



Cumberland Council
Events Strategy



OUR EVENTS CREATE
OPPORTUNITIES FOR US TO

Welcome *Belong* Succeed

Welcome to Cumberland. The heartland of Western Sydney.
A place made up of 220,000 people, each one of us with unique
experiences to share and stories to tell.

We come together in our local places, sharing our stories and
unique community life through food, culture, arts and vibrant
community activity to celebrate Cumberland. It's through our
community gatherings and events that we **belong**.

When we unite in our diversity and connect as one community
we **succeed** in creating a unique place that we are proud
to call home.

Why does Cumberland Council hold events?



Our events are the essence of community life in Cumberland. Through our events we define our place in Sydney, we tell the stories of our residents, we capture the history and the 'now' of our local area and we celebrate the diverse cultures that create a vibrant and evolving place that we are proud to call home.

A strong program of events is essential in activating and enlivening our town centres and public spaces. They also help us to recognise the natural beauty of Cumberland's expansive parks and gardens and bring to life the personality of our neighbourhoods.

Cumberland Council events provide a unique platform to express and learn about our rich and diverse cultures. They also present an evolving opportunity to support and partner with our businesses to build a stronger local economy. Most importantly, our events help strengthen our local community by creating connections and building a positive profile of Cumberland across Sydney.

The establishment of Cumberland Council in 2016 provided a great opportunity to conduct detailed research and community engagement to ensure our events program is meeting the unique needs of the local community and delivering real outcomes.

This Events Strategy is the outcome of this work and is a first step in realising the future direction and growth potential of our events. It is based on feedback received from some 1,900 people across the Council area, undertaken along with the work to develop a new Community Strategic Plan.

As the newly-formed Council's inaugural Events Strategy, this document represents a key step forward. In recognising there is still much work to be done, this Strategy also incorporates an annual review process to ensure our events continue to align with broader Council goals and that we benefit from new studies that examine the economic development capacity and impact of our events in the years to come.

It provides foundation for events in Cumberland, and covers everything from small events that enable active participation in community life, right through to rising larger outdoor festivals that attract visitors from across Sydney.

Overall, this Strategy creates new opportunities and supports the development of events that help define our new community and capture the collective spirit, history and endeavour of all the people within its boundaries.



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30 events
*100,000 residents
and visitors*

What the community told us about events

This Strategy was developed by listening to and engaging with residents, external stakeholders and staff over many months throughout 2016/17. More than 1,900 people from across Cumberland provided feedback by filling in a survey, visiting a Council stall at one of our many events, completing a telephone survey, and attending a forum or focus group since Cumberland Council was formed in May 2016.

The aim was to reach a broad cross section of stakeholders involved in local events and festivals from attendees, event staff, community event producers, sponsors, stallholders and local business.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

A telephone survey was conducted by Micromex Research in September 2016.

600 residents participated

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN SURVEY

An online survey, which was also conducted face to face at Council events, was undertaken seeking input into the vision and priorities for Cumberland.

762 surveys completed

INCLUSIVE CUMBERLAND FUTURE FORUMS

Four Community Forums were held across the Cumberland Local Government Area in September 2016.

176 engaged

CUMBERLAND EVENTS SURVEY WITH RESIDENTS

A specific online survey 'Have your say on events in Cumberland' was conducted between July and September 2016 and sought resident input on the type and preferred locations for community events. Surveys were also conducted at major Council events to encourage participation.

225 surveys completed

CUMBERLAND SURVEY WITH EVENTS ORGANISERS

An online survey with local community organisations/event producers was conducted from July to August 2016 to understand challenges in delivering events in Cumberland and Council support requirements.

153 surveys completed and additional in-depth interviews/meetings held with community partners, community event organisers and other key stakeholders such as sponsors to gain further insights.

LOCAL REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE (LRC) WORKSHOPS

Two workshop sessions were held with the LRC to gain feedback on the Interim Events Program and input into the redesign of the new Cumberland Council Events Strategy.

2 sessions held

From July 2016 to February 2017, Cumberland Council delivered 30 events under its interim Program ranging from small or targeted place based events to large scale outdoor festivals open to all.

Overall these events engaged with more than *100,000 residents and visitors* to Cumberland

Feedback we received

EVENT SATISFACTION

The Community Satisfaction Survey revealed that residents are generally satisfied with Cumberland's existing events program. This survey revealed that the Council's "festival and events program" was rated among the top ten areas for resident satisfaction.¹

From July 2016 to February 2017, some 100,000 residents and visitors engaged with the Council's Interim Events Program, which included 30 events.

PREFERRED EVENT TYPES

The top three most preferred types of events by residents included:

- Free family events.
- Large community festivals.
- Small or 'local' community festivals.

