

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Sutherland Shire has a fantastic culture of people lending their time, expertise and enthusiasm in support of all manner of causes, community groups and worthy initiatives. With National Volunteer Week kicking off from Monday 20 May, it's worth reflecting on the incredible contribution thousands of local volunteers make to our community, giving thanks for those who selflessly work to enhance the lives of those around them.

Throughout our community there are countless charities, sports clubs, service organisations and other worthy initiatives which simply could not operate without the support of local volunteers. Thankfully, Sutherland Shire punches well above its weight when it comes to how readily people involve themselves, with around 26,000 local residents taking part in some form of volunteering each year. In spite of the many demands on our time and the increased cost of living pressures most of us face, the fact that around 14% of all local residents still engage in some form of volunteering speaks volumes about the incredible community spirit we have.

Thanks to our volunteers

There are a number of services Council provides to our community which benefit greatly from the assistance of volunteers. At Council's Taren Point Animal Shelter, we have more than 20 passionate volunteers who perform invaluable work in caring for the huge number of animals that are

surrendered into our care and finding each of them a new home.

Similarly, our libraries benefit from the efforts of a dedicated group of volunteers, who play an instrumental role in running some of the programs on offer, particularly local students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh program who lend their technical skills to help seniors master the use of technology.

Volunteers play a pivotal role at Council's Hazelhurst Arts Centre too, carrying out a varied range of roles from staffing the front desk, to providing guided tours and supporting specialist programs such as 'Art Engage' for those living with dementia. Volunteers from the 'Friends of Hazelhurst' have remained integral to the success of the arts centre and gallery throughout its 24 year history and contribute a staggering total of more than 3,000 hours of volunteer service each year.

Our Bushcare volunteers also do an amazing job tending to the beautiful green spaces and



stunning natural surrounds for which our region is famed.

How to get involved

National Volunteer Week, marked nationwide from 20 – 26 May, is a great opportunity to recognise the selfless contributions of all our volunteers and their efforts in improving the quality of life for those around them.

This year Council is hosting a Volunteer Week Expo to showcase opportunities to get involved in volunteering, connecting prospective volunteers with the many community groups and charities which offer volunteering opportunities. It's a great way to meet people, gain vocational experience, and give back to the community.

To find out more about the Volunteer Week Expo, visit: <https://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/volunteer-week-expo>

Sutherland Shire Mayor Councillor Carmelo Pesce

Council Meeting - Monday 20 May 2024 at 6.30pm

Residents who are interested in attending ordinary Council Meetings as part of the Public Gallery can register their interest via Council's website. For more information regarding attendance, meeting dates, and to read Council Meeting minutes and business papers visit: [sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/council-meetings](https://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/council-meetings)

