

Community Newsletter



July 2019

Blue Mountains City Council

Community infrastructure projects underway

Projects valued at more than \$18.7 million will be completed across Blue Mountains City over the next three years, providing a welcome boost to community infrastructure and public spaces.

The projects include upgrades to four District Parks, rejuvenation of Blackheath and Springwood town centres, redevelopment of Katoomba Sports and Aquatic Centre and Springwood Library and implementation of parts of the recently adopted Lawson Crown Lands Master Plan.

Katoomba Sports & Aquatic Centre – an accessible outdoor program pool with play features will replace the current toddler and learn-to-swim pool, plus a new concourse for the 50m outdoor pool, landscaping and associated works.

Lawson Crown Lands (former Lawson Golf Course) – construction of accessible pathways, dog off leash area, seating and associated landscaping works.

Eastern Scenic Escarpment – a significant upgrade of 2.35km of walking tracks between key features in Knapsack Reserve. See page 3 for more.

Springwood Library – redevelopment of the public area so that it's a larger, contemporary, light-filled space and an accessible lift.

Blackheath and Springwood town centre rejuvenation – includes elements of the Blackheath Village Centre Public Domain Plan and the Springwood Town Centre Public Domain Plan.

Glenbrook Park Stage 2 playground works – creation of a new inclusive, accessible, interactive play area catering for seven to 12 year olds. Community consultation is currently underway.

Wentworth Falls Lake Park – development of an outdoor educational facility and upgrades to connectivity and accessibility, including an accessible viewing platform.

Buttenshaw Park, Springwood – an adventure playground, as well as connectivity and accessibility upgrades.

Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park – a new toilet block, landscaping and other enhancements that will complement the existing beauty of the park and its heritage.

See page 3 for more information on upgrades to District Parks.

Council will be seeking feedback from the Blue Mountains community on design concepts for each of the projects, progressively. The projects will be funded under the Western Parkland City Liveability Program, which is part of the Western Sydney City Deal (WSCD). The WSCD is a 20 year-agreement between Australian and NSW governments, and the eight local Councils of the Western Parkland City.

Go to bmcc.nsw.gov.au/major-projects for more.

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Have Your Say

Blue Mountains Have Your Say provides a convenient online forum for the community to find out about Council projects and proposals and provide feedback and ideas to contribute to Council's decision making.

Go to yoursay.bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Councillors

Ward 1 | Bell to Leura, Megalong Valley & The Mounts
Ward 2 | Wentworth Falls to Faulconbridge/Springwood
Ward 3 | Faulconbridge/Springwood to Valley Heights
Ward 4 | Warrimoo to Lapstone

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 <p>MAYOR Cr Mark Greenhill 0414 195 990 mgreenhill@bmcc.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>WARD 4</p>	 <p>Cr Brendan Christie 0423 565 988 bchristie@bmcc.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>WARD 4</p>	 <p>Cr Darryl Bowling 0414 195 989 dbowling@bmcc.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>WARD 4</p>

Funding boost to our Libraries

Blue Mountains Libraries will benefit from a boost in funding, thanks to a State Government pledge to public libraries across the state.

Funding to Blue Mountains Libraries in 2019/20 is \$250,399, which is up from \$193,016 in 2018/19. A record \$36.5 million in funding has been allocated to NSW public libraries in 2019/20.

The funding announcement followed the *Renew Our Libraries* campaign conducted in the lead up to the recent State election. Council pledged its support to the NSW Public Libraries Association and Local Government NSW campaign to double the State Government funding, index the contribution and enshrine that funding in law.

The increase in funding will help our libraries to better meet the growing demands of our readers and communities. It will also ensure our book and online collections are further enhanced.

- We have libraries at six locations in the Blue Mountains.
- 52% of Blue Mountains residents are library users. This is above the state average of 41%.
- Our libraries had more than 450,400 visitors in 2018/19.

- There were over 540,000 total loans for the year and over 23,500 hours spent on library computers.
- Blue Mountains Library has almost 116,000 physical items in its collection and almost 7,000 items in its eCollection.
- Our library staff answered more than 38,000 information requests in 2018/19.
- Blue Mountains Library also ran 663 programs in the past year, attended by more than 21,200 people.
- Visits to the library website was also up by 13% in 2018/19.

