



October 2024

A City for All

Midpoint review

The City of Sydney acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora nation as the Traditional Custodians of our local area.

CITY OF SYDNEY 

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Midpoint review

Social sustainability is about making our city a fairer place where people feel healthier, welcome, included, and connected now and in the future. It is about strengthening our communities to improve quality of life and resilience.

When we published our social sustainability policy and action plan A City for All in 2018, we said we would review our progress after 5 years. Our 10-year plan for a socially just and resilient Sydney includes 4 strategic directions containing 59 actions for an inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged city.

Our communities have faced rapid and significant change since 2018, including the pandemic further exposing inequality, exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis.

This midpoint review of a city for all policy and action plan helps us understand our progress on actions between 2018/19 and 2022/23, along with providing insights on the wellbeing of our communities and their quality of life. It also presents us with an opportunity to refocus and align our actions with our community strategic plan, sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 continuing the vision, to help us better support our communities in the next 5 years.

During the Covid-19 pandemic we responded quickly by reallocating resources to areas of greatest need, and we found innovative solutions for events and programs that could no longer be held due to pandemic restrictions. Although pandemic restrictions have since been lifted, our ongoing efforts must address current challenges and continue to build a strong foundation to help our communities withstand future shocks and stresses in the years to come.

This review of our progress recognises the increasing importance of maintaining a focus on equity and social justice for our social sustainability. This includes ensuring our communities have access to essential services and amenities, can connect with our places and with each other, celebrate their diversity, and actively participate in and influence decisions that impact their lives.

In this review we haven't developed new actions, but we've considered the progress of existing actions. We've also identified priority communities and 15 areas of focus for the next 5 years. These 15 focus areas are based on evidence and data and will strengthen and build on the success of existing actions, programs and projects.

We cannot achieve the vision for a socially just and resilient Sydney alone. It requires all levels of government, business, service providers and communities working together. Our review has found that many of the challenges impacting the wellbeing and quality of life in our communities are shared across Greater Sydney and New South Wales. We acknowledge there is further work needed to tackle these issues and we're committed to ongoing collaboration with all stakeholders to address them.

Social sustainability is a framework that puts people at the heart of cities. Cities that make equity and social justice central to their growth are stronger and more resilient, creating opportunities for everyone to thrive. Building a strong, inclusive society is a shared responsibility for governments, business and the wider community. An equitable society is founded on the principle that all people, regardless of background, circumstances, income or status, should be able to fully participate and afford the essentials of daily life.

A socially sustainable community is also a resilient community.

Our communities

At the time of the 2021 Census, 211,632 people lived in the City of Sydney area.



34 years

Median age



20,147

People in low-income households¹, with largest age group 20–24



25%

Increase in number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (from 1.2% to 1.4% of total population)



63.5%

Local residents who work in the City of Sydney area



52%

Born overseas, 37.5% speak a language other than English at home



41%

Residents who live alone, with 97% living in medium and high-density housing



\$2,310

Median weekly household income



65%

Households renting



58%

Residents with a bachelor's degree or higher



7.3%

Households in social housing

¹ Low-income households are defined here as those in the bottom 20% of equivalised incomes (which accounts for household size and composition) in Australia.

Community wellbeing

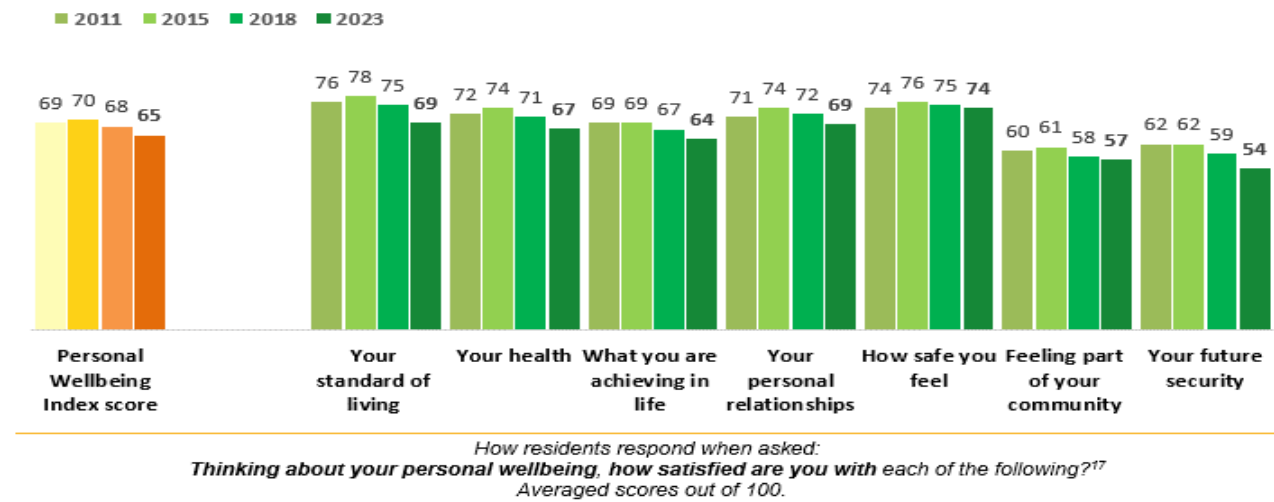
Our community wellbeing survey supports how we plan our programs and services.

Every 3 to 4 years we carry out a wellbeing survey. From this survey we can understand how our communities feel about their quality of life across 7 key domains as shown in figure 1 below. These combined domains make up our Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI), which measures subjective wellbeing from a possible score of 100.

The 2023 survey results show where our communities are experiencing ongoing stress and inequality. This is impacted by lack of affordable housing and increases in daily cost of living and everyday essentials.

Certain demographic groups had a lower PWI score when compared to the City of Sydney average (64.9). This includes public and community housing tenants (52.7), those living with a physical, sensory, cognitive or developmental disability (53.8), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (55.0), and pensioner or concession card holders (55.9).

In addition to the PWI, between 2018 and 2023, our wellbeing survey showed that social cohesion, as measured through questions on ‘trust’, ‘feeling part of the community’, and ‘being able to get help from neighbours remained relatively steady or improved slightly.



This midpoint review considered data from the 2023 wellbeing survey, 2021 census and other state and national data and research to understand national and statewide trends. Overall, we’ve seen a decrease in perceptions of wellbeing in our local area which is in line with findings across NSW and Australia. The most recent Scanlon report shows our city is trending higher than the national average in the areas of ‘social inclusion and justice’ which looks at perceptions of economic fairness and trust in government, along with ‘acceptance and rejection’ which looks at attitudes to immigrant diversity, support for minorities, and experiences of discrimination.²

² <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/social-cohesion-compass>

Key achievements

A City for All aims for an inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged city. These are the key highlights achieved under these 4 strategic directions in the first 5 years reported by financial year from 2018/19 to 2022/23 unless specifically noted.

<p style="text-align: center;">Inclusive city</p> <p>An inclusive city offers everyone an equal chance in life through social justice and opportunity, a guiding principle for city governance.</p> <p>Funded \$23.1m in social grants</p> <p>Assisted 1,052 people to exit homelessness</p> <p>Funded \$11.9m through our affordable and diverse housing fund and homelessness grants</p> <p>Welcomed 4,078,700 visits to our libraries</p> <p>Funded \$3.1m in food relief grants during the Covid-19 pandemic</p> <p>Recognised as an inclusive employer by the Diversity Council of Australia and accredited as a disability confident recruiter by the Australian Network on Disability.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Connected city</p> <p>A connected city is where diverse individuals and communities are socially connected and share values and aspirations for their city.</p> <p>Presented a total of 2,558 programs in our community centres</p> <p>Funded \$16.6m in creative and cultural grants</p> <p>Waived or discounted \$10.1m in fees and charges for City of Sydney venue hire</p> <p>Welcomed 259,908 attendees at 137 social inclusion and connection programs in 2023.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Liveable city</p> <p>A liveable city is one that supports high quality of life and wellbeing. It provides great places and spaces designed for people of all ages and abilities, enabling the social life of the city to flourish.</p> <p>Landscaped 45,950m² in parks, streets and city spaces</p> <p>Planted 4,386 trees and increased canopy cover in streets to 30.1% and parks to 35% in 2024</p> <p>Welcomed 6,932,750 visits to our leisure and aquatic centres</p> <p>Managed 217ha (3% increase) of open space</p> <p>Created 9,000m² more car-free space in the city centre by pedestrianising George Street south.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Engaged city</p> <p>An engaged city is one where people have opportunities to actively participate in shaping their city and community.</p> <p>In 2022/23 we spent \$1.42m with 69 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers</p> <p>More than 175 digital products are available on our open data hub</p> <p>Our organisation's gender pay gap is 5.3% in favour of women</p> <p>Winner of the UDIA NSW & MYBOS Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award</p> <p>Winner of the Local Government NSW Diversity and Inclusion Award for employee networks.</p>

Our progress

During the Covid-19 pandemic we accelerated several actions to provide support for our communities, including food relief. Since 2018 there have also been significant stressors and shocks locally and globally. Following the pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis and an extended period of high inflation resulted in significant financial hardship for many residents and local businesses. The worsening housing and rental affordability crisis has also placed significant strain on household budgets, outpacing wage growth for an extended period.

Sustainable development goals

Australia joined 193 countries in 2015 to commit to 17 United Nations sustainable development goals.³ These goals set an agenda to tackle climate change, inequality, sustainable business and innovation. This is our progress in supporting the 6 goals identified in our city for all policy and action plan.



We've invested significantly in new public and recreational spaces and promoting the city as a walkable city. We've provided grants to community organisations and free and low-cost community programs to improve health and wellbeing outcomes in our communities. We've supported new and improved public spaces through innovative laneways programs and pedestrianising George Street.



We're a leader in promoting equitable pay with a gender pay gap in favour of women, and policies to support employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with disability. We worked extensively with local businesses to encourage positive social impacts through our grants, programs and partnerships, including grant funding for social enterprise.



We're regularly an advocate of key issues around structural injustice and human rights challenges. This includes gender-based violence, the rights of people of diverse sexualities and genders, people with disability and people sleeping rough.



We monitor inequality in our own wellbeing indicators report. We've developed a city spaces curriculum that guides our programming, including starting out, healthy and well, living together, creative life, lifelong learning and resilient community.



We continue to look at how we can improve engagement, particularly with groups that are traditionally under-represented. We've introduced advisory panels, built relationships with community leaders, organisations and service providers, including the Lord Mayor social housing forums.

³ <https://unglobalcompact.org/sdgs/about>



Our partnerships include our sister cities, local business chambers, Better Buildings Partnership, Eastern Sydney Ageing and Disability Interagency, Interagency on Homelessness and the Milan Urban Policy Food Pact. We work with the NSW Government to increase access to open space and community facilities. We host and participate in Resilient Sydney, fostering connections across Sydney councils on issues of shared interest and projects that have a collective impact.

Progress of actions

We have made substantial progress against the 59 actions in A City for All from 2018/2019 to 2022/2023. The following section includes examples of initiatives and programs that have progressed under a city for all's four strategic directions. We will continue to deliver against these to 2028. A more detailed list with detail on the progress of each action is provided under the final section of the document.

1. An inclusive city: social justice and opportunity

Inclusive growth and opportunities

We're an advocate of addressing inequality through public policy in social services and social housing delivery. This includes supporting the rights of social and affordable housing tenants and renters with community education and awareness campaigns, submissions to the NSW Government and grant funding to community groups that support social and affordable housing residents and renters.

We've also worked extensively with local businesses to create positive social impacts through programming and grant funding. Our efforts include specific grants and support that target women in business, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises, and social enterprises.

1,052 people assisted to exit homelessness
1.9 million attendances at City Spaces
\$11.9m affordable and diverse housing fund and homelessness grants

Diverse housing types and tenures

We released our homelessness action plan in 2019 to reduce homelessness and its impacts by working closely with community members, services and other agencies. Since 2018, we've funded programs that have assisted 1,052 people to exit homelessness and prevented more than 500 people from becoming homeless.

We also continue to campaign for the retention and increase of social housing and directly support more affordable housing in the local area through our developer contributions and partnerships.

Between 2018 and 2023, our affordable and diverse housing fund provided \$5,705,000 million towards increasing affordable and diverse housing in the local area. During this time,

Between July 2018 and June 2023, we also approved over \$8.6 million in cash and value-in-kind funding for 104 projects where people experiencing homelessness were the primary or secondary community member beneficiaries.



William Street, Darlinghurst. Creative live and workspaces tenant Billy. Photo by Rob Hookey/City of Sydney

William Street, Darlinghurst. Creative

CASE STUDY: Supporting people sleeping rough during the pandemic

People experiencing homelessness were supported with unprecedented direct action and advocacy from all levels of government and community organisations, such as:

- Fast tracked initiatives to focus on people sleeping rough, social housing tenants, those experiencing food insecurity, international students, non-residents and temporary visa holders.
- A coordinated, consistent and targeted response with sector partners including the Department of Communities and Justice, Homelessness NSW, NSW Health, St Vincent's Health Network and specialist homelessness services including Aboriginal organisations, voluntary services and the End Street Sleeping Collaboration.
- The Sydney Rough Sleeping Covid-19 Taskforce set up in the first month of the pandemic.
- The NSW Government committing \$14.32 million in further funding for temporary accommodation.
- 300 more rooms in 30 new properties across metropolitan Sydney to accommodate people experiencing street homelessness.
- Our public space liaison officers working 7 days a week with people experiencing homelessness providing up to date health information, along with information about available services and temporary accommodation.

Affordable programs and facilities

We've strengthened social connections with our affordable and free services, programs and initiatives offered through our community centres, libraries and public spaces. We have provided free Wi-Fi services within our community centres and all venues for hire.

We also provided substantial financial support to our communities through our grants and sponsorship program. Between 2018/19 and 2022/23, \$23.1 million in social grants and \$9.9 million in fee waivers or discounted fees were approved for venue hire by organisations and projects that contributes towards social good benefitting our area's residents, workers, or visitors.

Pets are vital members of our communities, enhancing connection and wellbeing for their owners and families. We advocate for pets in rental properties and on public transport, and we proudly welcome dogs and their owners to parks through the city.

Each year, we host Pet Days for concession card owners and their pets to access free vet services in partnership with RSPCA NSW, Cat Protection Society of NSW, Counterpoint Community

Services, and the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Advisory Board. The events in 2022 and 2023 attracted more than 750 residents and 440 companion animals.

More recently, we expanded access to subsidised veterinary services for people on low-incomes and experiencing financial hardship, who can now access life-saving care for their animals in the local area through the animals in Need fund providing \$150,000 towards veterinary services at the University of Sydney over 3 years.

Strong empowered communities

We've empowered communities through our volunteer programs, community spaces, and programs that bring people together and encourages them to be involved in our local area.