PREFERRED EVENT ACTIVITIES

In terms of preferred event activities, the feedback was that:

- Free activities, food, learning about other cultures and meeting other members of the community were rated as the most important aspects of local events.
- Music, dance and arts were rated as the most popular forms of entertainment at local events.

HOW RESIDENTS TRAVEL TO EVENTS

The majority of residents travel by car to local events, followed by bus with only a small proportion of people walking to and from events.

Respondents were divided on how far they would travel to attend an event with the greatest proportion of respondents (44%) travelling anywhere in Sydney and a significant proportion (30%) only willing to travel a few suburbs from their home.

HOW THE COMMUNITY HEARS ABOUT EVENTS

According to feedback received, Council's online communications platforms are an important way to promote local events information to our community.

The strongest communication tools listed were Facebook, the Council website, direct mail and targeted email.

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Discussions were held with community organisations about how Council can support them to host events in Cumberland. These discussions highlighted that there are both advantages and disadvantages when it comes to community organisations hosting events.

The advantages are that community organisations can use their rich community insights and connections to hold events which strongly celebrate and reflect these communities. These insights and connections may not always be achievable to the same extent at the Council level.

Community-based organisers noted they are motivated by a desire to hold events which provide a platform for social well-being and networking, along with improving broader cultural awareness and understanding, including providing a "voice" for disadvantaged groups.


However, community organisations acknowledged it was often difficult for them to obtain an appropriate level of resourcing, including securing commercial sponsorship from the business community, to allow them to deliver events. Feedback received was that, given most events are delivered free to the community, these organisations have little other way to find funding besides fundraising, sponsorship or government grants.

The majority of the community organisations surveyed felt that a dedicated Council events grant program, along with assistance with hiring Council venues, would be the best type of assistance the Council could offer. This would allow community organisations to have the necessary resourcing needed to host events. Marketing and promotion support to the community by the Council for community-produced events was also highly desired.

Council's festival
& events program
featured among the
top ten areas for
resident satisfaction

¹SEE PAGE 15 AT [HTTP://WWW.CUMBERLAND.NSW.GOV.AU/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2016/11/CUMBERLAND-COMMUNITY-REPORT-2016-10-25-FINAL.PDF](http://www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/CUMBERLAND-COMMUNITY-REPORT-2016-10-25-FINAL.PDF)



A night scene of a parade. In the foreground, a large crowd of people is visible, many wearing red and white striped shirts. A young girl in a white tank top and pink skirt is running towards the camera. A large, ornate float with a red and white striped pattern is in the foreground. A street lamp is visible in the background, and a string of lights hangs from the top left. The text "Our events tell our stories, capture our history and define our home in Cumberland" is overlaid on the image.

Our events tell our stories,
capture our history and define
our home in Cumberland



What do events do for Cumberland?

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL EVENTS

1. Activate our places
by renewing and bringing to life the personality of our public places and neighbourhoods, creating vibrant entertainment precincts that make Cumberland a great place to live and visit.

LOCALE: STORIES FROM THE PEOPLE AND PLACES OF CUMBERLAND

This new event will play an important role in amplifying the rich and unique stories, culture, arts practice and history of the people and places of Cumberland.

With this event, Council will play a central curation role. It will work closely with community, local business and other government organisations to facilitate a series of co-ordinated activities which meet the event theme and are delivered across a range of local venues and places.

This event is expected to help build and explore the unique branding and identity of Cumberland, along with celebrating our community and forming strategic collaborations.

STEPHEN HALL, VISUAL ARTIST

'MERRY-ANDREW THE LIMNER: A JOURNEY THROUGH CUMBERLAND NOW AND THEN,' EXHIBITION AT THE PEACOCK GALLERY & AUBURN ARTS STUDIO, 2017.

'Merry- Andrew the Limner: A Journey through Cumberland now and then,' exhibition at the Peacock Gallery & Auburn Arts Studio, 2017.

For his latest exhibition, Hall embraced his alter ego Merry-Andrew the Limner, a Don Quixote style figure on a lifelong quest of artistic endeavor. From the sanctuary of the Auburn Arts Studio at the Peacock Gallery, Hall sallied forth to meet the people, chase the stories and touch the history that make this area so unique.

"I have found in my time here, a vibrant, lively and fascinating place and community, a place that has certainly engaged my senses and stimulated my imagination. Not taking your surroundings for granted and walking around keen to experience what is right before you can be greatly rewarding"

STEPHEN HALL



STEPHEN HALL, THE LIMNER TO THE RESCUE AS THE CRANKS PLAY ON 2016 INK, GOUACHE AND WATERCOLOUR ON COTTON PAPER 102CM X 76CM
FROM EXHIBITION: MERRY-ANDREW THE LIMNER- A JOURNEY THROUGH CUMBERLAND, NOW AND THEN , PEACOCK GALLERY 2017

2. Celebrate our community
by enhancing our unique community identity, recognising our diversity as our strength, actively welcoming people to the area and engaging people in community activity to promote a sense of belonging.

