

Emerging Issues Paper - Arts



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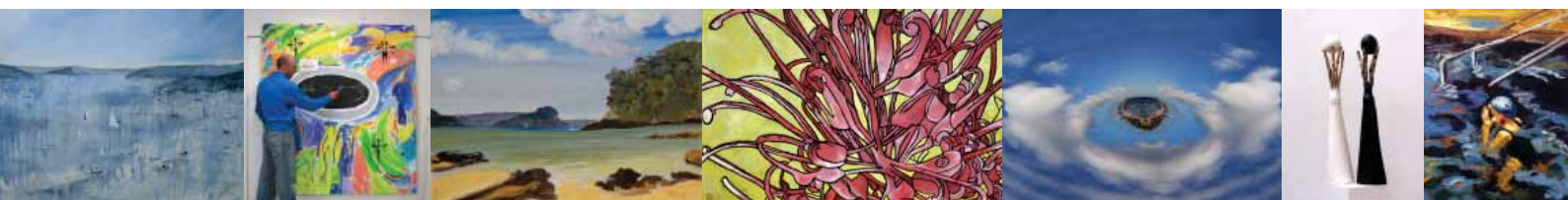
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Access to the arts make our communities healthier, safer, connected and vibrant. Data confirms that culture is valuable not only in social terms, but also economic terms (see section 9). Pittwater Council is committed to increasing the profile and provision of cultural experience.

The majority of Pittwater residents participate in the arts

Australia Council for the Arts research reveals over 93% of Australians participate in the arts. While community members may not identify as being “arty”, the vast majority of Pittwater’s residents are consuming and or creating art (see section 3). Some sections of our community are passionate about the arts, actively seeking opportunities to attend performances, gigs and exhibitions. Others find themselves engaging in the arts by accident, for example when they chance upon a public artwork or performance.

Attitudes towards the arts are becoming increasingly positive, with more and more Australians recognising the necessity of art in our communities and in school education.

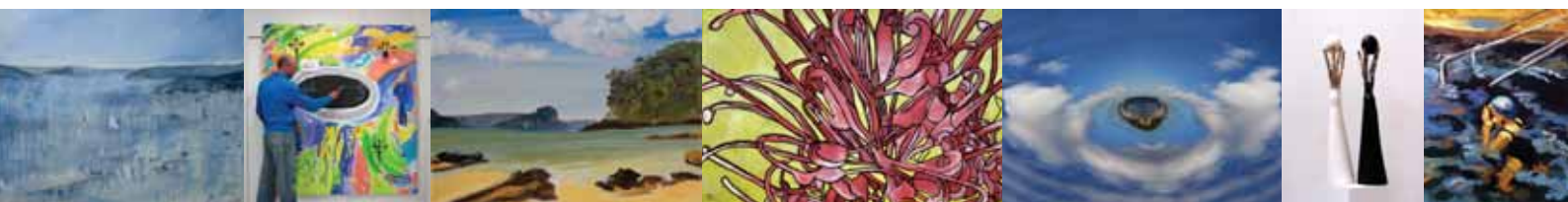
40% of Australians creatively participate in the arts – meaning they create something each year. Creative participation is more popular with young people. 60% of people aged 15 to 24 creatively participate each year. Given that 20% of Pittwater’s

population is under 20, the numbers of people making art stands to increase.

Mona Vale Library, community centres, outdoor venues, schools and businesses are the key sites for audiences to access art in Pittwater

Community centres, schools, businesses, cafes and bars are popular sites for accessing the arts in Pittwater (see section 3.3). Mona Vale Library is prized by the community – and there is potential to leverage this popularity to build access across different art forms. Avalon Recreation Centre is also a key venue for audiences. Local schools provide key arts infrastructure, playing host to a large number of music events in Pittwater.

Pittwater’s outdoor venues – particularly its village greens – accommodate a range of community and cultural activities. The community sees great possibilities to build on existing outdoor events with things like



outdoor cinema, outdoor performance and projection and light works.

The sites that play host to cultural activity are well-loved by Pittwater's community. Feedback has indicated that there is interest in dedicated cultural venues that play host to arts activity the whole year round.