Our volunteer programs include Sydney City Farm, Sydney ambassadors, the international student leadership and ambassador program, Sydney New Year's Eve and meals on wheels. We support volunteer youth leadership through our youth civic participation program.

We provided support for our 23 community gardens, and programming across our community centres, libraries and recreation centres, along with a range of low and no-cost community programs and community development activities which provide opportunities for social connection, learning and wellbeing.

Our library network provides free access to computers and the internet, and multiple digital education programs.

CASE STUDY: Auslan Slam

Our first Auslan Slam performance in 2019 featured 4 high profile Auslan performance artists and 5 audience members who participated in the 'open hands' section of the night.

As part of the event the host delivered a Deaf acknowledgement that recognises the contributions of the deaf community towards their culture, language, and identities. A total of 94 people attended and from those surveyed after the event, 95% said they agreed or strongly agreed that it inspired their own creativity, and 100% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcomed and included.

2: A connected city: diverse, cohesive communities

Supportive social networks and sense of belonging

We design our city to support people to connect to each other and place. This includes our public spaces, walkable streets, and programs like the Eora Journey.

Our community centres provide innovative programs fostering social networks and a sense of belonging. These include lunch with friends at Cliff Noble Community Centre (Alexandria), monthly community barbecues in Glebe, an Aboriginal men's cooking program and hip-hop classes at Redfern Community Centre, and storytime at Pyrmont community centre.

\$16.6m approved cultural grants

\$10.1m waivers / discounted venue hire

4,078,700 attendances at our libraries

Harmony and social cohesion

We work in collaboration with state government agencies, residents and local organisations to coordinate community events that aim to promote social cohesion, connect residents to services, and increase community safety. This included:

- 6 Good Neighbourhood events attended by 1,850 residents in 2018
- 6 Coffee with a Cop morning teas with the local police area commands attended by 408 residents in 2019
- 12 Lord Mayor social housing forums each year to provide updates and engage with social housing residents, with NSW Police, Department of Communities and Justice, and Land and Housing Corporation.
- Summer on the Green in partnership with Counterpoint Community Services attracts more than 500 Waterloo residents each year.

Our initiatives to raise awareness and support of people of diverse sexualities and genders in the community included silver sessions, drag story time, wear it purple and transgender day of visibility events and the Mardi Gras festival. In 2022, we began running free trans and gender diverse swim events at Cook and Phillip Park pool, providing up to 500 people with a safe and inclusive opportunity for swimming, sport, food, and fun and music. We also host rainbow family events in our libraries and extensive program of activities during pride month.



We produced programs that challenge racism, and build racial literacy, and hosted events that welcome and connect new arrivals to the city including skilled migrants, refugees, people seeking asylum and international students.

We developed our fifth inclusion (disability) action plan 2021–2025 in consultation with people with disability, our inclusion (disability) advisory panel, people with lived experience of mental health and/or chronic conditions, carers, and advocacy and disability service providers.

Transgender and gender diverse open day at Cook and Philip pool..
Photos by Damian Shaw / City of Sydney

Vibrant and creative life

We support cultural and creative programs and initiatives that enhance the quality and identity of local neighbourhoods, build trust, and support connection to place. Sydney Streets started as a trial program in 2021 after the second prolonged Covid-19 lockdown. It has evolved into ongoing community focused celebrations for local businesses and communities.

To support an activated city day and night, between 2018/19 and 2022/23 we funded 791 activation projects with a value of \$49m through our grant programs. This included \$2.61m through commercial creative and business events sponsorship.

We provided 127 projects with a value of \$12.77 million through the community services grants. We continued to substantially support the creative sector with \$16.6 million in cultural grants and \$10.1 million in fee waivers or discounted fees and charges for venue hire.

A broad range of creative participation opportunities were provided online, across our libraries and at Pine Street Creative Arts Centre, Ultimo Community Centre, and the makerspace at Darling Square Library.

These programs provided opportunities for hands on skills-based learning in emerging technologies and artforms, painting, drawing, and ceramics. We also produced 8 exhibitions at Customs House that explored our histories, cultures and identity.

Key to our diverse and liveable city are spaces for culture. The 2020 publication making space for culture in Sydney (cultural infrastructure strategy) identified the need to make space for culture by revitalising precincts and setting up a creative land trust. This is now being further investigated under the recently released draft Cultural Strategy.

We contribute to bringing stories and creativity to the public domain. The *bara* artwork by Judy Watson was completed in 2022 as part of the Eora Journey program. The artwork and launch event were developed and co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This project supports welcoming and inclusive places within our public domain.



bara by Judy Watson. Photo: Chris Southwood/ City of Sydney

3. A liveable city: quality places and spaces

People focussed urban design and planning

Public spaces are at the heart of our communities. We support spaces for people to connect through our network of 348 iconic, neighbourhood and pocket parks including Sydney Park and Hyde Park. We initiated the small parks upgrade program and innovative laneway revitalisation program.⁴

We provided new public open spaces, including realising the pedestrianisation of George Street, and new public spaces in Glebe and Annandale (The Crescent lands) and Green Square.

4,386 trees planted

Managed 348 parks spanning 217ha

15km new separated cycleways

37,678m² public domain improvements

Quality natural environment

Our strategy for greening Sydney released in 2021 recognises the importance of greening for all. The city's green spaces need to accommodate a wide range of uses to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Our green space network caters for active sports and passive play and provides contemplative places for people and their companion animals, and for wildlife. We also work closely with Landcare and more than 700 community volunteers to support the use of native plants across our local government area.



George Street – space for people and public transport. Photo: Mark Metcalfe/ City of Sydney

⁴ <https://news.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/articles/breathing-new-life-into-the-citys-laneways>

Accessible places and spaces

We're transforming our streets and public spaces to make them safer and more inviting for everyone, especially for people walking and riding bikes.

Our inclusive and accessible public domain policy and guidelines ensure we continue to design, build and maintain public spaces that are inclusive and accessible for all. We've published an online accessibility map that provides information on access features and barriers in the city.⁵

Through our infrastructure, we've enhanced safety and activated underused public spaces through creative and functional lighting, community gardens and public art.

Quality natural environment and climate

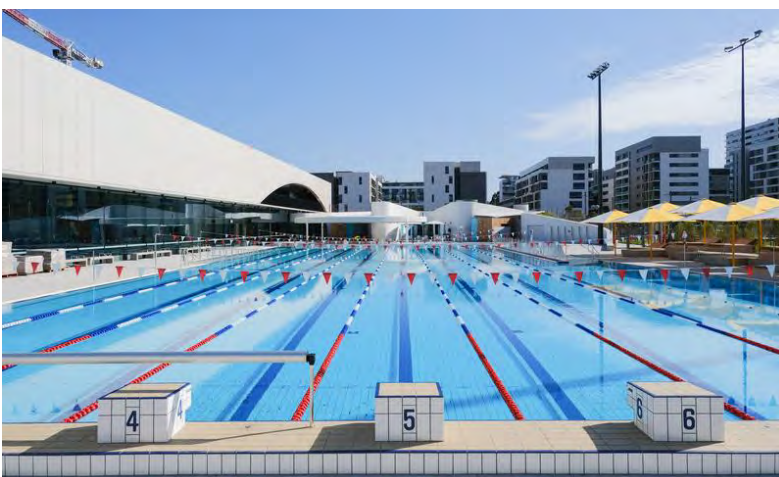
A green city is key to liveability and has many physical and mental health benefits. Our local area's overall tree canopy cover increased to 20.9% when measured from its original baseline of 15.5% in 2008. Our extensive work in this area is captured through our urban forest strategy, street tree master plans, and tree management and donation policy.

These efforts and more through our resilience and environment strategies help reduce urban heat offering numerous physical and mental health benefits.

Healthy active living and safe and secure communities

We work to strengthen social impact and community outcomes in urban renewal projects through active advocacy and collaboration with government and private sector partners. A recent example is the Waterloo South redevelopment, where our efforts with the state government led to key design improvements, creating a master plan that is more accessible, inclusive, and sustainable for all.

We also directly delivered community infrastructure for our communities, including the new Green Square and Darling Square libraries, Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre, and Perry Park Recreation Centre. Our new libraries provide more programs, study space, and meeting rooms for individuals or small groups.



Gunyama Park Aquatic Centre, Green Square. Photo: Chris Southwood/ City of Sydney

⁵ <https://cityofsydney.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ca717c4e82774e189c3a60215b67f230>

4. An engaged city: good governance and active participation.

We collected and analysed data, and conducted research, to inform how our programs and services are provided. We also share information publicly through our open data hub and annual reports, council meeting papers and the 2024 community wellbeing indicators report.

We provided resources to support the community on how they can have a voice in council decisions and provide materials in accessible formats, including easy read versions of grants and sponsorship guides. We continue to provide real-time information on public consultations through digital screens in our libraries and community centres.

Our engagement is designed specifically to suit each project and the diverse communities in our local area. We encourage broad participation by providing different opportunities to engage with our projects, including online surveys and pop-up consultations in parks and public spaces. Our community engagement strategy identifies our various communities including those who work and study in the area as 'communities of place', 'communities of interest' or 'communities of the future'. We design each consultation to reach relevant communities.

Our guide to council decision-making on our website explains how we make decisions and how community members can get involved. This guide was developed with the inclusion (disability) advisory panel. Our community engagement strategy is also available in easy read.

We hold meetings and workshops in libraries and community centres, which are planned out of hours and/or on weekends to best reach our communities. Recent examples include our community visions for Redfern, Camperdown and Haymarket, our resilience strategy and the Pyrmont peninsula strategic review.

We've introduced several new advisory panels and renewed efforts to reach under-represented groups including young people through our emerging civic leader's program, which engaged 51 young people aged 18 to 24. This includes existing initiatives and programs such as our youth interagency and youth week. These programs and initiatives have empowered and built the capacity of young people to have a voice and influence change.

67 Projects in 2022/23 engaged our communities to have their say

175 open data products on our website



Waterloo redevelopment public meeting. Photo: Katherine Griffiths/ City of Sydney

Changing context

Factors that impact the quality of life of our communities continue to evolve. Since a city for all was released in 2018, new social trends have emerged, while others have improved or worsened. The following trends have been identified through our community wellbeing indicators Report 2024 and additional research and data. Some of the key findings from our 2023 wellbeing survey are highlighted through each section.

If we're to achieve an equitable and just city for all, it's evident there is more work to do. This includes the need to continue to collaborate across all levels of government, non-government and business sectors.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outcomes

Sydney is on Aboriginal land, the land of the Gadigal. We acknowledge the thousands of generations before us who lived here in a sustainable and harmonious way.

We acknowledge that colonisation has had a devastating, generational and ongoing impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The 2023 wellbeing survey found that compared to the overall City of Sydney results, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents had a higher rate of feeling part of their community and participating in civic engagement activities, including attending public meetings and volunteering. They also have higher levels of participation in cultural activities.

But overall, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are disproportionately impacted by discrimination, access to housing that is affordable to rent or buy, and financial and food insecurity. They're also less likely to believe they have influence over decisions that impact their life and have lower perceptions of safety.

“For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, wellbeing is a broader concept than western understanding and depends on the broader community’s collective wellbeing, and ‘involves harmony in social relationships, in spiritual relationships and in the fundamental relationship with the land and other aspects of physical environment’.”⁶

Since 2020, we've implemented our stretch reconciliation action plan, which has furthered our progress in reconciliation around relationships, respect and opportunities. It has also increased our awareness of what it means to be a culturally proficient organisation. In 2022 we aligned relevant closing the gap priority areas and targets against the strategic directions of our community strategic plan. These are reported through our stretch reconciliation action plan annual report, state of our city 2024 report on implementation of our community strategic plan and the annual report.

70% volunteered in the past year
(city average, 40%)

52% satisfied with their health

43% feel enough opportunities to
have a say on issues important to them

⁶ <https://www.andi.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/NSW-2022-Wellbeing-Budget-Foundation-Paper-Foundation-paper.pdf>

We've set up a series of projects to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and communities, ensuring this fundamental part of our global city is celebrated by everyone through the Eora journey program. This included the launch in 2022 of *bara*, a major new permanent artwork by Aboriginal artist Judy Watson to celebrate traditional custodians of Gadigal Country.

In 2022, we began the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collaboration fund, which is open for applications all year. It supports a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector to deliver projects that meet the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To increase understanding and awareness of the history, culture and ongoing experience of Australian South Sea Islanders within our community, in 2022 we flew the Australian South Sea Islander flag at Sydney Town Hall on South Sea Islander Recognition Day, which has now become an annual event.

In June 2023, we launched the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strategy. The strategy recognises that our work to increase employment outcomes must be Aboriginal led and informed if it is to be successful. A dedicated Workforce Advisor – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Inclusion has been employed to implement the Strategy.

In 2024, we opened 119 Redfern Street, a local Aboriginal knowledge and culture centre and a major project of the Eora Journey. This is a space for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to gather, participate in activities and events and access services. We'll continue to work with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to help co-design and coordinate programs and activities in this space.

There is more work to do for all levels of government and the community to ensure the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are elevated and in a way that supports self-determination and cultural practice.



Yabun festival in Victoria Park celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Photo: Joseph Mayers/ City of Sydney

Social connection

Across Australia, a lack of connection, loneliness and social isolation are of increasing concern, particularly for young people, people who are unemployed and people with disability.

We know that people with a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood and social connection are less likely to feel isolated, more likely to be happy and trust other people. The current cost of living and housing crisis is negatively impacting the ability of our communities to connect, often with detrimental impacts on people's physical and mental health, which is reflected at the national and NSW levels.

Our local community is uniquely young and diverse. Our community has many renters, a large percentage of people who do not speak English at home, more than a third living alone, a high proportion of medium and high-density dwellings, and a high turnover of residents every 5 years. These pose unique challenges for social connection.

Our 2023 wellbeing survey found 61% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they identify strongly with their local area. But there is room for improvement when it comes to how respondents feel about social connection and belonging. This was seen from how around half of respondents saying they feel part of their community (46%) and that they can definitely or sometimes get help from their neighbours if needed (53%). But in turn, the vast majority (95%) of respondents say they will definitely or sometimes help their neighbours, which indicates our local area has been resilient given the challenges of the past five years and a strong foundation for community connection.

The survey also found that while 89% of respondents appreciate cultural diversity, too many people (45%) say they have faced discrimination in the past 12 months. This is higher for certain communities including people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people of diverse sexualities and genders, women, and people with disability. For example, almost a third (32.5%) of cultural and linguistically diverse respondents to our wellbeing survey say they have experienced racism, compared to the City of Sydney average of 20.1%.

There are also important considerations of intersectionality – for example, people of diverse sexualities and genders also indicated that they are more likely to experience homophobia, sexism, and ableism compared to the City average.

