

**SUSTAINABLE**  
**BLUE MOUNTAINS**  
**together**



# SBM Together Consultation Report

LGBTIQ Community Engagement  
May 2016



## Acknowledgements

Blue Mountains City Council acknowledges that the City of the Blue Mountains is located on the traditional lands of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples.

In addition, Blue Mountains City Council recognises the unique position Aboriginal people have in the history and culture of the Blue Mountains. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal peoples in the Blue Mountains have strong and ongoing connections to their traditional lands, cultures, heritage and history. Aboriginal people are recognised as the “Traditional Owners of the land” and it is important that this unique position is incorporated into Council’s community protocols, official ceremonies and events.



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# Introduction

Every four years the Blue Mountains City Council focusses on talking with the community about what's changed in the Blue Mountains, what kind of future we want for our community, and how we can create this future by working together.

The best outcomes for our community are achieved when we work together including all people living, working, studying or playing in the Blue Mountains. The NSW Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines for local government in NSW place specific focus on social justice principles and essential community engagement with relevant stakeholder groups including 'target groups'.

LGBTIQ People are one of the eight identified target groups. Whilst there are no exact figures for the number of LGBTIQ People in the Blue Mountains, the Australian Human Rights Commission states that up to 11% of the population in Australia are of diverse sexual orientation, sex, or gender identity. In the Blue Mountains, this would equate to 8,354 people (as at the 2011 Census).

The Blue Mountains is also home to a large number and variety of active LGBTIQ community groups, including;

- Pink Mountains
- Alphabet Soup Cinema
- Bush Lemons
- Katoomba Gay & Lesbian AA Recovery
- Lesbian Information Projects and Support (LIPS) group, as part of the Blue Mountains Women's Health Centre Inc.
- Lemon Zest
- Lesbians Got Talent
- PFLAG Blue Mountains
- PLWHA (People Living With HIV and AIDS) Blue Mountains
- The Open Door
- The Three Sisters Social Group

Pink Mountains also operates and administers an online community, the Facebook Group *Pink Mountains*, which currently has around 775 members.

This report refers to the community consultation with members of the LGBTIQ community held on 21 May 2016 during the IDAHOT event.

# Background

State legislation (Local Government Act 1993, s402), requires that each local government area has a community strategic plan that identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the future for a period of at least 10 years. In addition, the legislation requires that the plan:

- (a) Addresses civic leadership, social, environmental and economic issues in an integrated manner;
- (b) Is based on social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights;
- (c) Is adequately informed by relevant information relating to civic leadership, social, environmental and economic issues; and
- (d) Is developed having due regard to the State government's State Plan and other relevant State and regional plans of the State government.

The Community Strategic plan is a plan for the whole community. It is a plan that needs the participation of all stakeholders to realise its objectives. Reporting back also needs to reflect the success of the whole community, including agencies, in implementing the plan.

The Community Strategic Plan for the City of the Blue Mountains aims to support and enhance quality of life by focusing on the following 6 key directions:

1. Civic Leadership – Inspiring leadership
2. Looking After Environment – An environmentally responsible city
3. Using Land – A liveable city
4. Moving Around – An accessible city
5. Looking After People – An inclusive, healthy and vibrant city
6. Sustainable Economy – An economically sustainable city



# Consultation Methodology

The International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia has been supported by the Blue Mountains City Council for many years. Following discussions with Pink Mountains the Council held a pop-up stall at the IDAHOT event to inform the LGBTIQ about the on-line survey *Sustainable Blue Mountains Together* and encourage anonymous participation in the on-line survey.

## Key Findings

The survey is open to all people in the Blue Mountains. As an anonymous survey, identity and community affiliation is not identifiable.

However, key messages from the IDAHOT event included:

- Marriage Equality
- Strategies to address youth suicide among LGBTIQ people.

Supporting, advocating and resourcing both issues is part of an inclusive community which appreciates diversity. This sits within the Key Direction: Looking after People, in the Community Strategic Plan.

# Concluding Remarks

These community consultation workshops with the LGBTIQ residents in the Blue Mountains were undertaken as part of the process for reviewing and updating the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan: *Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025*.

The findings from these consultations will form part of the findings of many consultations with other community groups, government agencies, businesses, residents/ratepayers who live, work, play and study in the Blue Mountains, as outlined in the Community Engagement Strategy.

As *Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025* is reviewed and updated, there will be ongoing opportunities for community input. These include the availability of the online community engagement website, *Blue Mountains Have Your Say*, which enables all residents including the LGBTIQ community to comment.

Assuming the Local Government elections in New South Wales keep to its current timetable, the final draft of the new Community Strategic Plan, *Sustainable Blue Mountains Together*, will be placed on public exhibition in April 2017.

The Blue Mountains City Council thanks the LGBTIQ community for participating in this consultation process.

Yours sincerely,



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