Go to library.bmcc.nsw.gov.au



\$5.2M upgrades to Blue Mountains District Parks

All four district parks in the Blue Mountains will receive upgrades valued at more than \$5.2 million, thanks to funding received through the Western Parkland City Liveability Program.

Wentworth Falls Lake Park (*artist's impression right*) – an outdoor educational pavilion and shaded landscaped terraces will improve facilities for school groups and community groups. Meanwhile, a new pedestrian bridge, lookouts and connected pathways will improve access and resting places along the northern edge of the lake. They will also form part of an educational journey around the district park.

Buttenshaw Park, Springwood (*artist's impression below*) – the unique natural amphitheatre of this park has led to a topography-led design concept for a youth-focused adventure playground. The location of the playground, next to Springwood Aquatic and Fitness Centre, will anchor it amongst related uses, creating a recreational hub benefiting this important district park.



Buttenshaw Park artist's impression



Wentworth Falls Lake Park artist's impression

Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park – a new toilet block, landscaping and other enhancements that will complement the existing beauty of the park and its heritage.

Glenbrook Park Stage 2 playground

Community consultation is currently underway. Go to yoursay.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/glenbrook-playspace for more information and to use our *Funbobulator* to select your favourite pieces of playground equipment.

The *Funbobulator* closes on Thursday, 1 August.

Scenic Eastern Escarpment Upgrades

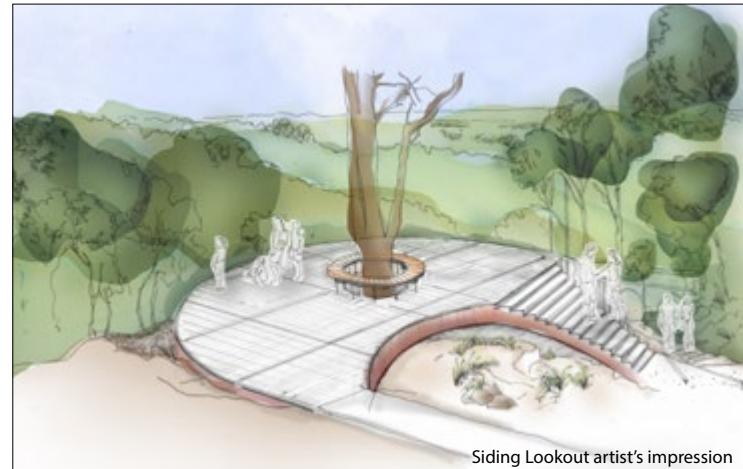
A \$2 million upgrade to 2.35km of walking tracks in the lower Blue Mountains will make significant heritage features more accessible to residents and tourists.

The Blue Mountains City Council project, with detailed design set to get underway later this year, will upgrade walking tracks between key features in Knapsack Reserve. This includes Siding Lookout to Knapsack Viaduct, Elizabeth Lookout to Knapsack Viaduct, Marges Lookout to Mitchell's Pass, and Marges Lookout to Lennox Bridge.

Development of the Scenic Eastern Escarpment recreation hub will take two years to complete and include a fully accessible path from Knapsack Street track head to an upgraded Siding Lookout.

Mayor, Cr Mark Greenhill, said : "This project will not only make these walking tracks in the lower Blue Mountains more accessible to more people, but it will also help open up significant heritage areas."

A new concrete path will provide full accessibility along the top section of the Lapstone Zig Zag Walking Track, through an impressive cutting and past the former Lucasville train station. It will also connect to a new lookout with views down to the heritage Knapsack Viaduct and beyond to the Penrith plains. The Lapstone Zig Zag was a railway built in 1863-1865 to overcome,



Siding Lookout artist's impression

an otherwise insurmountable climb, up the eastern escarpment of the Blue Mountains.

The new Siding Lookout (*artist's impression above*) will wrap the edge of the existing switchback, while terraced seating will give priority views over handrails to people in wheelchairs. It will also include interpretive signage.

Council will be seeking feedback from the Blue Mountains community when the project gets underway in August 2019.

Serving our community

...key achievements

lead
inspiring leadership

Completed an organisational review

Following an extensive review of the performance of the organisation, Council adopted a continuous improvement strategy. This builds on past strengths and identifies key action areas going forward. The first focus area includes a new operating model and structure.