72% agree that most people can be trusted

72% are willing to help neighbours

53% feel they can get help from neighbours

47% see neighbours not at all, or are unsure

38% rate mental health as very good to excellent



Green Square Markets. Photo: by Anna Kucera / City of Sydney.

To increase social connection among diverse communities, we provide services and programs aimed at building social bonds, trust and fostering a sense of belonging. These include community-centred programs designed to engage a broad spectrum of individuals, initiatives tailored for those susceptible to or experiencing social isolation, projects that harness connection in neighbourhoods, programs that challenge racism and build racial literacy, and opportunities to promote intergenerational connections across age demographics. We also offer volunteer opportunities and support volunteer organisations through our financial and accommodation grants.

Our grants and sponsorship programs deliver outcomes for social, economic, environmental and cultural policies endorsed by the City of Sydney council. The grants system allows communities to put proposals to the Council seeking support for programs and projects that deliver benefits to the community, such as support for people experiencing homelessness, youth programs and festivals and events.

Proposals put to council through the grants and sponsorship programs are assessed against criteria that include benefit to community, capacity to deliver, and whether the projects support outcomes within Council policies (social, economic, environmental and/or cultural values) that have been developed with local community.

We create connection through the design of our network of walkable streets and public open spaces. Our extensive network also creates free, inclusive and welcoming spaces for people to connect. Our libraries and community centres provide direct and indirect wellbeing benefits free of charge or at low cost. Our libraries are well appreciated by our communities with 71% of respondents satisfied with access, and 88% satisfied with these vital community assets.

We provide a range of cultural spaces and produce events that are inclusive, welcoming and support community connection, from Sydney New Year's Eve to our local Sydney Streets program.

While the programs and spaces we provide are achieving their intended outcomes, the nature of the challenges we're trying to address are complex, and systems-level change at multiple levels of government is often required. This means we often see a positive shift in program level outcomes but not necessarily population level outcomes.

We also support the community to engage in many projects, from building and upgrading parks, to specific action plans and strategies. The proportion of residents participating in community engagement has continued to be high at 58% in the 2023 wellbeing survey. But the proportion of respondents participating in decision making and volunteering has decreased, which may reflect cost-of-living pressures.

Ongoing collective effort is needed across all levels of government and the community for spaces and programs that bring a diverse community together and builds connection.

We will continue to demonstrate leadership and advocacy on human rights and the inclusion of historically marginalised groups, alongside our demonstration to equity through our role as an employer.



Spaces for reading and studying at Kings Cross Library. Photo: Abril Felman/City of Sydney

Cost of living

The rising cost of living, alongside the impacts of the pandemic, have drawn attention to existing economic inequalities in our communities. Income inequality declined temporarily in the first year of the pandemic, which likely reflects government subsidies through JobKeeper and coronavirus supplement payments. But once these were removed, inequality has increased in following studies.⁷

19% feel financially insecure

72% feel most people can be trusted

Those most affected include people relying on uncertain incomes, those who are unemployed, or have ill-health, disability, or caring responsibilities. People receiving Jobseeker and parenting payments, and reliant on age and disability pensions are more likely to be in the lowest 10% income group.⁸

We have a range of initiatives to support the community with cost of living, including free and low-cost programs available through our extensive network of community centres and libraries. In 2022, we introduced fee waivers for eligible community groups using our venues, which will continue until 2029. Acknowledging the cost-of-living challenges, we also provide up to 100% rebate on rates to eligible pensioners.⁹

Our community centres provide free Wi-Fi and public computers and offer free or low-cost programs to support people of all ages to learn new skills, improve health and wellbeing, have fun, and make and strengthen social connections. Our Access Card provides low-cost entry to any City

⁷ https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/inequality_in_australia_2023_overview/

⁸ <https://povertyandinequality.acoss.org.au/inequality/>

⁹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/rates/apply-pensioner-rebate-rates>

of our aquatic and fitness centres to residents who have a pension, receive government income support, are holders of Commonwealth health and concession cards, or are refugees or asylum seekers.¹⁰

We provide discounted early childhood education and care fees. Families who are on or are seeking a refugee or humanitarian visa will be supported with up to 100% subsidy for their enrolment in the service. Our fee relief program reduces the cost of early childhood education and care services by up to 95% for priority families not eligible for additional childcare subsidies provided by the Australian Government.

We also support a reduction in energy costs. We continue to advocate to State and Federal Government and the Australian Energy regulator to review embedded networks so as to require 100% renewable energy and ensure cost savings are shared equitably among all residents in those buildings.

A key focus of our resilience strategy is to advocate for climate-proof social, affordable and rental housing including improved building codes to ensure new homes are water and energy efficient and for minimum energy performance standards.¹¹

Also, our emphasis on quality public open space and a walkable city supports wellbeing and day to day connections between our diverse community. Our work on cycling infrastructure and riding confidence programs are low-cost options for people to access work and their daily needs.

We also responded quickly during the pandemic to provide more equitable access to the essentials for safe and comfortable daily life for all residents. We also address the rising inequality within our communities by campaigning for and supporting access to essential services for all. This includes housing, food, community services and digital resources.¹²

The cost of living continues to impact people's ability to access adequate housing, food and daily services, their health and wellbeing and the digital divide explored in the following sections.



Free vet checks at the City of Sydney Pet Day at Waterloo Green. Photo: Damian Shaw/ City of Sydney

¹⁰ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/facility-bookings-outdoor-events/apply-for-access-card>

¹¹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/resilience-strategy>

¹² <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/recovery-plan#:~:text=The%20plan%20supports%20economic%20and,support%20where%20it's%20needed%20most.>

Housing affordability

Sydney remains Australia's least affordable city with a third of renters in Greater Sydney in rental stress. The high cost of housing is an important economic and social issue.¹³

13% satisfied with housing they can afford to buy

19% satisfied with housing they can afford to rent

Housing stress occurs when housing payments are more than 30% of a household's income. Our community indicators report found households in housing stress and on a low income increased from 19% in 2011 to 22% in 2021¹⁴. Between 2006 and 2023, the median weekly rent on units (bedsitters to 4+ bedrooms) increased 99% from \$400 to \$795¹⁵.

Housing growth continues in the city, with 56,000 more dwellings to be built by 2036. This includes the NSW Government's short-term target of 18,900 dwellings by 2029. We aim to increase the supply of affordable and diverse housing across our local area to provide greater opportunity for people to access appropriate housing.

While the number of social and affordable rental housing is increasing, this is not keeping pace with demand. By 2036 our target across the local area is for 7.5% of all private dwellings to be social housing and 7.5% to be affordable housing. Despite this, affordable housing stock is tracking below target, representing 1.19 % of all private dwellings as of 30 June 2023. Our ambitious targets always envisaged Local, State and Federal governments all doing their bit, as well as the development industry.

In 2020 we published our local housing strategy housing for all, to push for more affordable and social housing. As of 30 June 2024, the City has 1,447 built affordable and diverse housing units in the local area, 556 dwellings in the development pipeline, and a further 1,385 that are in the pre-application stage.

Since 2011, we've provided \$31.6 million discounted land, property sales and leases to community housing providers to increase social and affordable housing. . This included a grant for an Aboriginal engagement officer to support affordable housing outcomes for community at St George's Community Housing's development of 11 Gibbons Street, Redfern. We've set up preferential zoning for affordable rental housing and planning controls to encourage affordable housing in particular locations across the local area.

In 2022/23 we supported affordable housing in Glebe. Around \$7.8 million from our employment lands affordable housing levy was allocated to Bridge Housing through a tender process with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.



We continue to advocate the NSW Government to increase social and affordable housing across the local area. For example, we were successful in getting the former government to approve improved urban domain and built form at Waterloo. We were also successful in having the current government agree to provide 50% private /50% social and affordable housing (including a minimum 15% housing target for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) in the area, up from the previous arrangement of 70% private /30% social and affordable housing.

Butterscotch Park and apartments in Rosebery. Photo: Katherine Griffiths/ City of Sydney

¹³ <https://sydney.org.au/policy-library/chronically-unaffordable-housing>

¹⁴ Community Wellbeing Indicators Report, 2024

¹⁵ Community Wellbeing Indicator Report, 2024

Homelessness

People experiencing homelessness, and those at risk of homelessness, are among Australia's most socially and economically disadvantaged. Across Australia the decrease in affordable housing for people on lower incomes has impacted the number of individuals who have experienced homelessness.

The City of Sydney's dedicated homelessness unit was one of the first of its kind at a local government level in Australia. Each year we invest more than \$2.4 million to address homelessness and its impacts.¹⁶ We're an advocate of a housing first approach that supports people experiencing homelessness with permanent housing as quickly as possible – and then providing 'wrap around' and support services as needed.

Since 2018 we've funded programs that have assisted 1,052 people to exit homelessness. This approach has included rapid response, early intervention and preventative models, and working with government and non-government organisations to advocate, provide referrals and support for people sleeping in public spaces.

We also provide direct funding to services, including specialist homelessness services to undertake assertive outreach, post-crisis support, prevention and intensive casework for young people, and to provide culturally appropriate support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We undertake an annual street count, tracking the number of people sleeping rough in the city, and occupied beds in temporary shelters and hostels. Between February 2019 and February 2023, the number of people sleeping rough in our city decreased from 373 to 277 (down 26%). However, between February 2022 to February 2023 people sleeping rough in our city increased by 23% to 277.¹⁷

Preventing and responding to homelessness remains a key challenge for all levels of government. We've learnt that temporary interventions have temporary impacts and increased ongoing state and federal funding is needed.



Street Count August 2016. Photo: Adam Hollingworth/ City of Sydney

¹⁶ 2024, Australian council on Homelessness, Volume 37 – Issue 7, Parity Magazine

¹⁷ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/public-health-safety-programs/street-counts> (February counts 2019, 2022, 2023)

Sustainable access to nutritious food

The cost of food has increased substantially, and the results of our 2023 wellbeing survey found that 1 in 10 residents within our communities had run out of food and were not able to buy more in the past year.

11% ran out of food and can't afford more

33% had to limit spending on food and groceries

At the same time, a third (33%) of residents say they have unwillingly had to limit spending on food and groceries in the past 12 months. Most impacted are younger respondents aged 16–29 (43%), respondents living with disability and/or mental health condition (45%), students (49%), renters (43%) and public or community housing tenants (55%).¹⁸

The Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 found that more Australians than ever (36%) experienced moderate to severe food insecurity. This results in a reduction of food quality and variety, and also impacts on eating patterns¹⁹. Access to nutritious and affordable food is also impacted by a broader system of production, supply, distribution alongside the skills needed to prepare food.

With the important connections between culture and food, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's voices must be included, as well as initiatives that support self-determination. In addition, recognising and valuing the unique needs and contributions of our multicultural communities is essential to ensuring an inclusive, equitable and sustainable access to nutritious food for all.

We've carried out activities across the food system, ranging from growing food and urban agriculture to emergency food relief grants, and meals on wheels services. We've proactively led research, programs, and initiatives to address food security. This included grants with leading tertiary institutions, community education and food growing at Sydney city farm, and support for our local network of community gardens. We continue to provide the meals on wheels service, which delivers more than 40,000 meals each year.

During the pandemic, we provided more than \$3.13 million in direct funding and donations to emergency food relief providers including OzHarvest, FoodBank and Second Bite. We worked closely with government and community partners to coordinate the unprecedented emergency food relief response. This involved partnerships and grant funding, including supporting culturally appropriate response by local Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and initiatives supporting our diverse communities such as Asian food hampers delivery by Addison Road in partnership with Kylie Kwong.



The work undertaken during the pandemic led to us looking into options to financially support food relief organisations that provide access to affordable food. This resulted in the establishment of our food support grant, running from 2023 to 2026, with an annual budget of \$1.7 million.

Planting and gardening activities at Sydney City Farm. Photo: Renee Nowytarger/City of Sydney

¹⁸ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/research-reports/community-indicators-report>

¹⁹ https://reports.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023_Foodbank_Hunger_Report_IPSOS-Report.pdf

Food insecurity is increasing across Australia, and while food relief continues to be an essential response, a wider systems approach is needed to support sustainable impact that includes production, distribution, diets and nutrition, and food waste.

As a signatory of the Milan urban food policy pact where 290 cities across the world committed to developing sustainable food systems, we need to continue our advocacy, partnerships and policy frameworks to ensure focused attention and collaboration.²⁰ This includes continuing work to improve food security locally in the context of a broader ‘food systems’ lens and improve mapping and coordination of our own food-related activities. This will ensure a strategic and effective program that is tailored to community needs and emerging priorities and will allow effective reporting of activities.

Access and confidence in a changing digital world



Large digital screen readers at Waterloo Library. Photo: Abril Felman/City of Sydney

53% face barriers to access, and of these residents:

62% due to infrastructure and connection issues

45% due to cost of hardware and plans

31% due to data security and privacy concerns

“Technological advances are ‘merging the physical, digital and biological worlds in ways that create both huge promise and potential peril’.”

– World Economic Forum

Our 2023 wellbeing survey found that while there is generally high confidence in using the internet, confidence reduces when it comes to online safety and creating content. This was particularly the case with people aged over 70 years, public and community housing tenants, pension and concession card holders and people who don’t speak English at home.

53% of respondents told us they experienced barriers that limit their internet use. For residents who do face barriers, the most common reason given was infrastructure and connection issues (62%), followed by (42%) due to price of internet/mobile plans, and cost of devices (17%).²¹

The rate of digital change is also impacting our communities, with artificial intelligence (AI) tools emerging as a major disruptor. The democratisation of these tools brings new opportunities but also raise concerns around the representation and verity of information, personal privacy and

²⁰ <https://www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/the-milan-pact/>

²¹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/research-reports/community-indicators-report>

security, and having the skills and ability to navigate this technology. This is impacting young people, who are also increasingly concerned about their privacy and representation online.

To counter digital exclusion, our libraries provide digital literacy programs tailored to our community that gives people access to affordable digital technology and equipment, education and training, and lifelong opportunities.

Since 2018, we've increased community access to equipment and public Wi-Fi across our libraries and community centres. We offer free wireless internet in our libraries and at Customs House and Town Hall House. Libraries and community centres offer public computers, and many buildings now have free Wi-Fi.

Technology is a great enabler however, rapid advances in technology risk worsening the digital divide in our communities, such as that between those who have access and opportunity and see the benefit of digital engagement, and those who do not. While we know that cost and connectivity remain barriers towards accessing the internet, there are concerns from both our older and younger community members around their ability to share in the benefits and opportunities technology offers.

Our health and perception of safety

Although life expectancy among residents has steadily increased, a different picture emerges when reviewing subjective perceptions of health. Our 2023 wellbeing survey shows that ratings of physical and mental health have declined in the past decade.

