearly a preferred approach by senior management at Council and uniformed police. It is the preferred approach of the majority of residents. It is not the preferred approach of the majority of Councillors. You would have to ask why? Is it an election year, Yes? Is this a political, popular decision. Maybe yes.

The Stakeholder group participation will improve Council/Community communication, but it appears to be stuck on a final solution that doesn't involve a complete stop to alcohol allowed.

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## Electrification of Manly Ferries

The electrification of the Freshwater ferries is the new focus of the Save the Manly Ferries campaign following a feisty Parliamentary debate last month. The debate was prompted by a 22,000 signature petition calling for the State Government to retain all four Freshwater class ferries, which are set to be largely replaced by smaller Emerald class boats.

Leader of the community campaign and Northern Beaches Deputy Mayor Candy Bingham said the case was strong for conversion of the Freshwater ferries to battery power or other low emission technology, such as biofuels or even hydrogen. Electrification is supported by Manly MP James Griffin, and battery power has been flagged as the future for Sydney's ferry fleet by the Transport Minister Andrew Constance.

While Minister Constance is not yet talking about electrification of existing ferries, electric conversion has been successfully carried out in many locations including Seattle and Sweden, with large double-ended passenger ferries similar to our Freshwaters. Another area of focus is the 80 defects and safety concerns, the worst of which is probably the thin hull which may not be capable of supporting the reinforcement necessary to withstand repeated rough water trips across the heads.

Other concerns with the new ferries include their accessibility for people using wheelchairs, older citizens, families with prams and cyclists. The ferries have narrow steep gangplanks and passage ways around the side and very little space in the central areas. Wheelchair users say there is inadequate space in the designated areas. Many businesses are concerned that the loss of the iconic ferries

## Electrification of Manly Ferries Continued...

will have an impact on our \$500 million-a-year tourist economy. While the State Government has promised to initially keep two ferries for weekends and public holidays, James Griffin has called on other institutions including NBC to consider taking the remaining two ferries for tourism or heritage purposes.

## Manly Footpaths

At the last Forum meeting, the Council staff responsible for footpaths explained the mysteries of keeping our footpaths in good nick. For context the entire NBC area has 562km of footpaths, Manly Ward has 153km and the Eastern Hill has 26km. The closest footpath earmarked for renewal will be Raglan St in FY 21/22. Footpaths that get damaged by the utilities (Telstra, NBN, Sydney Water, Electricity and Gas companies etc) should be 'made good' by the company, however this doesn't often occur. The community is asked to report damaged footpaths (regularly) to Council and/or the utility responsible. Council will respond to customer service requests where specific problems (trip hazards, holes, root damage etc) are reported. Council maps defects in the footpath, categorising these as 10, 20, or 30mm trip hazards. Council plans to call for tenders for a 2-year repair program, starting with high priority areas which are in high foot-traffic areas such as around schools, shops and recreation locations. The Forum highlighted the very poor asphalt footpath on the western side of East Esplanade between the Skiff Club and Osborne Rd above the new toilet block. This needs more attention than just a bit of asphalt filling. This footpath is a very busy route and is an extremely uneven surface in need of complete replacement. We will continue to lobby for it to be fixed.

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