Secured Liveability Program funding

We secured \$18.7 million in funding under the Western Parkland City Liveability Program. Projects include upgrades to four District Parks, rejuvenation of Blackheath and Springwood town centres, redevelopment of Katoomba Aquatic Centre and implementation of parts of the Lawson Crown Lands Master Plan.



Recognised in national service awards

We were honoured in three categories at the 2018 National Local Government Customer Service Awards, including receiving the Customer Service Team of the Year Award. In 2018-2019, our Customer Contact Centre received almost 73,000 calls and helped almost 60,000 customers in person.



protect
an environmentally responsible city

Targeted illegal dumping

We joined the Western Sydney based Regional Illegal Dumping Squad (RID), which has been fighting illegal dumping in the region for the past two decades. There is about 600 illegal dumping incidents in the City annually, with the average clean-up costs of more than \$269,000 annually.



Reduced waste to landfill

We launched our Compost Hub, which links households that would like to compost with households that already do. It followed a successful trial which diverted 1,000kgs of food scraps from landfill. Since 2003 our community has reduced the volume of waste to landfill by half.



Introduced sustainability initiatives

As a Cities Powers Partnership member, we adopted 5 pledges including – to install renewable energy on Council buildings; adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all Council buildings; roll out energy efficient lighting across the LGA; and encourage sustainable transport use.



care
an inclusive, healthy and vibrant city

Celebrated our citizens

We recognised local citizens for their outstanding contribution to the community. Citizen of the Year was awarded to George Winston, who works tirelessly to campaign for justice for refugees in Australia. We also hosted a range of events including the Seniors Festival, Swampfest, IDAHOT and NAIDOC.



Provided grant funding

We provided more than \$100,000 in grants. The *Blue Mountains City of the Arts Grant Program* for 2018 recognised seven arts projects. The program was created to build on the City's reputation of being the State's inaugural City of the Arts. Also, 50 not-for-profit organisations received grant funding in the *Community Assistance Program* for 2018.



Supported the City's families

We released the 4th edition of the *Blue Mountains Guide to Services and Activities for Families*. It provides information to support families accessing local services and finding the support they need. It is part of our commitment to make our City a more child, youth and family-friendly community.



Snapshot of achievements for 2018-2019

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...

live a liveable city

Developed 20-year planning vision for land use

We consulted with the community extensively to capture aspirations for future land use. Sydney metropolitan councils are required by the NSW Government to prepare a Local Planning Statement. The statement will be our 20-year planning vision for land use in the Blue Mountains.



Planned for recreation facilities and services

Council adopted the Open Space and Recreation Strategic Plan which will guide how we provide and manage open space, and sport and recreation facilities and services, over the next ten or more years. The plan was developed following extensive research and consultation.



Upgraded fire trails across City

We worked with the member agencies of the Bush Fire Management Committee on fire trail renewal and upgrade work across the City, following NSW Government policy changes and reclassification of all trails. Detailed planning is underway for vegetation management, trail widening and surface restoration on a number of Council managed trails.



move an accessible city

Developed parking precinct plans

We developed draft Parking Precinct Plans for key towns, villages and priority tourist sites. Introducing paid parking in areas with high visitation has been identified as a priority to shift the burden from rate payers, for the maintenance and investment of tourism infrastructure



Planned for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure

We reviewed our Active Transport planning framework, to guide the development and improvement of the City's footpath and shared path network and help us prioritise works in the future. We sought feedback from the community on where footpaths, shared paths, bike routes and accessibility can be improved.



Improved local roads

Our Asphalt Resealing Program and Sealing of Unsealed Roads Program continued. The annual projects improve accessibility and amenity. More than 65,000 m² of new asphalt surface was laid. We also manage 178km of footpaths, 550km of kerb and gutter and nearly 78,000 sqm of sealed car parks.



thrive an economically sustainable city

Opened new Visitor Information Centre

The new Blue Mountains Visitor Information Centre at Glenbrook was opened. The provision of two accredited Visitor Information Centres – at Glenbrook and Echo Point – is a key part of our tourism offering. 4.7 million people visited the Blue Mountains in 2018.



Strengthened relationship with local business

We established a Mayoral Reference Group for Blue Mountains business to advise on matters such as development processes, place-based planning matters, the Local Environment Plan and tourism. We also launched the Easy to do Business program for those opening or expanding a small business.