The social determinants of health are non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. These include income, education, food insecurity, housing, basic amenities, the environment, social inclusion and non-discrimination, and access to affordable health services.

Studies suggest that these determinants account for between 30–55% of health outcomes, and cities can play a key role in helping to address preventable health issues.²² For example, cities can provide environments that are walkable, green neighbourhoods with adequate public space, and free and low-cost preventative health programs.

While mental health services are primarily the responsibility of the state and federal Governments, we recognise that we have an important role to play through supporting local organisations that promote mental health and provide support to people living with mental health issues. We also advocate for improved healthcare services, and our community-based programs help people build social connections to create a sense of belonging and establish support networks.

A lack of physical activity is a risk factor for diseases such as cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes in Australia.²³ We support physical activity through our recreation spaces for organised activities such as sport, and through our network of public spaces. Our green, safe and walkable

27% of women feel unsafe walking along after dark compared to 10% of men

80% satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of parks and 49% with opportunities to participate in recreational activities

75% walk as one of their main modes of transport

²² <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/what-are-determinants-of-health>

²³ *ibid*

streets support more casual or incidental exercise. We also encourage the community to connect with places, neighbourhoods, and public spaces, with positive results for mental health.

Our 6 aquatic centres, many with fitness centres, alongside our indoor and outdoor courts and sports facilities offer a wide range of programs and bookable spaces. This includes Perry Park recreation centre which has 4 multipurpose indoor sports courts for competitions, programs or hire. Our network of community centres offers free and low-cost programs for our communities to support their health.



Try and e-bike event. Photo: Abril Felman/City of Sydney

Our 2023 wellbeing survey found that 84% of our residents were satisfied with access to parks and open space. Resident satisfaction with access to public sports and recreational facilities, such as pools and courts, has increased since 2018 (64%). More specifically, there has been a notable increase in satisfaction in Green Square, with satisfaction going up by 32%.²⁴

There is more work to do in supporting and providing opportunities for participation. Our 2023 wellbeing survey found a decline in respondents rating their physical health as excellent to very good from 51% in 2018 to 45% in 2023.

We support active transport, and our strategy and action plan, a city for walking includes the pathways to achieve this and its contribution to a more equitable city.

Our physical and mental health is supported by our green infrastructure. As part of our urban forest strategy, we're aiming to increase the quantity and quality of our canopy cover across streets, parks and properties.

In February 2024, the tree canopy cover had increased to 20.9% from 15.5% in 2018. Canopy cover in streets has significantly increased from a baseline of 21.5% in 2008 to 30.1% in 2024. Our parks have seen significant growth in tree canopy, from a baseline of 26.1% in 2008 to 35% in 2024, providing enhanced recreational spaces.

But achieving canopy equity, referring to the fair and equitable distribution of tree canopy cover across different neighbourhoods, is also important. Everyone should benefit from the numerous advantages that trees provide, regardless of their location or socio-economic status. We've prioritised providing canopy cover to areas with less canopy. Our urban forest strategy outlines our targets to increase the canopy of trees and maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits they can provide.²⁵

Our mobility and freedom to move around the city is impacted by our perception of safety and this differs across genders. Sydney is regularly ranked one of the safest cities in the world, and our 2023 wellbeing survey found people feeling safe while walking alone after dark, increased from 50% in 2011 to 63% in 2023.²⁶ But at the same time, gender differences exist, with 27% of women saying they feel 'unsafe' or 'very unsafe' walking alone near home after dark, whereas this is the case for 10% of men.

An important aspect of feeling safe is for people to feel welcome and respected for who they are. Our key considerations continue to be creating culturally safe and welcoming spaces for all, and

²⁴ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/research-reports/community-indicators-report>

²⁵ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/urban-forest-strategy>

²⁶ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/research-reports/community-indicators-report>

specifically providing a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Safety remains a priority, and we recognise that this is a complex area. We continue to act across the focus areas of safe streets and spaces, crime prevention and response, being ready and resilient, and being a safe global destination. We've also continued to work towards addressing domestic and family violence and sexual assault through our local coordination and advocacy efforts. We lead and support interagency networks to improve collaborative responses, fund specialist services, and promote gender equality and respectful and non-violent relationships to benefit the whole community.

No one organisation can solve complex safety issues, and we will continue to work with a range of partners to identify solutions and respond to issues with the community.



Resident walking in Ashmore precinct.
Photo: Katherine Griffiths/ City of Sydney

The next 5 years

Through our midpoint review of progress towards a socially just and equitable Sydney alongside the current context, we've been able to define priority communities, identify where we'll have a refreshed focus over the next 5 years, and have streamlined our measurement framework.

Priority communities

We've identified priority communities who may experience heightened inequality, and this builds on the priority communities identified in our Resilience Strategy 2023–2028. In this approach we also recognise the importance of intersectionality, where a person can identify as more than one of these priority communities. The following communities have been identified as needing continued focus in our engagement and social sustainability programs, and strategies in the coming years:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- people on low incomes
- people renting including social housing residents
- people experiencing homelessness
- people with disability
- people with lived experience of a mental health and/or chronic condition
- people over 65
- young people, and children under 5
- new immigrants, non-citizens and refugees
- people with English as second language
- people of diverse sexualities and genders
- women and girls.

We'll continue to enhance our place-based approach and collaborate with local communities to support a green, global and connected city. Our wellbeing survey results across the 10 villages have provided insights into specific challenges and opportunities in each area. We've seen increases in the PWI score and relatively stable results in the city centre and Green Square, which may reflect the importance of significant investment in infrastructure and place-based programs by us. For example, Green Square saw the addition of the Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre and Green Square Library, and programs to people in apartments during the pandemic.



Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre, 2017.
Photo: Katherine Griffiths/ City of Sydney

There are communities within our villages who hold a particular connection to a place because of its historical, social, or cultural significance. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Redfern; people of diverse sexualities and genders on Oxford Street; and the Chinese community in Haymarket. People can also strongly associate with the activities and events within certain areas, and this can apply to members of sporting, community gardening or cultural groups. This diversity of attachment to places in Sydney adds to the unique characteristics of our villages and neighbourhoods.

Refreshed focus for 2023–2028

We will continue to deliver on all actions outlined in A City for All to 2028. As a result of our midpoint review process, including the results of the wellbeing survey, broader social trends and understanding our progress, we will enhance our focus on 15 actions, building upon existing programs to strengthen our response to support the community.

These 15 actions are listed below under each strategic direction. These will enhance the current actions as written in A City for All. Our progress will be next updated through a consolidated close out report in 2028.

Inclusive direction – refreshed focus areas

1. **Increase supply of subsidised social, affordable rental and supported housing (Action 1.7):** We will develop a refreshed Housing for All strategy that supports opportunities to increase social and affordable housing across the local area and continues a housing first approach to homelessness.²⁷
2. **Provide affordable access to City community facilities, programs and services for people on all incomes (Action 1.10):** We will provide equitable and affordable access to our community spaces, and programs that support the community, including those on a low income, young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people with disability.²⁸
3. **Promote volunteering among local community members (1.14):** We will research the modern-day role of volunteering, including opportunities to increase social connection across and within communities in the local area.²⁹



Prince Alfred Park Tennis Courts. Photo: Katherine Griffiths/City of Sydney

4. **Reduce food insecurity (1.16):** We will support a sustainable food system approach that incorporates diverse cultural practices around food, including by and for people who are culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
5. **Increase digital literacy and inclusion (Action 1.17):** Improve digital access, literacy and inclusion in the community, including the impact of artificial intelligence and cyber security on service provision and we will advocate for improved and equitable digital access through precinct redevelopments.

Related transformative projects from Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision

- Eora Journey – Yananurala³⁰
- Building on housing for all³¹

²⁷ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategic-land-use-plans/local-housing-strategy>

²⁸ <https://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/>

²⁹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/volunteer-programs>

³⁰ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/cultural-support-funding/eora-journey-recognition-public-domain>

³¹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategic-land-use-plans/local-housing-strategy>

Connected direction – refreshed focus areas

6. **Strengthen social connectedness among our diverse community (2.1) and in social housing precincts (2.3):** Advocate for and provide initiatives for social connection, including support for social and affordable housing residents to access programs and services during urban renewal projects.
7. **Foster place-based connections among diverse communities (2.6):** With a focus on equitable, inclusive, safe, and welcoming public spaces, including the development of an updated inclusive and accessible public domain policy. This is strongly related to Action 2.10: To promote public spaces as shared spaces for all. We see open space and public domain that supports a connected City for a diverse community, including safety for women and girls and people of diverse sexualities and genders.
8. **Embed participatory placemaking approaches to urban renewal (Action 2.7):** Develop a placemaking approach for key precincts that responds to community need and supports a sense of belonging, attachment and community connection. This builds on the approaches developed for Oxford Street and Haymarket to support strategic decision making on public space, programming, collaboration and events.^{32 33}
9. **Deliver place-based cultural and creative initiatives that enhance local neighbourhoods (Action 2.13):** Support inclusive programs and an increase in space for affordable cultural programs, events and services that support a diversity of workers and audiences that reflect our communities. This includes increase space for local creative and cultural production.

³² <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/oxford-street-lgbtiqa-social-and-cultural-place-strategy>

³³ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/haymarket-chinatown-public-domain-plan>

Related transformative from Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision

- Making space for culture
- Reimagining our community assets

Liveable direction – refreshed focus areas

10. **Renew social infrastructure to meet changing community needs and aspirations (3.3):** Develop a principle based social impact framework to guide our work, that considers the quality of life and wellbeing of our communities. This is closely aligned with Action 3.2 to increase the positive impact of urban renewal and development.
11. **Enhance walking and cycling infrastructure to support active lifestyles (3.11):** A greener, more walkable city for all led by the walking strategy and action plan.³⁴ This will include projects related to crossings, street upgrades, road space reallocation, planting, and public domain enhancements along key walking routes.³⁵
12. **Deliver inclusive sport, recreation, health and wellbeing programs through community facilities (3.12):** Community infrastructure and public space supports growth, learning and social connection for young people. Continue to support opportunities for growth, learning and social connection within our communities and public spaces including spaces for connection including young people.

Related transformative from Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision

- Three linked city squares
- The green city – increasing city greening and green avenues (Broadway)
- City space improvement program

³⁵ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/improving-streets-public-spaces>

Engaged direction – refreshed focus areas

13. A socially responsible organisation:

Develop a holistic approach to being a socially responsible organisation committed to social justice and inclusion through our procurement, employment, workplace supports, engagement practices, accessible communication and collaboration. We want to promote this through our connections with local businesses, community organisations and grant recipients for broader collective social impact. This includes the actions listed below:

- Action 1.1 Lead by example as an employer committed to social justice and inclusion)
- Action 1.2 Collaborate with businesses to deliver positive local social impacts
- Action 3.8 Collaborate with local businesses to improve their accessibility to people of all ages and abilities
- Action 4.1 Increase open access to City data
- Action 4.2 Deliver Council information in a range of accessible formats
- Action 4.3 Facilitate broad community participation in City decision-making
- Action 4.8 Enable broad community participation in the civic life of the city
- Action 4.11 Collaborate with government and non-government organisations through interagency

- forums, partnership initiatives and collaborative pilot projects
- Action 4.12 Collaborate with government and non-government organisations on community resilience-building initiatives across the Sydney metropolitan area through the Resilient Sydney Strategy - both as a project lead and partner organisation.

14. Proactively engage with under-represented sectors of the community (Action 4.4):

Continue to enhance and expand our engagement techniques, processes and content to ensure we effectively connect with and represent our priority communities. This includes young people, renters, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people of diverse sexualities and genders.

15. Empower communities to have a say on issues that affect them (4.6):

In addition to our focus on priority communities through our actions we will centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices within our engagement activities and strategy development by developing a framework to support our engagement practices for new strategies in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel and the First Nations Leadership team.



Seniors' week comedy festival. Photo Abril Felman/City of Sydney

Measuring success

We've streamlined the measurement and evaluation framework to align and support our long-term plan **Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision.**

A City for All includes an evaluation framework with key performance measures and population level measures. As part of the midpoint review, we considered current reporting and available data. As a result, we've revised the evaluation framework into a more consistent and streamlined approach to monitoring progress, clearly outlining:

- **An overall outcome indicator** – using the Personal Wellbeing Index from our wellbeing survey for the community as a whole and for our priority communities.
- **A lead indicator** – for each strategic direction except an Engaged City, these are taken from the ten measures from our community strategic plan 2022–2026.
- **Performance measures** – from our annual report and reports on the progress of action plans on how much we're doing.
- **Outcome measures** – from participants in our programs to understand how the programs are achieving their intended outcomes.
- **Impact measures** – people's perception of their quality of life from our community wellbeing indicators report every 3 to 4 years.

This approach supports the development of our annual progress reports for A City for All. It will help refine and develop our services, programs and priorities for collaboration, advocacy and grants and captures measures that are purposeful and timely.



Sydney Lunar Streets. Photo: Chris Southwood/ City of Sydney

Inclusive city

Lead indicator

Private dwellings – 7.5% will be social housing and 7.5% will be affordable housing with this proportion maintained into the future.

Performance	Outcome	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of attendees at our libraries Number of attendees at community facilities Number of programs at community facilities (new) Funding amount in accommodation grants for rent concessions through social initiatives Funding amount for approved social grants Funding provided to social enterprises (grants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of participants reporting improved wellbeing Percentage of participants who report improved community connection and inclusion Percentage of participants who report increased confidence, skills and insights due to participation Percentage of participants who felt safe and welcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who self-reported mental health as excellent to very good Percentage of people who experience financial insecurity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of volunteers participating in our programs, services and initiatives (new) Number of volunteer programs we run 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who volunteered in the past 12 months once, twice or often
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding amount for food relief grants Number of community gardens and visitation to City Farm Number of Meals on Wheels services 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who experienced food insecurity at any point in the past year, such as running out of food and could not afford to buy more
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants in our digital literacy programs Number of digital programs we run 	As Above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of households facing barriers to internet access Percentage of people who report cost prevents or limits internet use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people prevented from becoming homeless through our brokerage program Number of people assisted to exit homelessness Funds (including value of space) invested for affordable and diverse housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people sleeping rough 	Percentage of low-income households in housing stress (mortgagees and renters)

Connected

Lead indicator

By 2050 community cohesion and social interaction will have increased. This is based on at least 75% of the local resident population feeling part of the community, agreeing most people can be trusted and believing that when needed, they can get help from their neighbours.