AUSTRALIA DAY: CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

TREVOR SIMPSON, CUMBERLAND
CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2017

In 1965 Trevor began offering Ju-Jitsu classes for children in the local area. Not long after he found a permanent home at the Wenty Leagues Club thanks to Trevor's persistence. Until this day, 88 year old Trevor is still very much involved with the Ju-Jitsu Club and continues as an instructor every Wednesday night.

Over the years, Trevor has been recognised for a number of his contributions to the local community and the wider population.



*"I feel very proud and humble.
I wasn't after medals, I just wanted
to help. Get involved in the community,
respect different cultures and focus on
a particular goal"*

TREVOR SIMPSON



3. Engage and connect residents
by creating new connections and a shared understanding between people to bring us together as one community.

REFUGEE CAMP IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

Refugee Camp in My Neighbourhood reflects our commitment to welcoming all people to Cumberland and building a sense of belonging for people who have arrived as refugees.

Developed by Council, in collaboration with over 30 community organisations and settlement providers, this event shares the personal stories of Cumberland residents and their journeys to Australia. Members from refugee backgrounds, representing an array of countries, are involved in planning and designing the refugee camp, and delivering the education and engagement experiences to visitors.

This multi-award winning project attracts people from across Sydney and has lasting impacts on visitors and locals alike.

HEDAYAT'S STORY

Hedayat is a tour guide in the Camp, originally from Afghanistan, aged 16. Hedayat fled his homeland in 2009 leaving behind his siblings and mother.

He travelled to Malaysia and Indonesia and was detained on Christmas Island after a 7 day boat journey from Indonesia. He spent 2 months on Christmas Island.

Hedayat is passionate about community work and supporting refugees of all backgrounds. He volunteers at several not for profit organisations in the local area every week. He is currently completing his Honours Degree in Political Communication.

4. Build a positive profile

by promoting a positive image of Cumberland and its people through showcasing it as a place with unique cultural experiences and assets that attract visitors and create local economic development opportunities.

SYDNEY CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

In August each year, the Auburn Botanic Gardens and Peacock Gallery & Auburn Arts Studio spring into life for the Sydney Cherry Blossom Festival. This is when the groves of cherry blossom trees are at their best for only two weeks of the year.

It is a spectacle to behold, with the colourful blooms wonderfully complemented by performing artists throughout the serene surrounds of the Japanese Garden within the Auburn Botanic Gardens.

The Festival is also a favourite with enthusiasts of Japanese fashion and subcultures such as 'cosplay' – a type of performance art in which participants dress in costumes and accessories and play out character representations.

The Sydney Cherry Blossom Festival attracts visitors from across Sydney and Australia, helping promote Cumberland as a destination and providing business opportunities in the local area.

KERRIE DAVIES, AUBURN BOTANIC GARDENS CURATOR

"Auburn Botanic Gardens is the natural centre of Cumberland sitting in the Council's Riparian Zone. I see the Sydney Cherry Blossom Festival as an extremely important exhibition of horticultural principles, projects and possibilities. The educational component of this festival highlights the linkages between our natural climate and Australia's plant life. The climatic conditions are a massive influence on the Festival as it dictates the timing of the bloom and the condition of the blossoms.

Cherry Blossom is a beautiful representation of the biodiversity of the gardens, showcasing plants and flowers from other continents to over 60,000 visitors throughout its two weeks"

KERRIE DAVIES



5. Promote partnership

by working collaboratively with community, business and other key stakeholders to develop productive relationships that add value and generate benefits for the community.

This also involves supporting community organisations to run their own events, including funding support under the Cumberland Community Grants Program.

"Cherry Blossom is a beautiful representation of the biodiversity of the gardens, showcasing plants and flowers from other continents to over 60,000 visitors throughout its two weeks"

KERRIE DAVIES





What are the benefits of a more strategic approach?

The formation of Cumberland Council in May 2016 gave Council an opportunity to closely consider its strategic reasons for holding events and to set a new direction for its events program.

There are many advantages in creating an Events Strategy and aligned events program, as distinct to simply responding to ad hoc requests to hold events. These advantages include:

- Allowing the Council's events to be considered both as a group, and individually, which ensures that the proposed approach aligns with the Community Strategic Plan.
- Providing certainty about the timing and nature of events, which helps with securing high-quality entertainment talent, Council staffing and suppliers in a way which delivers value for money for Council.
- Allowing a closer consideration of how Council can link to the broader Sydney events environment, including linking to emerging Western Sydney events initiatives and other national or state wide events.
- Providing a starting point to explore new economic development opportunities generated by our events program.