Supported community events

We coordinated the development of a five-year event strategy and management plans for the Winter Magic Festival. This strategic work will have relevance for other local events. We are also delivering risk management training and templates for local event organisers.



Statement by Blue Mountains City Council - Ray Hadley Morning Show

On Thursday 16 May 2019, Mr Ray Hadley of Radio 2GB made two broadcasts (commencing at 10.51 AM and at 11.08 AM) in which Mr Hadley reacted to the First Interim Report of the Public Inquiry into the Blue Mountains City Council. In his reaction, Mr Hadley made false accusations about the Council and its staff (current or former).

There are times when a public body must make a strong defence of its people and itself. This is such a time. Mr Hadley's attacks are so serious, and so wrong, that the Council has no alternative but to respond. However, Mr Hadley's erroneous claims are so numerous that the Council must focus on those that are most serious and of most direct concern to the Council.

The Public Inquiry's First Interim Report—which was based on a thorough review of extensive documentation and on sworn testimony from several witnesses—held, in respect of the matters that it covered, that the Council's conduct, through the process of engaging Clyde & Co solicitors (Mr Michael Tooma) and McCullough Robertson solicitors to conduct their respective investigations, was, in all the circumstances, prudent and appropriate.

The first Interim Report also concluded that while Mr Tooma had no conflict of interest, the Council's response to the allegations that a conflict did exist, and the response of the governing body to those allegations, was reasonable and appropriate. The report concluded that no aspect of the matters raised in Term of Reference 4 involved conduct or action that was not in accordance with the obligations and duties imposed on the Council and on the governing body under the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act.

Mr Hadley knew that the Inquiry was being held. He claims to have "proof" of his allegations. He claims that he has whistle-blowers. He, like everyone else, had the opportunity to assist the Inquiry by providing information. If he had a genuine commitment to the public interest, he would have done so. But he chose not to do so.

Now Mr Hadley complains that the Commissioner reached wrong conclusions. In fact, the Commissioner was right, and his findings were based on the kind of thorough evidentiary process that Mr Hadley does not undertake.

The Inquiry has found that various allegations previously made by Mr Hadley were wrong, including his foundational—but false—allegation that the Council was wrong to appoint Clyde & Co and Mr Michael Tooma as an independent investigator because Mr Tooma had a conflict of interest arising from his acquaintance with Mr Mark Mulligan. As the Inquiry found, it was proper of the Council to appoint Mr Tooma, and he did not have a conflict of interest.

Having failed to assist the Inquiry, and now being unwilling to accept the umpire's finding, Mr Hadley, in his 16 May broadcasts, has—as seems to be his wont—used the bully pulpit of his radio station to attack the Council and its personnel instead.

Mr Hadley has claimed:

The only information I ever reported incorrectly was that Mark Mulligan was the Chief Safety Officer instead of the Acting Director, Service Delivery.

That statement was false. As the Inquiry demonstrated, Mr Hadley incorrectly reported on many matters. After the Interim Report listed ten allegations by Mr Hadley, the report states:

As will become clear from the findings that follow, except for [one matter listed in] (h) above, the assertions made by Mr Hadley were not factually accurate ...

Mr Hadley—in quibbling with the finding that Mr Tooma had no conflict of interest—said this about Mr Mulligan's role in Council's recruitment of an Asbestos Response Team (ART) in December 2017:

As Acting Service Delivery Director in 2017 Mark Mulligan ... was the convenor of the recruitment panel and presided over and made the offers of employment.

That statement was false. Although Mr Mulligan was one member of the panel, he was not its convenor, he did not preside over the making of employment offers, and he did not make the offers of employment. The statement was also irrelevant, for the recruitment of the ART had nothing to do with Mr Tooma's investigation. And the ART was not part of the Service Delivery Directorate or under Mr Mulligan's management.

Mr Hadley then proceeded to say:

This is the same asbestos response team that had members ... not deemed competent in line with the SafeWork NSW regulations.

Mr Hadley doesn't say who deemed the workers "not ... competent". SafeWork has not made that allegation. Mr Hadley is not qualified to make that assessment. Mr Hadley's claim is false.