Performance	Outcome	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Square metres of cultural production space • Number of free cultural events and activations we produce or support • Funding amount in accommodation grants for rent concessions through cultural initiatives • Funding amount for cultural grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of participants reporting improved wellbeing • Percentage of participants who report improved community connection and inclusion • Percentage of participant's who report increased confidence, skills and insights due to participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of people who agree or strongly agree there are opportunities to participate in arts and culture • Percentage of people actively engaged in arts and cultural programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of placemaking programs and outcomes for example Haymarket, Oxford Street LGBTQIA+ Place Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of participants who report improved community connection and inclusion • Percentage of participants who felt safe and welcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of people who when needed can get help from neighbours • Percentage of people satisfied with feeling part of their community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of campaigns proactively supporting and promoting tolerance and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of participants who report greater respect for different people and cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of people who agree that most people can be trusted



Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade. Photo: by Katherine Griffiths/City of Sydney

Liveable

Lead indicators

By 2030 every resident will be within a walkable distance to what they need for daily life.

Performance	Outcome	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of attendees at leisure and aquatic centres (new) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of participants reporting improved wellbeing Percentage of participants who report improved inclusion and community connection and inclusion Percentage of participants who felt safe and welcome Percentage of people satisfied or very satisfied with opportunities for sporting or recreational activities in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who self-reported health as excellent to very good (physical and mental health)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Square metres of public domain amenity improvements Funds invested in public open space enhancement Number of hectares of parks and open space managed by us Square metres of new and renewed landscaping of parks, streets and our spaces to achieve greening targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people satisfied or very satisfied with access to parks and open space Percentage of people satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of parks and open space (data available from 2023) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds invested in new and renewed community facilities Square metres of new community facilities managed by us (new) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage increase in community satisfaction with access to community facilities and services (Libraries and future customer satisfaction survey) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Square metres of renewed footpaths Number of kilometres of cycling infrastructure (separated cycleways) across the local area 	<p>As above</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who walk as a mode of transport Percentage of people who felt safe or very safe walking alone near home in daylight and after dark

Engaged



Perry Park Recreation Centre. Photo: Katherine Griffiths /City of Sydney

Lead indicator

We will be a recognised leader and socially responsible organisation, achieving beyond best practice in our people and culture, procurement, digital services and community participation.

Performance	Outcome	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of documents published in accessible formats Percentage of documents translated into community languages Number of open data digital products on website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of participants reporting increased knowledge, skills, and confidence in civic education programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people with an opportunity to have a say on issues important to them
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of civic engagement activities Number of community engagement projects Number of people reached through Sydney Your Say online consultations by page visits 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people with an opportunity to have a say on issues important to them Satisfaction with democracy

Progress of actions

We've aligned A City for All's action plan with Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision to demonstrate its connection to our longer-term goals.

We have made progress in all of the 59 actions from A City for All between 2018/19 and 2022/23. We'll look at progress against all 59 actions from a social sustainability perspective in 2028 using the new measurement and evaluation framework. At this time, we will also take a deeper case study approach to our progress against the 15 refreshed actions identified

Our progress as a socially responsible organisation will be through our annual reporting across people and culture, finance and procurement.



King George V Recreation Centre. Photo: Chris Southwood /City of Sydney

Progress of actions across directions

Outcome objective	Action	Update
Inclusive city		
<p>Inclusive growth & opportunities</p> <p>1.1 Lead by example as an employer committed to social justice and inclusion.</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Commit to social justice through workplace diversity and inclusion policies and practices; support for workforce wellbeing, and providing apprenticeship, traineeship and broader employment opportunities for people who are disadvantaged.</p>	<p>Our people strategy 2022–2026 consolidated our approach for an inclusive, diverse and welcoming organisation. We actively addressed barriers faced by diverse candidates, strengthened disability and inclusion targets, and target recruitment of people with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>We introduced several new employee support networks in 2021 including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, City Pride, City Women, Disability, Diverse City, and Young Professionals. We offer mental health first aid training, flexible working, and supportive programs like our employee assistance program for employee wellbeing. Recognised achievements include becoming a Disability Confident Recruiter and joining the Include Ability Employer Network. We were also recognised as an inclusive employer by the Diversity Council of Australia. Awards include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministers’ Award for Women in Local Government – Employment Diversity. The Australian HR Award for Best Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Program. • Winner of the UDIA NSW & MYBOS Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Award. • Winner of the Local Government NSW Diversity and Inclusion Award for Employee Representation Groups (Employee Networks). • Finalist of the Local Government NSW People and Workplace Award for modern workplace flexibility initiative. • Finalist of the Local Government NSW Innovative Leadership Award for our purpose and values. <p>We lead in gender pay gap equality, with 6 consecutive years in favour of women, including a 2022 gap of 5.3% in favour of women. Our efforts also include monitoring and reporting on gender pay equity and introducing family-friendly policies. Employment of women has increased from 29% in 2005 to 42.7% in 2022.</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>1.2 Collaborate with businesses to deliver positive local social impacts</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Encourage and support businesses to deliver positive social impacts locally through their corporate responsibility agenda, including through their employment and procurement practices and collaborative initiatives with government, community groups, not-for-profit organisations, universities and social enterprises.</p>	<p>We've worked with the business community to create positive social impacts. This includes implementing our programs, providing grant funding for diverse social initiatives and supporting the social enterprise ecosystem through significant capacity building and funding. Our efforts include specific grants that target women in business, Indigenous enterprises and social enterprises. With one in 6 Australians living with disability, ensuring accessibility is embedded in business operations is not only inclusive but also enhances our operations. International Day of People with Disability 2023 included our partnership with Zero Barriers to host a free breakfast to promote access and inclusion with local businesses. These initiatives will be further integrated into our new economic development strategy and ongoing grants programs, promoting an inclusive economy.</p>
<p>1.3 Foster the growth of the local social enterprise sector</p>	<p>Encourage and enable the growth of the social enterprise sector locally through supporting networking and collaboration; sector specific research, monitoring and reporting; through the City of Sydney's procurement practices, and through raising awareness of the sector's potential to deliver economic and social benefits.</p>	<p>In 2019 we carried out a desktop literature review on 'Strengthening the social enterprise sector in Sydney', which informed internal action planning and programs from 2020 to 2023. In 2023, we hosted the Social Enterprise World Forum community hub. We also established a partnership with the Social Enterprise Council of NSW & ACT (SECNA), funding the growth of this peak body. We continue to support social enterprises through collaborating with industry associations like SECNA and Social Traders to enhance awareness, capacity and understanding of social procurement opportunities. These will be further integrated into our new economic development strategy and ongoing grants programs, promoting an inclusive and impactful economy.</p>
<p>1.4 Monitor socio-economic inequality to inform local responses</p>	<p>Research, monitor and publicly report on inequality in the local area and its impacts on society and the economy, to inform effective responses – both through direct action and collaboration with government and non-government organisations.</p>	<p>In 2019 we engaged the Sydney Policy Lab at the University of Sydney to develop the Sydney Inequality Indicators framework. This report defines inequality in Sydney, proposed fit-for-purpose equality indicators and applies them to generate initial baseline data, presenting an insight into inequality in the city. This report is available on our website and helps inform how we plan and provide programs and services for our communities and forms a basis for our community wellbeing indicators report. We also continue to advocate to other levels of government, the private and not-for-profit sectors to address inequality through public policy in social service and housing delivery.</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
1.5 Prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping	Lead and participate in collaborative and innovative approaches to address homelessness and rough-sleeping, including rapid response models, early intervention and preventative one-stop-shop models, and through working with other government and non-government organisations to advocate, provide advice and referrals, and support for people sleeping rough in the public domain.	<p>In 2019 we released our homelessness action plan to reduce homelessness in the city by collaborating with the community, service providers and agencies. Since 2008 we've carried out street counts every year to track the number of people sleeping rough and count occupied beds in shelters and hostels. We also coordinate the Woolloomooloo Integrated Services Hub (WISH), a monthly event providing essential services to those experiencing homelessness. In 2023 our Homelessness unit provided specific training around homelessness to more than 200 homelessness sector stakeholders.</p> <p>We provide over \$1 million in funding to specialist homelessness services for outreach, support, and culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In 2022/23, the number of rough sleepers increased from 225 to 277. During this period, 192 people were assisted out of homelessness, and 172 were prevented from becoming homeless. This marked a 31% increase in support compared to the previous year, with many young people housed by Launchpad.</p>
1.6 Improve social housing residents' wellbeing and access to opportunities	Support and enable social housing residents' improved wellbeing, including through education, training and facilitating their access to opportunities through capacity-building programs, community development initiatives, and initiatives to support their effective engagement in state government-led estate renewal projects.	<p>We collaborated and campaigned to the NSW Government, community housing providers and other organisations for improved wellbeing and safety of social housing residents including access to opportunities in the local area. We make submissions to state government, coordinate and attend local resident meetings, and provide grant funding to local community groups.</p> <p>Since the Waterloo redevelopment was announcement in 2015, we've supported residents through funding local organisations to deliver community development, advocacy, and capacity building programs. This has included the Waterloo Public Housing Action Group, Redfern Legal Centre, Counterpoint Community Services and the Redfern Waterloo Aboriginal Affordable Housing Alliance. We are committed under the Waterloo Human Services Collaboration to work with social housing residents to improve safety within the Waterloo social housing estate.</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>Diverse housing tenures and types</p> <p>1.7 Increase supply of subsidised social, affordable rental and supported housing for lower income earners</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Implement a range of strategies to increase the supply of subsidised housing for lower income earners – including through subsidised land sales and grants to the community housing sector; the use of planning and property mechanisms (for example levies); research, monitoring and advocacy activities, and other collaborative initiatives with government and non-government organisations.</p>	<p>As of 30 June 2024, the City has 1,447 built affordable and diverse housing units in the local area, 556 dwellings in the development pipeline and a further 1,385 that are in the pre-application stage and are expected to be built in the future.</p> <p>We continue to campaign for a minimum number of social and affordable housing dwellings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within any government urban renewal project. This was achieved within the Waterloo south redevelopment where 15% of all social and affordable housing will be provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p>Our creative live/workspace program also offers 7 City of Sydney-owned apartments in Darlinghurst and Waterloo for 18-month residential leases at a subsidy well below market rate for artists and creative workers.</p>
<p>1.8 Increase supply of housing that is universally designed for people of all ages and abilities</p>	<p>Pursue opportunities to increase the supply of housing that is accessible, adaptable and suitable for people of all ages and abilities – including Gold standard housing under Australian Liveable Housing Design Guidelines – through the City's planning framework and advocacy activities.</p>	<p>We continued to campaign for 100% affordable housing to be at the Liveable Housing Guideline's gold level on all NSW Government sites.</p> <p>Council has approved draft planning controls for public consultation that will require 100% of dwellings to meet the silver level and 15% of dwellings to meet the platinum level.</p>
<p>1.9 Improve housing choices for renters</p>	<p>Advocate and collaborate to deliver improved housing choices and conditions for renters, including long term rental tenancy options</p>	<p>We supported and campaigned for the rights of renters through community education and awareness, submissions to the NSW Government and grant funding to community groups that support renters. We made 2 submissions to the NSW and Australian Government in 2023 to support changes to rental laws that allow for more equitable outcomes. We campaign for pet friendly rental and strata schemes.</p>
<p>Affordable services, programs, and facilities</p> <p>1.10 Provide affordable access to City community facilities,</p>	<p>Ensure City of Sydney community and recreation facilities, venues and associated programs and services are affordable to community organisations, low-income earners and people facing financial hardship, including</p>	<p>We're committed to ensuring fair and equitable access for all to our programs and activities provided through our community centres, recreation centres, cultural spaces and community venues for hire.</p> <p>Programs are offered free or for a small cost. Free programs include health and wellbeing, digital literacy and lifelong learning programs, along with bus trips and walking groups. There is also a wide range of free events on offer through our centres, including open days and meet the staff days and days to</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>programs, and services for people on all incomes.</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>through fees and charges discounts, waivers, and subsidies.</p>	<p>celebrate significant events such as NAIDOC day, Moon Festival, Lunar Festival, Seniors Week, Youth Week, Wear it Purple Day, RUOK Day, Transgender Remembrance Day and International Day of People With Disability, along with events to celebrate the festive season.</p> <p>Currently for programs with a fee, there is a \$5 concession rate. There may also be a minimal materials fee for some free programs such as painting or pottery. Community centre staff are also able to provide fee waivers to those who are unable to pay for classes or for the cost of materials and there is no application process or form needed to request a waiver, it is simply a conversation with centre staff.</p> <p>Our access card provides residents who have a pension, receive government income support, are holders of Commonwealth health and concession card, or are a refugee or asylum seeker, low-cost entry to any of our aquatic and fitness centres.³⁶</p> <p>We provided discounted early childhood education and care fees for priority families. Families who are on or are seeking a refugee or humanitarian visa will be supported with up to 100% subsidy for their enrolment in the service. Our fee relief program reduces the cost of Early Childhood Education and Care services by up to 95% for priority families not eligible for additional childcare subsidies provided by the Australian Government.</p> <p>We also supported a reduction in energy costs. We continue to advocate to State and Federal Government and the Australian Energy regulator to review embedded networks to require 100% renewable energy.</p>
<p>1.11 Improve low-income earners' access to creative and cultural programs and events</p>	<p>Promote and pursue opportunities to increase access to free and affordable creative and cultural programs and events for low-income earners in the local area.</p>	<p>We hosted free and inclusive events for our communities including Sydney New Year's Eve, Lunar New Year, Yabun and our Sydney Streets program. Our community centres and libraries provide free and low-cost programs that support community wellbeing and connection. These programs are promoted through our newsletters, website and at our centres.</p>

³⁶ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/facility-bookings-outdoor-events/apply-for-access-card>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
1.12 Facilitate low-income earners' access to affordable veterinary services for pets	Collaborate with animal welfare organisations and veterinary practices to provide free or discounted services for low-income earners and residents facing financial hardship.	<p>This action is in progress with further support recently announced. We have held two pet days for concession card holders in the local area each year. Pet Day partners include RSPCA NSW, Cat Protection Society of NSW, Counterpoint Community Services and the Surry Hills Neighbourhood Advisory Board. Pet Day was hosted at Northcott Pet Day in September 2022 and Redfern/Waterloo Pet Day in June 2023.</p> <p>The events attracted more than 750 residents and 440 companion animals including 282 dogs, 152 cats and 6 rabbits. The Cat Protection Society of NSW, RSPCA NSW, Sydney University Veterinary Teaching Hospital and local veterinary clinics provided free pet health checks and advice to pet owners. Residents and their companion animals also accessed free collars, leashes and gift bags, engraved pet tags, flea and worming treatments, vaccinations, microchipping and desexing bookings.</p>
<p>Strong empowered communities</p> <p>1.13 Enable community-led solutions to local social issues</p>	Enable and support local communities and community groups to design and implement projects that improve social inclusion and wellbeing in local neighbourhoods	<p>We supported communities and community groups to design and implement projects through our grant programs.³⁷</p> <p>We regularly engaged our communities on the development of strategies, action plans and precinct plans that shape our city and wellbeing outcomes. We also engaged on the community response plan in response to the pandemic, emphasising active community involvement in recovery and future planning for resilience. This plan was shaped by extensive community engagement and capacity building within the community sector.</p> <p>We also conducted governance workshops at Green Square to support new community groups in the area to form and produce their own programs and events.</p> <p>Our engagement approach continues to evolve and ensure involvement with priority communities.</p>

