

Serving our community

...key achievements

Snapshot of achievements for 2019-2020

Blue Mountains City Council is committed to building a sustainable and successful future for the Blue Mountains. Here is an overview of our achievements for the past year...



lead inspiring leadership

Supported community given difficult times

Council implemented initiatives this year to support our community after bush fires, flooding and COVID-19.

We launched programs like Good Neighbour (more than 200 emergency food boxes and 400 books to our most vulnerable residents and Love Local (support for local businesses). We also waived or reduced fees where possible (including waiving rents for all Council tenants and removing sportsground fees for two seasons).



Responded to unprecedented bush fires

Council supported the Incident Management Team managing the bush fires. We provided emergency service, communications and administrative staff, delivered bulk water carriers, provided extra waste services and prepared staging areas.

We supported communities in the upper mountains who were directly impacted. The Bush Fire Mayoral Relief Fund has so far raised almost \$100,000 and almost 100 payments have been distributed to the community.



Committed to climate change action

Council adopted a target of becoming carbon neutral by the end of 2025. The organisation continues to support and advocate for initiatives that address climate change, as outlined in our *Carbon Abatement Action Plan*.

Council took advantage of the recent closure of community facilities to finish the installation of solar panels at four more of our facilities

Council's Carbon Revolving Reserve project also won the national *Cities Power Partnership's Project Financing Innovation Award*.



protect an environmentally responsible city

Endorsed water and weeds plans

Council adopted the *Water Sensitive Blue Mountains Strategic Plan* that focuses on water efficiency, water harvesting and reuse, stormwater management and education.

Council also adopted the *Weed Management Strategic Plan 2019*.

We were also awarded at the *Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards*, for the project to restore Jamison Creek following the devastating crayfish kill in 2012.



Activated Pulpit Hill

Council was a successful recipient of a *NSW Government Heritage Near Me Activation Grant* of \$100,000, for the Pulpit Hill Heritage Interpretation Project.

The objective of the grant was to enhance the public's understanding of the place and its multilayered history, amplify the Aboriginal perspective on the site and provide access to interpretive information. The project was designed to encourage community appreciation of significant heritage values.

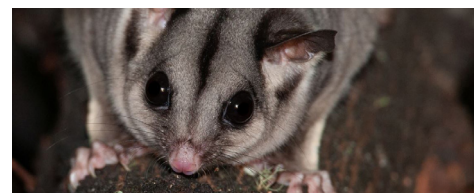


Launched fauna directory online

A research and citizen science project that catalogued fauna species within the Blue Mountains was published online.

The Blue Mountains Fauna Project Inventory collated over 300,000 fauna records and showcased more than 450 different species, including 51 threatened species.

The project was a joint partnership between Blue Mountain Bushcare Network and Blue Mountains City Council, with grant funding from Greater Sydney Local Land Services.



care an inclusive, healthy and vibrant city

Provided green waste services during crisis

To assist residents prepare their properties for bush fires, Council offered free extra chipping services; extended the operating hours of our Waste Management Facilities (WMF); waived the fee for green waste (covering the State Govt levy); and added extra green bin collections.

Following restrictions at our WMFs due to COVID-19, extra booked bulky waste Services were made available to assist the community. The booked Service was also extended to collect green waste from households.



Implemented online services

During COVID-19 and following the closure of Council facilities – our Libraries, Cultural Centre and Leisure Centres looked at innovative ways to keep people connected and entertained during the pandemic.

At the Library, Children's programs were transferred online including Storytime and Babytime. The Cultural Centre launched VIRTUAL INSIGHT. Meanwhile, the Leisure Centres offered the community free access to a suite of over 800 online workouts.



Conducted community consultation

Planning for community infrastructure projects got underway, as part of the *Western Parkland City Liveability Program*.