Mr Hadley also said:

This ... same asbestos response team ... went on in 2018 to make errors with work at Katoomba depot that resulted in 13 staff being exposed to friable asbestos from poorly controlled works.

This statement is also false, and in several ways. Most importantly, the ART did not do the asbestos removal work at the Katoomba depot in 2018 to which Mr Hadley is referring: an asbestos removal company licensed by SafeWork carried out that work. And the ART did not issue the relevant clearance certificate following completion of the work: a private contractor, certified by SafeWork, issued the certificate.

In the context of referring to this occasion at Katoomba, Mr Hadley makes the further claim:

Tooma investigated the Council's incident.

That statement was false. Mr Tooma was investigating matters in 2012 to 2017, not matters in 2018—and not this matter.

Mr Hadley's most serious allegation on 16 May was this:

...the General Manager of Council and Megan TeBay have misled the Commissioner ... [b]ecause his findings heavily rely on the fact that Mulligan had nothing to do with asbestos, which is just a lie.

That statement was false—and it is scandalously so. Neither the General Manager nor Ms TeBay misled the Commissioner. Indeed, Ms TeBay did not even give evidence before the Commissioner, nor did she otherwise make any communication to the Commissioner. The General Manager's evidence was truthful, accurate and supported by extensive documentation. There was no lie—except for Mr Hadley's reckless disregard for the truth.

Mr Hadley claims:

There's no protection in Council ... for whistle blowers

That claim is wrong. As Mr Hadley knows, there are statutory protections for whistleblowers. The Council provides the proper protections.

The position Mr Hadley occupies as a radio broadcaster is one of great privilege and responsibility. He has not acted in accordance with that privilege and responsibility, even when a Public Inquiry, acting on evidence, has exposed his many false and unfounded allegations.

Mr Hadley does not like having his false allegations exposed for what they are and his response, in making further false allegations against the Council and its personnel, is reprehensible.



Blue Mountains Family Day Care - the natural choice in childcare

'I believe play is the basis of childhood and learning, so watching creative play, it's just a joy.' – Blue Mountains Family Day Care Educator Kathryn Tang.

Are you passionate about working with children and want to play a part in shaping their futures while running your own business from home?

As a Family Day Care educator you will have the flexibility to set your own work hours and fees, and establish a childcare service reflective of your passions as a teacher and carer.

There are many benefits to working in family day care and Blue Mountains Family Day Care is seeking educators to work from their homes throughout the Blue Mountains area.

You will need an early childhood qualification or the motivation to gain a Certificate III in Children's Services to start, as well as a Working with Children Check, a first aid certificate and a property inspection.

To find out more visit our website at bmcc.nsw.gov.au/blue-mountains-family-day-care/become-an-educator, call us on 4780 5280 or email familydaycare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au.



IMAGE: Family Day Care Educator, Kathryn Tang. Credit: The Big Fix.

48 community organisations receive funding in Community Assistance Program 2019

Forty-eight not-for-profit community organisations received grants totalling almost \$52,000, as part of Blue Mountains City Council's Community Assistance Program for 2019. The successful recipients for the 2019 grant program are:

- Connect Child & Family Services
- Springwood Seniors Dance Inc
- Orpheus Strings Music Society (Blue Mountains) Inc
- Friends of Everglades
- Blue Mountains Women's Health & Resource Centre
- Mountains Youth Services Team
- bentART incorporated
- Academy Singers Inc
- Blue Mountains City Band
- Fusion Australia Ltd
- CBCA (Children's Book Council of Australia) Blue Mountains Sub Branch
- Blue Mountains Orchestra Inc
- Kinship at Christmas Foundation
- Iris Society of Australia
- Blue Mountains Pipe Band
- Mountains Community Resource Network
- Greystanes Disability Services
- Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre
- Blue Mountains Junior Roller Derby League
- Blue Mountains & Penrith Woodworking Club Inc
- Elizabeth Evatt Community Legal Centre
- Katoomba Children's Cottage Inc
- Blue Mountains Family Support Service Inc T/A Thrive Services
- Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre
- Blackheath Community Op Shop Inc
- Your Music Inc
- Blue Mountains Roller Derby League Inc
- Mountains Outreach Community Services
- Blue Mountains Concert Band
- Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre
- Blackheath Area Men's Shed
- Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society Inc
- Blackheath Kookaburra Kindergarten
- Mount Victoria Community Association Inc
- Katoomba Leura Preschool
- Katoomba Neighbourhood Centre
- Blue Mountains Bridge Club
- Nepean and Blue Mountains Parkinson's Support Group
- St Hilda's Anglican Church Support
- Shared Reading NSW
- Central Mountains Men's Shed
- Hazelbrook Association Community Inc
- Bullaburra & District Progress Association
- Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre
- Springwood Neighbour Centre Co-op
- Gateway Family Services
- Lower Mountains Neighbourhood Centre
- Glenbrook Preschool Kindergarten