Simply delivering an event for historic reasons or in an ad hoc manner can lead to inefficiencies, poor use of Council resources, or delivery of poor quality events that do not reflect the aspirations of Council or the community. It is inevitable that, overtime, Council's Event Strategy will evolve to reflect the changing nature of the community and the opportunities that become evident via new research and ongoing community and stakeholder engagement.

It is important that this Events Strategy aligns with the work done to date to develop an overall strategic direction for the Council, but also benefits from the work to come.

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL'S BRAND

Council has adopted a new branding and visual identity to align its brand to the new Cumberland Council.

The core brand platform adopted is based around the central message of 'Welcome, Belong, Succeed'. Supporting this message are a number of 'brand values' which were developed to reflect Council and the community and guide our ambition for both.

They are:

- People first
- Getting things done together
- Strength through diversity
- Youthful ambition
- Connected opportunities
- Leadership with purpose

Council's events have been specifically developed in line with the central message and values on which our brand platform is founded. What's more, events form a key component of the implementation program of the Council's brand – bringing our brand, place and community to life.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Community Strategic Plan's vision is 'Cumberland is a place we are proud to call home.' This vision reflects the fact that the concept of community pride and the desire to belong was the strongest theme emerging from all the community engagement undertaken to develop the Plan.

The Community Strategic Plan outlines the need to celebrate and support Cumberland both as a place, and a community. Events are critical to delivering this outcome. This Strategy largely explains how the Council will seek to support Cumberland's community and places, through its events program.

COUNCIL SPONSORSHIP PROSPECTUS

This Strategy will also form the basis for the development of a Sponsorship Prospectus for Council Events. This prospectus will be reviewed and released on an annual basis.

The Prospectus outlines sponsorship opportunities of Council events, including what processes the Council has put in place when considering or promoting these opportunities.

Overtime Council may also be required to re-position or re-brand some events to attract other income streams including government funding, revenue generation, as well as partnerships with community and business, particularly to support the growth of larger destination and cultural tourism events.

MOVING FORWARD

In the future, Council will explore the potential role events can play in serving as a broader engagement tool and 'touch point' with the community to benefit all business units of the Council.

We will be working to promote sustainable and waste initiatives to further decrease the impact of events on our natural areas and to educate residents on the importance of sustainable living.

Council will also undertake further research to understand the economic impact and development opportunities generated by our events and to demonstrate the tangible outcomes and benefits to the community, local businesses and event stakeholders investing in our events.

This Strategy has been developed for a three year period to enable the growth of emerging events. Whilst the growth period is often more resource intensive for Council, once established they become sustainable.

OUR BRAND VALUES

People first

Getting things
done together

*Strength through
diversity*

Youthful ambition

Connected
opportunities

**Leadership
with purpose**





PHOTO CREDIT: RHETT BUCKLEY,
LUNAR NEW YEAR, LIDCOMBE 2017

How will we measure our success?

We will be introducing measures for our events to ensure we are delivering on the outcome areas outlined in this Strategy whilst meeting the broader events needs of our community.

The following event evaluation framework will be implemented in relation to all events included in our events program.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Strategy supports an ongoing, review process. This review process enables Council to ascertain if specific events are meeting their objectives and producing outcomes for the community.

It also provides opportunities for continuous improvement, including opportunities to realign or tailor existing events to achieve growth potential or to create new events or eliminate existing ones where objectives are not being met or the event purpose has already been sufficiently achieved or reached.

Event Evaluation Framework

OUTCOME AREA	MEASURES
Activate our places	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Number, diversity and accessibility of locations where events are held across Cumberland.– Satisfaction with transport options for Council events.– Level of investment and new initiatives to create entertainment precincts.
Celebrate our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Diversity of cultures highlighted and engaged through performance, attendance or participation.– Number of opportunities created for social interaction between residents.
Engage and connect residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Public attendance at events.– Resident satisfaction with festival and event programs.– Satisfaction of event attendees, partners and suppliers.– Number of Council business units engaged in event delivery and outcomes achieved.– Agreement with access to arts and cultural activities.– Agreement with Cumberland as a harmonious, respectful and tolerant community.
Build a positive profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Level of media coverage of events, including social media engagement and reach.– Economic and social impact of event and return on investment for the local community.
Promote partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Number of community driven events supported by Council.– Number and range of community partners involved.– Level of local business engagement or support in the event.





CUMBERLAND
COUNCIL

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL EVENTS STRATEGY 2017-2019
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