We asked the community about proposed upgrades at our District Parks, as well as at Blackheath village centre, Lawson Parklands and Springwood Library. Planning also got underway for Springwood town centre, development at Katoomba Sports and Aquatic Centre and upgrades of walking tracks at Knapsack Reserve.



live a liveable city

Conducted 'make safe' tree works

Council assessed and coordinated 'make safe' tree removal works with the Rural Fire Service, valued at nearly \$480,000 – on public land managed by the Council and some high priority tree removal work on private land – following bush fires.

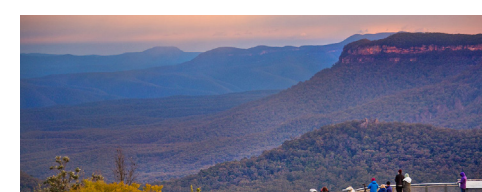
Council tree officers assessed approximately 1200 trees, for removal or pruning, along roadways within fire affected communities in the upper Blue Mountains include the villages of Bell, Mt Wilson and Mt Tomah.



Endorsed Local Planning Statement

Council endorsed the Blue Mountains Local Strategic Planning Statement *Blue Mountains 2040: Living Sustainably*.

Developed with extensive community consultation, it is Council's long term land use plan aimed at ensuring the Blue Mountains local government area can respond in a locally appropriate way to the challenges and opportunities for the future. It aligns with, and responds to, the *Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan 2035*.



Opened new heritage trail

A new heritage trail, *Layers in Time*, opened at Woodford Reserve. The trail takes visitors on a self-guided loop of the central estate grounds of Woodford Academy. Illustrated signage along the heritage trail features QR codes to easily access information.

The trail was a collaboration between Council, Traditional Owners and the National Trust and was the culmination of dedicated work over many years by local residents, the Woodford Academy Management Committee and staff.



move an accessible city

Improved local infrastructure

Council's improvement of accessibility and amenity of local roads, continued in 2019-2020. Council graded more than 220,000m² of unsealed roads and completed general maintenance of more than 4,500m² of the unsealed road network.

Other infrastructure work included: checked and cleared more than 1,250 drainage pits; and repaired and replaced more than 1,500 signs, which is 18% of total Council signage in the local government area.



Supported bush fire response

We provided traffic management for multiple road closures to assist the Incident Management Team who managed the Ruined Castle, Grose Valley and Erskine Creek bush fires in December and January.

Council provided traffic management for multiple road closures; more than 30 Council staff controlled numerous road blocks over six weeks. Council also delivered bulk water carriers to support fire-fighting efforts across many locations.



Responded to landslips

Council responded to more than a dozen significant landslips across the City, following flooding in February 2020.

We are currently working on the remediation of Cliff Drive, Leura, after a landslide from private property onto public land.

We also completed the rebuild of an embankment, road and footpath at Megalong Street, Leura, that collapsed following flooding in January 2019. This area is now fully accessible to cars and pedestrians.



thrive an economically sustainable city

Assisted local businesses

Council responded to recent disasters with an Outreach Program to support small businesses across the City.

Council also: waived rents for tenants in Council buildings under commercial agreements for as long as needed; provided payment arrangements for ratepayers and businesses who are experiencing hardship; developed a 'Recovery for Business' web portal, and a new monthly eNewsletter; and implemented the *Love Local* campaign.



Developed Echo Point precinct

Council embarked on a major upgrade at Echo Point, Katoomba.

The works, which are almost complete, included the installation of evacuation signage, the installation of fixed and removable bollards, the installation of CCTV, the reopening of the Prince Henry Cliff Walk, and the development of a community amphitheatre. The City receives over 4 million tourists annually and Echo Point is a critical piece of Council's tourism offering.



Boosted local tourism economy

Council, in partnership with Blue Mountains Tourism and the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, developed a destination marketing campaign to kick-start the local economy after bush fires and COVID-19.

#GoBlue #StayANightOrTwo encouraged Sydneysiders, and NSW residents, to visit the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and stay overnight, or for a weekend. Aimed at families and couples, the campaign showcased some of the best the region has to offer.