In addition to these successful grant applications, Council was also able to provide an extra \$2,750 each for Thrive Services (Blue Mountains Family Support Services), Gateway Family Services and Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre to contribute to emergency food relief funds.

For more information on the annual grants program, go to bmcc.nsw.gov.au/grants.

Image: Mountains Outreach Community Services was awarded a Community Assistance Program grant to purchase Billy Booksie hand puppets – that will be used in conjunction with the full-sized mascot for Paint the Blue REaD activities. The hand puppets will allow Billy Booksie to make more appearances at early childhood venues and community events.

WHAT'S ON BLUE MOUNTAINS

BLUE
MOUNTAINS
THEATRE

The Odd Angry Shot

Sunday 18 August, 3pm

Hosted by David Stratton with special guests Tom Jeffrey and Bryan Brown

A special fundraiser for the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and Associated forces Inc. and Soldier On with money from ticket sales used to provide welfare services to Australian Veterans.

Join us at the theatre for a wonderful commemorative screening of the 1979 Tom Jeffrey written/directed and co-produced film of *The Odd Angry Shot*

This seminal piece of Australian cinema is considered to be the best movie made that reflects what Vietnam was like for an Australian Soldier back in that era and to add to the screening being of particular relevance, it is featured on Vietnam Veterans' Day.

Following the screening, we have Tom Jeffrey, the director and Bryan Brown, one of the stars on stage in a Q&A hosted by esteemed film critic, David Stratton. *The Odd Angry Shot* is a war and action film with elements of great Aussie comedy, based on the book of the same title by William Nagel.

Rated M: Contains medium level violence, medium level coarse language, nudity.

Tickets \$25 and can be purchased at the Box Office, on 4723 5050 or online bluemountainstheatreandhub.com.au



Blue Mountains Writers' Festival 4.15pm, Saturday 24 August

LIBRARY PYJAMA PARTY WITH THE BANANAS IN PYJAMAS! Stories, games, craft, music and an opportunity to meet the Bananas. Come in your PJs! \$6, book at bluemountainswritersfestival.com.au



From Apollo 11 to ThunderStruck, Saturday 31 August, 2pm

Hear the riveting story of how one Australian 17 year old accidentally found himself playing a small but crucial role in the Apollo 11 landing at the Sea of Tranquillity in July 1969. FREE but bookings essential library.bmcc.nsw.gov.au.



Blue Mountains Cultural Centre: Trivia Night Friday 9 August, 6pm

Test your knowledge at the inaugural Trivia Night! Form a team of 6 or register to be placed on a table for a chance to win. \$15 / \$10 InSight Members. Bookings essential at reception or 4780 5410. bluemountainsculturalcentre.com.au



The Possibilities of Colour – Acrylic Painting Course, Wednesdays 4-25 September, 10am-1pm

Join Ashlee Bucholtz, Alumna of the National Art School, for a four-week acrylic painting course focusing on the exploration of colour. \$190 / \$180 InSight members. Bookings essential at reception or 4780 5410. All materials included.



Sunday 25 August 2019, 10am – 2pm

Bring the family to Wentworth Falls Lake to discover more about our local waterways and the creatures that live there as part of the **Waterways Festival**. Wet weather friendly event - bring your raincoat and gumboots! Sausage sizzle and coffee will be available on the day. bmcc.nsw.gov.au/waterways



Road Safety Activities August 2019

FREE Learner Driver workshop - Saturday 10 August, 2pm - 4pm, at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub, Springwood. A **FREE Child Restraint Checking Day - Saturday 24 August, 9am to 1pm**, at the Hazelwood Childcare Carpark, Hazelbrook. Bookings are essential. Call 4780 5000 to book.



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