³⁷ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/grants-sponsorships>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>1.14 Promote volunteering among local community members</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to encourage and promote volunteering among local community members.</p>	<p>We promoted and supported volunteer programs and opportunities for the community and provide funding to local volunteer community-based organisations. For example, the Stay Kind Foundation and Stay Kind ambassador programs. Roving teams of trained volunteer ambassadors provide on-the-spot assistance to people at risk in the city at night.</p> <p>We have several volunteer programs including our Sydney City Farm, Sydney ambassadors, Sydney New Year's Eve and ongoing programs like Meals on Wheels. We support international student volunteering opportunities through the international student leadership and ambassador program and volunteer youth leadership through our youth civic participation programs.</p> <p>We currently support 23 community gardens, including 2 footpath verge gardens and 3 active Landcare groups. This action will be taken forward through a research project to understand the current role of volunteering within local government.</p>
<p>1.15 Improve community wellbeing and health equity</p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations in the health sector to deliver programs and initiatives aimed at improving community health and wellbeing, including in relation to mental health and identified local priority issues such domestic and family violence, youth mental health, and harm minimisation for substance misuse.</p>	<p>We regularly collaborated with local networks including social housing, gendered violence and homelessness through regular network and forum meetings.</p> <p>Under our community response plan for the pandemic, we collaborated with and support local health districts, primary health networks, other state agencies and not-for-profit organisations in shared and coordinated approaches to improve community health and resilience.</p>
<p>1.16 Reduce food insecurity</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Collaborate with local businesses, government agencies and not-for-profit organisations to address food insecurity, including through initiatives that address entrenched social and economic disadvantage; increase the affordability and accessibility of healthy and nutritious food, and provide</p>	<p>We've worked on a suite of programs to address the challenges of increasing food insecurity in our communities. In 2020 we set up a temporary home meal delivery service. This program was provided in partnership with OzHarvest. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we supported Oz Harvest with a \$1 million donation to adapt its service delivery model to include cooked meals and vouchers for local supermarkets. In 2022 Sydney City Farm volunteers also grew and donated \$18,000 worth of fresh food to OzHarvest.. In 2021 we awarded a knowledge exchange grant to Charles Sturt University for the mapping social innovations in Sydney's food systems</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
	nutrition education for the community.	<p>project. This project has supported the development of our sustainable food systems work. We support and promote the development of community gardens, footpath gardening, and sites maintained and managed by community volunteer groups.</p> <p>In 2022 and 2023 bush food and habitat display garden areas were planted. In 2021 the Sydney City Farm orchard was created with more than 150 fruiting trees, shrubs and vines being planted. From 2018 to 2023, 128 city farm education programs were held, attracting more than 2,500 attendees. Topics included edible gardens for renters, herb propagation, edible flowers and bush food tours. All farm produce is donated to local charities who support people experiencing food insecurity.</p>
<p>1.17 Increase digital literacy and inclusion</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Improve digital literacy and inclusion through facilitating community members' access to affordable digital technology and equipment; access to education, training and lifelong learning opportunities, and through other initiatives to counter digital exclusion among target sectors of the community, including among older and unemployed people.</p>	<p>Since 2018 we've increased community access to digital technology and equipment, including community access to public Wi-Fi across our libraries and community centres.</p> <p>Our libraries provide digital literacy programs tailored to priority community groups that have high attendance and satisfaction by attendees.</p>
<p>Resilient, adaptive communities</p> <p>1.18 Support communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change through Resilience Strategy with a focus on priority communities</p>	<p>Deliver targeted initiatives to support communities' adaptation to climate change impacts, including support for residents identified as vulnerable to heat stress, providing access to community facilities for respite in extreme weather events, and other local collaborative initiatives with government and non-government organisations.</p>	<p>We've took numerous initiatives to address immediate impacts of climate change including free entry to our pools on extreme heat days.</p> <p>In 2023 we developed a resilience strategy to support communities with heat stress and extreme weather conditions. The strategy identifies priority communities with a focus on climate justice and resilience.</p> <p>Our greening strategy and access strategy recognise the importance of tree canopy to cooling the city and creating more equitable walking and cycling routes.</p> <p>This action will be taken forward through the City's resilience strategy released in 2023.</p>

Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>1.19 Strengthen communities' resilience in the face of shocks and emergencies</p>	<p>Deliver targeted initiatives to enhance communities' capacity to recover and thrive in the face of shocks and emergencies, including economic shocks and unforeseen events, through supporting community capacity-building, neighbourhood-based social networks and emergency preparedness initiatives.</p>	<p>We played a major role in strengthening community resilience by running projects and providing programs and services to support local communities. We host the Resilient Sydney Office and are part of the Resilient Cities Network. The Resilient Sydney strategy 2025–2030 is being developed through comprehensive research and engagement with stakeholders and community members. Research will include a resilience risk assessment to identify the shocks and stresses most likely to impact our city.</p> <p>Alongside this work, we developed a resilience strategy 2023–2028 that recognises local impacts of climate change and social and economic disruptions, which threaten the city's stability and prosperity into the future. As part of this strategy, we'll collaborate with partners and communities to increase equity and create connected communities that are more resilient to shocks and stresses. This will address inequality, homelessness, safety, affordable housing, food insecurity, social cohesion, loneliness and isolation, and digital inclusion.</p>
<p>Connected City</p>		
<p>Supportive social networks and trust</p> <p>2.1 Increase social connectedness among diverse communities</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus with 2.3</i></p>	<p>Deliver services, programs and initiatives to strengthen social connectedness and trust in our diverse communities, including through community-based programs that appeal to a diverse range of people; initiatives targeted at people at risk of social isolation; initiatives that strengthen social connectedness in local neighbourhoods, and intergenerational initiatives that foster connections across age groups.</p>	<p>In 2019 we developed a city spaces curriculum to guide development of programming across our community centres. This program includes starting out, healthy and well, living together, creative life, lifelong learning and resilient community.</p> <p>Our programs and services in our community spaces align with our strategies such as A City for All, Resilient Sydney, reconciliation action plan and disability (inclusion) action plan.</p> <p>Free programs and events connect our diverse communities that mark and celebrate significant dates and events each year. These include Youth Week, Refugee Week, Seniors Festival, International Day Against the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Transgender Day of Visibility, Wear it Purple Day and International Day of People with Disability.</p> <p>In 2022 we also committed to formally acknowledging Australian South Sea Islander Recognition Day on 25 August, with an opportunity to program and promote initiatives designed in collaboration with Australian South Sea Islanders.</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
2.2 Strengthen social networks in urban renewal areas	Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to deliver services, programs and initiatives to strengthen social connectedness among new residents in urban renewal areas and connections with existing and surrounding residents.	We've collaborated with government and non-government organisations to strengthen social connections among new residents in urban renewal areas. Some of these initiatives include the online community support directory for Green Square residents and the Green Square welcome dinner where community members met to share food and stories. They also include Green Square Knitting Group, Over 60s Club, Neighbour Network and Banga Shed Community Garden Group.
2.3 Strengthen social connectedness in social housing precincts <i>Refreshed focus with 2.1</i>	Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to deliver services, programs and initiatives to strengthen social connectedness, trust and sense of safety among residents in and around social housing precincts.	We've strengthened communication with social housing residents by participating in Neighbourhood Advisory Board meetings. These meetings are arranged by Mission Australia in the social housing precincts of Surry Hills, Redfern, Waterloo, Glebe and Woolloomooloo. The meetings provide an opportunity to inform residents of available programs, services, facilities and events in their local neighbourhood. We also collaborated with state government agencies, residents, and local non-government organisations to coordinate community events to promote social cohesion, connect residents to services and increase knowledge about safety.
2.4 Improve community safety	Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to deliver programs and initiatives that support safety and perceived safety in the community, including through building the capacity of businesses, residents and visitors to reduce the risk of crime and targeted initiatives for those like to be a crime victim or offender.	<p>In 2019 we released our community safety action plan that sets out our contribution to making Sydney a safe and resilient place to live, visit, work and study.</p> <p>Through our Resilience Strategy we also work with communities and government to prepare organisations, services and people to respond to and recover from shock events. From 2018 to 2023 our child safety policy was developed and reviewed twice. The policy aligns with the NSW Child Safe Standards and includes a statement of commitment to child safety and wellbeing.</p>
Sense of belonging and connection to place 2.5 Enhance sense of belonging among diverse communities	Deliver programs and initiatives that strengthen sense of belonging among residents and workers, including through initiatives targeted at specific sectors of the community such as new immigrants, people from culturally and linguistically diverse	<p>Our libraries provided regular programs to foster community connection and belonging. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auslan story time on Saturday mornings at Glebe Library • bilingual story time at Green Square and Darling Square libraries, promoting literacy in English and Mandarin • rainbow family story time, promoting inclusion of all family types.

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
	<p>backgrounds and international students, and initiatives that support local businesses to connect with local residents.</p>	<p>Our major events and festivals program aims to be welcoming and inclusive for everyone. For example, the Sydney Lunar Festival involves diverse communities including Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Thai. Sydney New Year's Eve attracts many interstate and international visitors with materials translated into multiple languages and initiatives to ensure the event is accessible for people with disability. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, our Sydney Streets program reconnected local communities with their neighbourhood businesses. A range of our programs support cultural diversity and strengthen belonging, inclusion and harmony including: anti-racism and racial literacy workshops Australian sports program – a free series of events engaging new arrivals to the city to learn about Australian culture through sport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee Week programs and events • international student leadership and ambassador program.
<p>2.06 Foster place-based connections among diverse communities</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus with 2.10</i></p>	<p>Deliver place-based programs, projects and initiatives in the public domain that reflect and strengthen awareness, understanding and sense of connection to the city's diverse communities.</p>	<p>We've initiated place-based projects to support a sense of connection and tell the stories of place, including public artworks in Green Square and the Eora Journey. Notably, the <i>bara</i> artwork for the Eora Journey by Judy Watson was completed in 2022.</p> <p>Our naming working group introduced a new place-based naming policy, resulting in places such as Gunyama Park and Daniel Boyd's artwork at 180 George Street, and the Woolloomooloo Park upgrade.</p> <p>Customs House exhibitions, aligned with our strategies and cultural policy, highlight how history shapes the present and future. From 2018 to 2023 we produced 8 major exhibitions at Customs House exploring history, culture and identity.</p> <p>Our libraries team promoted Sydney WorldPride 2023 through activities like rainbow families rhymetime and storytime. Our LGBTIQ+ book collections are prominent in Newtown, Surry Hills and Kings Cross branches, often displayed for significant LGBTIQ+ events such as Wear it Purple Day, Intersex Awareness Day and Mardi Gras.</p> <p>The Art & About program supported the <i>Still Thriving</i> mural by queer Yuwi, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander artist Dylan Mooney. Located at 227 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst, this mural is highly visible, particularly for participants of the Sydney Harbour Bridge walk during Sydney WorldPride.</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>2.7 Embed participatory placemaking approaches to urban renewal</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations and communities to deliver participatory placemaking approaches to urban development and renewal projects that integrate physical and social development.</p>	<p>Since 2015 we have provided placemaking activities in Green Square including, events held at Green Square Library, plaza, and parks.</p> <p>A temporary open space link between Green Square plaza and Ebsworth Street was set up for Mirvac placemaking events and future City of Sydney-run events. During the pandemic, programs and services shifted online to meet community needs, focusing on resilience, screen time and time management. A community connection card was created to help residents support each other.</p>
<p>Harmony and social cohesion</p> <p>2.8 Strengthen social cohesion among culturally diverse communities</p>	<p>Foster cross-cultural awareness, tolerance, understanding and connections among people from diverse cultural backgrounds, including through services, programs, events, and targeted initiatives.</p>	<p>We continue to provide several programs and events throughout the year that support social cohesion and connection in the community. These include Refugee Week, anti-racism and racial literacy programs, rhymetime and storytime in our libraries, pop-up library stalls at NAIDOC in the City, Yabun and Redfern Community Centre. Our international student leadership and ambassador program engages the city's culturally and religiously diverse international student communities in volunteering opportunities and local programs and events.</p> <p>Since 2018 we've increased the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures during Sydney New Year's Eve by transforming the 9pm family fireworks into the Calling Country fireworks display. We engage an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artist or organisation as the creative consultant for the display. They in turn engage other Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander artists, performers and creatives to produce an 8-minute animation sequence for projection on the Sydney Harbour Bridge pylons, including a soundtrack to accompany the fireworks and lighting. They also develop and produce a 3-minute performance piece that is presented onstage as part of the ABC broadcast. This provides extensive opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creatives and increases the recognition of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to a global audience.</p>
<p>2.9 Improve social harmony in high density neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Deliver programs and initiatives that promote tolerance, respect and harmonious living among residents in high density areas, including through collaborative initiatives with strata managers, committees and communities that build</p>	<p>We continue to support programs and initiatives that promote harmonious communities and connection within high density areas. We develop resources and capacity-building programs for strata managers, committees and apartment communities that address barriers and support residents to connect with each other and their neighbourhood.</p> <p>This action is also being taken forward through a refreshed action on placemaking and other</p>

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	skills and understanding among residents of strata apartment schemes.	connected actions as more than 90% of our communities live in areas of medium and high-density housing. This will build on the success of programs in Green Square and the Oxford Street LGBTQIA+ Place Strategy.
2.10 Promote public spaces as shared spaces for all	Promote the role of public spaces in the social life of the city, including through access and activation by diverse people and communities.	<p>We proactively support public space to remain public, including our streets. This work is reflected in our 2016 open space study, which identifies actions to improve inclusion and accessibility in the public domain. Key projects that build on this are also included in Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050</p> <p>Continuing the Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building a new square at Town Hall extending the pedestrianisation of George Street to Railway Square • improving east–west pedestrian links to provide better access to existing high quality open spaces at the foreshore and Darling Harbour. <p>We’ve campaigned for more green public space, and working with the state government to open Moore Park to the public.</p>
<p>Diverse thriving communities</p> <p>2.11 Encourage diverse communities’ active participation in the cultural and creative life of the city</p>	Deliver, promote and support community-based, cultural and creative programs, events and initiatives that appeal to diverse people, and seek to increase active participation among sectors of the community who may face barriers.	<p>We offered a variety of activities and programs through our libraries and creative studios including Pine Street Creative Arts Centre, Ultimo Community Centre and the Darling Square makerspace. These programs cover performance-based practices, emerging technologies, art forms, painting, drawing, ceramics, and more. More than 81% of participants surveyed as part of our creative programs reported that the programs inspired their creativity.</p> <p>In 2022 Pine Street increased programming and extended services to Ultimo, offering low-cost, low-commitment opportunities, access to studios for returning students and flexibility to respond to emerging needs.</p> <p>Since 2018 we’ve introduced regular Auslan storytime at library and community events. Our major events and festivals program, including Sydney Lunar Festival, celebrates community diversity. All City of Sydney events feature a Welcome to Country from a Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council representative.</p>

Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>2.12 Celebrate and promote Sydney as an inclusive global city - a welcoming city for all</p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations and communities to realise and promote the benefits of social and cultural diversity as a defining competitive strength of Sydney.</p>	<p>We actively promote and celebrate the social and cultural diversity of our communities through our communications, and support for events and festivals.</p> <p>Some examples of how we celebrate and promote Sydney as an inclusive city include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public art program, such as <i>bara</i> by Judy Watson and Yananurala – the Sydney Harbour Eora Journey walk • supporting local community organisations through our accommodation grants program, for example providing a space in Ultimo for local Aboriginal organisation We Are Warriors • our creative hoardings program, for example the Amy Blue LGBTIQ+ hoarding located along Oxford Street celebrating local queer identities and histories. <p>We regularly consult young people on the design of playgrounds and parks, including skate and recreational facilities. We inform local schools and children’s services when upgrading parks and offer engagement activities for their students including class workshops, and class discussion guides. Recent examples of youth engagement include the Wentworth Park consultation, Crown Lands plan of management consultation, and the City’s ongoing small parks upgrade program, including Woolloomooloo playground upgrade. Each year the Lord Mayor hosts a welcome reception for international students that also celebrates their contribution to Sydney.</p>
<p>Vibrant creative life</p> <p>2.13 Deliver place-based cultural and creative initiatives that enhance local neighbourhoods</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Promote and support the delivery of cultural and creative programs and initiatives that enhance the quality and identity of local neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>We promote and support local community arts projects that enhance connections to and understanding of place. We also supported cultural and creative events through our venue hire fee waiver across our community spaces.</p> <p>Since 2022, the Sydney Lunar Festival has shifted focus from Circular Quay to the Haymarket area, to help enliven the area following the Covid-19 pandemic. This has resulted in the festival increasing its engagement of local community organisations and enhancing connections to the local community.</p> <p>We support arts initiatives in local neighbourhoods that reflect the lived experiences of communities, including Mardi Gras and Yabun festivals. We support the cultural and creative activations of local neighbourhoods, including the current Sydney Streets program allowing local businesses and</p>

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		<p>organisations to activate the street with pop-up dining, retail and engagement activities. The program also provides opportunities to employ local performers as part of a program of roving and pop-up entertainment throughout the day.</p>
<p>2.14 Increase community participation in the design and delivery of creative projects</p>	<p>Provide and support opportunities for community members to deliver and actively participate in cultural and creative projects in the local area, including public art projects and community-based arts and cultural events.</p>	<p>We've co-designed several artworks with the community, including a collaboration with artists Hugo Moline and Heidi Axelsen (MAPA) for the Danks Street south precinct. This project engaged the community to ensure their vision and needs were reflected in the public domain design and created ongoing opportunities for community collaboration to deliver on project concepts and ideas. This resulted in 'The Open Field Agency Report,' which was incorporated into the City's planning controls and referenced in the concept design plans for the area.</p> <p>In addition, in 2020, when we undertook a social pinpoint consultation with local residents, 78% of respondents indicated that they liked all the project ideas and 21% stated they liked some of the project ideas. While third parties may deliver these works, we ensure community input is integral to the process by fostering ongoing community participation. We also support community creativity through our grants programs, funding projects that enhance Sydney's cultural life, encourage creative participation, enliven public spaces, and bolster the sustainability of cultural and creative industries.</p> <p>We promote active participation in our public art program through grants, guided and self-guided public art tours, and the Culture Walks app. We're investigating providing spaces for cultural creation and production in community facilities to further increase creative opportunities.</p>
<p>Liveable City</p>		
<p>People focussed urban design and planning</p> <p>3.1 Enhance personal amenity in the public domain for people of all ages and abilities</p>	<p>Enhance amenity and opportunities for rest and respite in the public domain, including through increased provision of street planting; public seating and water fountains; footpath widening in the city centre; areas for quiet respite in libraries, community facilities and public parks; designated 'green' pedestrianised</p>	<p>We've supported space for relaxation and respite through our network of public open spaces. This includes Sydney Park and Hyde Park, our small parks upgrade program, innovative laneways programs and George Street pedestrianisation.</p> <p>We've increased the supply of bubblers with integrated dog water bowls throughout the public domain to make fresh water more freely accessible, and more benches for people to sit.</p> <p>Our libraries provide free Wi-Fi and computers, study rooms and a range of spaces for quiet respite.</p>

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	walking routes throughout the local area; public noticeboards in local neighbourhoods, and personal amenity provisions such as free public Wi-Fi hotspots, mobile phone and mobility scooter charging points.	Our network of digital screens share information about upcoming events and useful information, including tips and news about what is happening in our local area. In 2023 we developed the first interactive screen in our libraries to display local community events.
<p>3.2 Increase the positive social impact of urban development and renewal</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus with 3.3</i></p>	Enhance the positive social impacts of new developments through collaboration with the planning, urban design and development sectors to deliver placemaking approaches that integrate physical and social development; implement best practice for liveability; design for all ages and abilities; deliver social infrastructure and apply social impact assessment and health impact assessment approaches to improve community wellbeing outcomes.	<p>We enhance positive social impacts in new urban renewal developments through advocacy and collaboration with government, non-government and private sector stakeholders. This includes providing strategic advice on social impact and community infrastructure provision.</p> <p>We also provide an evidence base on community demographics and wellbeing through our published reports that inform best practice approaches to improve positive community outcomes.</p>
<p>3.3 Renew social infrastructure to meet changing community needs and aspirations</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus with 3.2</i></p>	Renew social infrastructure across the local area to meet growing and changing community needs and aspirations over time, including through planning the provision of City libraries, community centres, open space, cultural and recreation facilities, and through collaboration with state government and the development sector to deliver infrastructure through urban renewal schemes - including schools and health facilities.	<p>Our engagement team continues to provide a range of creative ways for our community to participate and provide feedback on new strategies, infrastructure, parks and playgrounds. In 2021 this included 2 new parks in north Rosebery, the Danks Street south precinct public domain plan and the ongoing program of small parks upgrades. Consultation methods included interactive online mapping tools, development of self-serve activity sheets for children to participate in at school or home during the pandemic, online workshops and briefings, and face to face consultation in parks.</p> <p>We have delivered several new and upgraded community infrastructure across our local area, including the Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre – with 4 pools, aqua play for kids and indoor and outdoor spaces to relax and exercise, and 119 Redfern Street – a space for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to gather, participate in activities and events, access services and share knowledge and culture.</p>

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		<p>We also worked with the NSW Department of Education on shared facilities at Alexandria Park School (sporting) and the upcoming Green Square Public School and Community Spaces (community multipurpose spaces and court). We regularly consult young people on the design of playgrounds and parks, including skate and recreational facilities.</p> <p>Over the next 10 years, we're upgrading more than 60 parks across the local area, from small pocket parks to larger local parks.</p>
<p>People focussed urban design and planning</p> <p>3.4 Improve the provision of shared spaces through new development and the public domain</p>	<p>Enhance the amount and quality of shared spaces available to support social connectedness and sustain quality of life in an increasingly dense urban environment - including through provision of public open spaces and shared or communal indoor and outdoor spaces in new developments.</p>	<p>We created new public open spaces in collaboration with various government agencies and the development sector to enhance quality of life as urban density increases.</p> <p>Notable successes include our advocacy on the pedestrianisation of George Street, developing public spaces in Green Square, and concepts underway for 3 major squares at Circular Quay (the water square), Sydney Town Hall (Sydney's civic heart), and Central (Sydney's arrival square), which align with Jan Gehl's 2030 vision for a pedestrian spine through the city. We also support communal spaces through the accommodation grants program and venue hire fee waiver, promoting workshops, creative activities, and social interaction or community wellbeing.</p>
<p>3.5 Enhance placemaking approaches to urban renewal</p>	<p>Deliver and encourage the use of placemaking approaches to urban renewal by the urban design and development sector to foster social as well as physical development.</p>	<p>We continue to provide social, cultural and economic advice and expertise on place-based approaches to urban renewal. This includes supporting government, non-government and private sector organisations to provide services, programs and initiatives within urban renewal areas during and after construction, enabling community cohesion and social connection.</p>
<p>3.6 Activate public and private spaces to deliver community benefits</p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to activate land and buildings to deliver economic, social and cultural priorities identified by the community, including supporting the growth of key employment sectors, and enabling cultural and community-based activations.</p>	<p>Between 2018 to 2023, our grants program funded 791 activation projects, with a value of \$49 million. Our Sydney Streets program began in 2021 after the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns. The program has assisted residents to reconnect with local businesses in the public domain. The events have evolved to become strong community focused celebrations that occur throughout the year.</p>

Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>Accessible places and spaces</p> <p>3.7 Improve the inclusiveness and accessibility of the public domain</p>	<p>Improve the accessibility of the public domain for people of all ages and abilities - with a focus on children and young people, older people, and people with disability - including through the delivery and improvement of inclusive and accessible public spaces, amenities and facilities; and through harnessing new technologies to assist people with disability to get around more easily.</p>	<p>We consulted our Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel on new public domain projects. In 2019 we released the inclusive and accessible public domain guidelines to create a liveable city with accessible spaces for everyone to travel, work, study, and participate in community life.</p> <p>To ensure quality access information, we provide clear precinct signs, wayfinding signs, and online information about access features and barriers. We've made navigation safer for everyone with more than 2,100 tactile street signs at signalised pedestrian crossings, following community consultation and testing with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and Vision Australia.</p> <p>We also acknowledge the importance of pets and clearly mark off-leash, on-leash and prohibited areas, while providing dog litter bag dispensers in all off-leash parks.</p> <p>We also coordinate weekly homelessness assertive response team (HART) patrols and case coordination meetings, to address the needs of non-residents. During the pandemic, we campaigned for emergency accommodation for non-residents, assisting them into hotel accommodation.</p>
<p>3.8 Collaborate with local businesses to improve their accessibility to people of all ages and abilities</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Encourage and support businesses to be more inclusive and accessible for people of all ages and abilities, with a focus on retail, hospitality, and entertainment businesses in the local area.</p>	<p>We continue to work with Business Events Sydney on supporting and producing sustainable events in the local area. We also work with Zero Barriers to support local businesses to become more inclusive and accessible for people with disability.</p> <p>We will continue to engage business under the Economic Strategy once finalised.</p>
<p>3.9 Enhance local transport choices for people of all ages and abilities</p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to deliver improved transport availability and accessibility throughout the local area for people of all ages and abilities, with a focus on people with disability, low-income earners and</p>	<p>We continue to provide free and low-cost transport options for our communities, which is seen through positive pedestrian and cycling outcomes across the city. This includes the pedestrianisation of George Street and extensive new cycleway networks across the local area. We continue to push for improved public transport connections across the local area and metropolitan Sydney.</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
	people who experience other forms of disadvantage.	
<p>Quality natural environment and climate</p> <p>3.10 Improve local environmental conditions to support health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Enhance the environment through a range of approaches in collaboration with government and non-government organisations and communities, including greening streets; delivering green roofs and walls on new developments; delivering community gardens and verge gardens; increasing green pedestrian networks, and improving environmental quality - including levels of air, noise and light pollution.</p>	<p>We actively raise awareness about the health, environmental and climate benefits of greening urban streets. From 2018 to 2023 we planted 5,300 street and park trees, increasing canopy cover from 18.1% in 2019 to 19.8% in 2022. Overall, canopy cover has grown by 20.9% since 2008 when it was 15.5%.</p> <p>Comprehensive reviews of the strategy for greening Sydney, urban forest strategy, street tree master plan, and tree management and donation policy were completed from 2020 to 2023. These efforts help reduce urban heat and ensure equitable access to canopy cover, offering numerous physical and mental health benefits.</p> <p>We've published guidance on sustainable development. The 2018 sustainable design technical guidelines detail how to incorporate sustainability into the design, construction, and upgrades of city assets. For example, Green Square town centre has received the highest rating for a sustainable community.</p>
<p>Healthy active living</p> <p>3.11 Enhance walking and cycling infrastructure to support active lifestyles</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Deliver high amenity, green walking routes and separated cycleways throughout the local area to encourage active transport modes that support wellbeing and social connectedness.</p>	<p>Since 2018 we've invested significantly in cycling and walking infrastructure. This includes new separated cycleways, upgraded footpaths, improved wayfinding, enhanced lighting, and green routes throughout the city to create cooler, more enjoyable spaces. Our efforts have not only focused on enhancing amenity but on improving accessibility and enjoyment through walking tours, the free Culture Walks app, cycling classes, and inclusive wayfinding have been implemented. Key projects like the pedestrianisation of George Street highlight our commitment to creating pedestrian-friendly environments.</p> <p>Our continued investment in infrastructure and programs will be guided by updated design guidelines, existing strategies, and the access and walking strategies.</p> <p>Our approach to reducing transport emissions aligns with the electrification of city transport strategy and action plan, advocating for zero-emission buses.</p> <p>In 2019 our cycling strategy and action plan prioritised expanding and connecting the cycling network. Efforts include completing regional bike routes, expanding the local bike network, and</p>

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		<p>addressing barriers to cycling through education and outreach programs.</p> <p>We continue to promote enjoyable travel through initiatives like Sydney Culture Walks, promoting local walking groups, and publishing informative walking tours such as Barani/Barrabugu, history walks, and the Rock and Roll Walks of Fame 'n' Shame. Cycling initiatives include riding skills courses, guided bike tours and the Sydney cycling map, which highlights low-traffic streets, cycleways and shared paths.</p>
<p>3.12 Deliver inclusive sport, recreation, health and wellbeing programs through community facilities</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Deliver a range of sport, recreation and community health and wellbeing programs to support healthy living, including targeted initiatives for older people, people who are disadvantaged, and people at risk of social isolation.</p>	<p>Our 2016 Open Space Study provides a framework and for the ongoing provision, use and management of our open space, sports and recreation facilities.</p> <p>We promoted free and low-cost activities, including table tennis at Ultimo, dance cardio at Darlinghurst and swimming skills assessments at Cook + Phillip Park Pool.</p> <p>We encouraged increased participation in healthy ageing programs including free 'come and try' days for older people at our recreational facilities.</p> <p>Our community centres offered a range of programs, activities and services to support healthy and active ageing. Centre-based programs are offered to support individual independence and social connection with others. Our dedicated older adult's page on the What's On website promotes activities, events and programs for older people. Events include accessible yoga classes at the Cliff Noble and St Helen's community centres, Living Longer Living Stronger at Reginald Murphy and Redfern community centres, gentle exercise at KGV, Zumba at Ron Williams Community Centre and more. These are accessible with concession rates of \$5 for many classes.</p>
<p>Safe and secure communities</p> <p>3.13 Improve community safety in the public domain</p>	<p>Improve public safety and perceptions of safety through a range of approaches in collaboration with government and non-government organisations, including space activations; public domain management; lighting and CCTV upgrades; applying Safer by Design principles to space planning; emergency preparedness planning, and other</p>	<p>Our priority is to create vibrant, safe and inclusive environments across our network of walking paths, cycleways, entertainment precincts, parks and outdoor spaces, accessible day and night.</p> <p>Our commitment to safe streets and spaces is outlined in our community safety action plan 2019–2023. It focuses on increasing public safety through partnerships and managing lighting, CCTV, parks, footpaths, graffiti, waste management and crime prevention.</p> <p>We operate nearly 100 street safety cameras that are monitored 24/7 from the Sydney Town Hall control centre. Partnering with the community our initiatives include the rainbow crossing in Darlinghurst</p>

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	targeted initiatives for sectors of the community more likely to feel unsafe or be a victim of crime.	<p>celebrating diversity, enhancing public safety and activating underused spaces with creative lighting, community gardens and public art.</p> <p>Public lighting, managed under the Sydney lights: public domain design code, ensures safe night-time environments for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.</p> <p>As part of our community safety action plan and ongoing operations, we continued to apply Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to development applications in accordance with the Sydney development control plan 2012. As part of this process, development applications are referred to external organisations, including NSW Police, for advice on licenced and late-night trading premises.</p> <p>The Homelessness unit collaborates with partners like Property NSW, NSW Police, and teams across our organisation to maintain public space amenity and cleanliness, supporting a pleasant environment for all.</p>
3.14 Improve the safety and amenity of social housing precincts	Collaborate with NSW Government, community organisations and community members to improve the safety, amenity and quality of social housing precincts, including through targeted initiatives to reduce crime and fear of crime; activating shared spaces, and improving property management and maintenance.	<p>We advocated to, and collaborated with, Homes NSW to improve social housing amenity. This includes convening monthly social housing operations meetings, the waste steering group, quarterly cross-agency escalation meetings, and partnership meetings with DCJ. Lord Mayor social housing forums are held twice a year in each of the 6 social housing estates to facilitate collaborative responses to community issues.</p> <p>We also participate in the Waterloo human services action plan with NSW Government agencies and local service providers to enhance social housing residents' experiences and address human services challenges. We collaborate with NSW Police and other agencies on social housing precinct safety audits and community education pop-up events to tackle issues like waste management.</p> <p>We facilitate cross-agency site visits, including partnerships with Sydney Local Health District to address local concerns such as sharps disposal safety. In 2021 in partnership with Homes NSW, we conducted 53 inspections over 10 weeks across the local area, identifying key actions for improvement.</p>
Engaged City		
Transparent, accountable governance	Increase the availability of Council data to enable government and non-government	Our data hub has more than 175 publicly available digital data products including open data sets, interactive maps, dashboards and story maps.

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>4.1 Increase open access to City data</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>organisations and communities to identify, analyse respond to local social issues.</p>	<p>In 2019 we collaborated with University of Technology Sydney and its data engineering students to develop data products using our data hub. We also publish a wide range of research and evaluation data through our strategies, publications and annual reports that support other agencies and organisations in their planning and delivery in the local area.</p> <p>Our archives and history resources catalogue with more than a million items and over 4,000 topic specific 'collection' tiles that curate items for easier access by the community. Examples include collections about First Nations, World War I and II, the Liberate! Exhibition (LGBTIQA+ for Sydney WorldPride), cycling and entertainment venues, markets, and significant city streets (operational report).</p>
<p>4.2 Deliver Council information in a range of accessible formats</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Provide information in a range of languages and formats widely accessible and appealing to diverse audiences, including online and through the public domain, such as information on how communities can participate in and influence Council decisions.</p>	<p>We use numerous approaches to enable community participation in decision-making. Our engagement processes are tailored to each project incorporating a mix of traditional and digital channels such as letters, face to face meetings/workshops and online tools, such as surveys and interactive maps.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic further accelerated a shift to digital engagement, and we've strengthened our digital toolkit and tested alternative approaches, such as online workshops. We're increasingly using data maps and stories as an interactive visual mechanism to support engagement.</p> <p>Our digital and print accessibility policy and procedures were updated in 2018/19 and 2022/23 to ensure our employees, suppliers and contracts comply with current standards and provide accessible information. We'll continue to strengthen our practices in providing information and communication channels. Face-to-face activities continued to be a crucial part of how we engage. We make the outcomes of public consultation available to the community through our engagement reports.</p> <p>We aim to ensure our public facing comms are inclusive, clear and consistent in tone and style. For example, we provide translated materials to support major engagement projects such as Sydney 2050, a community vision for Haymarket and wellbeing surveys. We also have translators available at key community events such as the Haymarket community forum. There is also information on our corporate website to 'get help in your language' for community members who may require assistance.</p>

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<p>Balanced and inclusive local decision making</p> <p>4.3 Increase the use of deliberative and participatory engagement models</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Facilitate broad community participation in City of Sydney decision-making through participatory engagement models, including deliberative democracy models for deep engagement to inform decisions about projects, programs and services.</p>	<p>To develop the vision for Sydney in 2050, we worked with the community for over 18-months and held over 90 engagement activities in 2018 to 2019. Activities included community sessions, surveys, pop-up activities, storytelling and workshops, a First Nations Dialogue Forum, Children’s Summit and Youth Summit and Citizens Jury. Through the process we strove to create robust evidence base and reach diverse communities, capturing a breadth and depth of community perspectives.</p> <p>We continue to investigate how technology can support an increase in community participation. We have a suite of online engagement tools available on our online consultation website (Sydney Your Say) to strengthen our ability to hear from communities through digital channels.</p> <p>A sign-in process will be implemented, asking some basic demographic information about the people participating. This will help us understand whether we’re capturing the views and perspectives of a range of people. It will also allow a more personalised experience where the user can see projects happening in their area and keep up to date on progress.</p> <p>(In addition, see progress report for Action 4.5)</p>
<p>4.4 Proactively engage with under-represented sectors of the community</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>Enable increased participation in decision-making among diverse sectors of the community who are under-represented, through proactively reducing barriers to their participation and undertaking outreach engagement activities.</p>	<p>We continued to look at how to improve our engagement, particularly with groups that are traditionally under-represented.</p> <p>We’ve introduced advisory panels, built relationships with community leaders, organisations and service providers, including the Lord Mayor social housing forums.</p> <p>We provide surveys and consultation materials in a variety of formats (hard copy and online) and translation in different languages for example during the Haymarket community vision consultation, wellbeing survey, and the resilience strategy consultation.</p> <p>Our community engagement strategy describes the role communities play in our decision making processes and includes chapters on engaging with young people.</p>

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		<p>We work with schools, universities, children’s services and youth organisations to involve young people in planning and designing our projects and programs. The social programs team produced the emerging civic leaders’ program in February and September 2019 and in April/May 2021, engaging 51 young people aged 18 to 24. The program empowers and builds the capacity of young people to have a voice and influence change by understanding the decision-making processes at the City of Sydney. Through the program, participants pledge to vote, and inspire other young people to do the same. Other City of Sydney civic engagement programs for young people build their skills and capacity to work with us to co-design community programs, events, and campaigns, including for Youth Week and International Day of People with Disability.</p>
<p>4.5 Engage diverse communities in broad conversations about Sydney's future</p>	<p>Engage diverse communities in broad conversations about significant global, national and city issues affecting their lives to inform the development of strategic policies, plans and programs by the City of Sydney and other organisations.</p>	<p>We engage diverse communities in broad conversations about significant global, national and city issues.</p> <p>Our 18-month engagement program to develop a new long-term community strategic plan to deliver Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision included a First Nations Dialogue Forum, Citizens Jury, business and community workshops, pop-up consultations at social housing forums, school workshops, City of Sydney hosted youth summit, community sessions held in different languages and surveys.</p> <p>We consult our advisory panels including the Multicultural Advisory Panel, Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel on key issues, strategies and projects. Key consultations include the resilience strategy, cultural strategy and economic development strategy.</p> <p>Our ongoing CityTalks program of free public talks to inspire and educate our communities on global and national issues including ‘Why the Voice to Parliament is essential for all Australians’ in July 2023 was attended by 1,100 people, and received extensive media and social media coverage, including front page of The Guardian Australia.</p>
<p>Civic knowledge and skills</p> <p>4.6 Empower communities to</p>	<p>Proactively enable and support community members to have a say and influence Council decisions, including through education and</p>	<p>We proactively supported community members to have a say and influence Council decisions.</p> <p>Our guide to council decision-making on our website explains how Council makes decisions and how community members can be involved. This guide was developed with the Disability (Inclusion) Advisory</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>have a say on issues that affect them</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus</i></p>	<p>training provided through community centres.</p>	<p>Panel, and our community engagement strategy is also available in Easy Read.</p> <p>Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Advisory Panels provided advice about the needs and desires of the diverse cultural groups and populations living in our area. The Multicultural panel features a cross-section of members. It includes representatives from the local community, NSW Government organisations, multicultural organisations and universities in our area.</p> <p>Our Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision consultation (2018-2020) engaged with students and young people to involve them in developing our long-term community strategic plan through school workshops, activities and a Youth Summit.</p> <p>We continue to encourage students to participate in Council decision-making through our emerging civic leader’s program and by involving them in our engagements and. Some recent consultations involving youth engagement include Wentworth Park, Crown lands plan of management and Woolloomooloo playground consultations.</p> <p>We support our residents to link to local community and resident groups with our online directory and offer free governance and skills training for community organisations through our Connect Sydney programs.^{38 39}</p>
<p>Public participation in civic life</p> <p>4.8 Enable broad community participation in the civic life of the city</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Deliver civic engagement activities in ways that enable greater and broader participation among community members, including through activities in the public domain, in community centres, and out of business hours.</p>	<p>Each engagement process is designed specifically to suit the diverse projects and communities we support. We encourage broad participation by holding pop-up consultations in parks and public spaces, community meetings and workshops in libraries and community centres, which are planned out of hours and/or on weekends to best reach our communities.</p> <p>Recent examples include our Camperdown vision, Haymarket vision, resilience strategy and Pyrmont Peninsula strategic review consultations. We also conduct 12 social housing forums each year in our community facilities to hear directly from residents on key concerns and issues.</p>

³⁸ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/talks-courses-workshops/connect-sydney>

³⁹ <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community-groups/local-community-resident-groups>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
<p>4.9 Increase civic participation among target sectors of the community</p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations to identify and address barriers that prevent target sectors of the community from participating in civic life, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.</p>	<p>We collaborate with government and non-government organisations to identify and address barriers that prevent priority communities from participating in civic life. This includes strategies to engage under-represented groups being built into our engagement processes. Channels to reach these communities include, our advisory panels, relationships with community leaders, local and regional organisations and service providers, and the Lord Mayor social housing forums.</p> <p>We provide surveys and consultation materials in a variety of formats (hard copy and online) and translations in different languages where needed.</p> <p>Recent examples include the Haymarket community vision consultation, wellbeing survey and resilience strategy consultation.</p>
<p>Collaboration and partnerships</p> <p>4.10 Co-design social programs and initiatives with communities</p>	<p>Utilise co-design models to engage with communities in the development and delivery of social projects, programs and initiatives that address identified local social issues.</p>	<p>As part of our community engagement, we use co-design processes to enable community participation in the planning and design of new and upgraded parks social programs, and community facilities.</p> <p>Our staff that work in our community spaces, deliver our vision of ensuring that these spaces are welcoming, inclusive, vibrant and affordable. We research best practice, listen and co-design with our communities to deliver a range of events, activities and services that meet the needs of the community and build social cohesion, resilience and trust.</p> <p>Our programs support healthy ageing and aim to reduce the impact on health and other services. We address gaps in service delivery to contribute to community wellbeing. This includes, providing social supports and referrals, health and wellbeing activities, space for people to come together to build social networks, information provision and opportunities to learn a new skill or activity.</p> <p>In 2018 we began an extensive community engagement program to support the development of a new community strategic plan to 2050. The 18-month engagement program was awarded Australasian Project of the Year in 2020 by the International Association of Public Participation and was recognised as one of the top 3 projects internationally. This deliberative program included a Youth Summit, a Children’s Summit and a Citizens Jury that took a deeper look at how Sydney could be transformed in the future. One hundred students deliberated on the outcomes of the school workshops</p>

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Outcome objective	Action	Update
		<p>and presented their transformative ideas to the Lord Mayor.</p> <p>Our youth civic participation programs aim to empower young people to have a voice, act on matters that concern them and actively contribute to shaping significant City of Sydney programs, events, and campaigns.</p>
<p>4.11 Strengthen collective responses to complex local social issues</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations through interagency forums, partnership initiatives and collaborative pilot projects – as a lead or partner organisation – to develop, deliver and evaluate effective collective responses to priority local social issues.</p>	<p>We regularly advocate to the NSW Government on legislative, policy and funding changes to support complex social issues. This is demonstrated by our responses to homelessness, Covid-19 recovery and emergency food relief, and housing affordability. For example, through the City Covid-19 Taskforce and Food Operations Working Groups. We work with local inter-agencies and networks including the City of Sydney Youth Interagency and the City of Sydney and Eastern Sydney Ageing and Disability Interagency.</p>
<p>4.12 Collaborate on community resilience agenda across metropolitan Sydney</p> <p><i>Refreshed focus as part of being a socially responsible organisation</i></p>	<p>Collaborate with government and non-government organisations on community resilience-building initiatives across the Sydney metropolitan area through the Resilient Sydney Strategy – both as a project lead and partner organisation.</p>	<p>Key partnerships include our sister cities, chambers of commerce, Better Buildings Partnership, City of Sydney and Eastern Sydney Ageing and Disability Interagency, Resilient Sydney, the Milan Urban Food Pact, work with the Social Enterprise Council and our advisory panels.</p> <p>Through our partnership, Resilient Sydney continues to foster connections between the City of Sydney and metropolitan Sydney councils to take a regional approach to issues of shared interest. We regularly collaborate with councils in Greater Sydney to identify opportunities to work collaboratively to achieve positive social outcomes through collective approaches and initiatives aimed at building urban resilience.</p> <p>We also regularly research, assess and make submissions on intergovernmental policy issues to the NSW and Australian Government that support local, regional and state social issues. .</p>