Community events, festivals, market days, music performances and exhibitions are popular arts events in Pittwater

Community events, festivals, market days, music performances and exhibitions are the cultural events which draw the biggest audiences and greatest response in Pittwater. When arts events occur, they are met with strong support from the community. The concern has been raised that cultural events run irregularly, and that Pittwater wants for a more coordinated program of art activities.

The main barriers to people participating in the arts in Pittwater are: location (that art is not available locally); time constraints; transport limitations; and cost. There is merit in reducing these barriers where possible to make cultural experience more widely accessible.

Pittwater residents get drawn out of the area to attend cultural events, particularly large scale exhibitions and events in Sydney like Vivid, Sydney

Writers' Festival, and Biennale of Sydney. As Australia's destination city, Sydney hosts some of the nation's premier cultural venues and events. There are opportunities to pursue local satellite activities to major festivals, and to enhance the existing cultural landscape of Sydney by celebrating and showcasing what is unique to Pittwater.

There is a demand for an increase in the frequency and variety of arts experiences in Pittwater

Pittwater's community is passionate about increased cultural activity. The demand is not only for an increase in frequency, but an increase in variety. Community members want art experiences that move them – they want to be surprised, challenged and delighted with new, experimental and interactive art.

Pittwater's community is passionate about increased cultural activity throughout our villages

The top priority which has been identified through consultation is to have public art in our villages and urban spaces. There is a real mood of excitement in the community about making parts of Pittwater more distinct, and more reflective of the colourful people that live here. The vision outlined ranged from temporary





artworks and performances, through to festivals, interactive artworks, and permanent public art pieces.

The community perceives value in enlivening and activating our villages – using culture as a mechanism for driving greater visitation and economic returns to our commercial centres. The *Enliven Pittwater* project has been developed with these opportunities in mind. *Enliven Pittwater* is a collaboration between Council, community and business, and will deliver a program of social and cultural initiatives to energise and activate our villages. For example, under *Enliven Pittwater* Emma Anna's installation *imag_ne* will be installed in Park Street, Mona Vale between June and August 2013. The 4.5 metre sculpture will act as a visual metaphor, encouraging people in Pittwater to imagine the potential of our villages.

Residents and visitors alike appreciate Pittwater's natural environment. Pittwater beaches, bush and waterways, and the seclusion afforded by its position on a peninsula, are attractive to visitors. Opportunities exist to attract more visitors into the region through cultural tourism, as has successfully been achieved by Pittwater Artist Trail.

Environmental conservation also emerged as a theme through community consultation. Residents want to ensure that local flora and fauna is respected, and in the development of any outdoor programs consideration of its long term preservation is maintained.

The artistic community in Pittwater is defined by an exceptional willingness to collaborate and cooperate for the greater community good

A clear vision has been outlined for coupling Pittwater's unique natural environment with art

In addition to our villages, a clear vision has been outlined for coupling Pittwater's unique natural environment with art. The community has indicated they want something like Bondi's Sculpture by the Sea in Pittwater. The marriage between art and nature has great possibility across different art forms. Another suggestion was to host bands on barges on our waterways, playing to shore-based picnickers.

Pittwater is a local government area which is relatively specialised in creative arts¹. 1% of the available local jobs in Pittwater are in arts and heritage, which is considerably higher than the Greater Sydney statistical division. Furthermore, proportionally more Pittwater residents are employed in the arts sector than the Sydney average. Pittwater has been identified as sharing characteristics with well-known arts areas such as Byron Bay and the Blue Mountains².



The artistic community in Pittwater is defined by an exceptional willingness to collaborate and cooperate for the greater community good. Consultation yielded stories of artists helping their peers, running charity auctions, musicians holding fundraising events, and donations of instruments to local schools.

There are exceptionally talented creative people in Pittwater. However, there is a disconnect between the world-class produce that is developed here, and the access local audiences experience. There is opportunity to showcase the excellence and creativity in Pittwater, to the benefit of art practitioners and audiences alike.

Creative people in Pittwater experience a shortfall in the variety and availability of spaces to present their craft. This experience is true of all art forms, but voiced most strongly by the visual arts and music communities. Space for the development of work is also sought, with creative people interested in shared studio spaces and increased tuition and rehearsal spaces.

Creative people in Pittwater experience a shortfall in the variety and availability of spaces to present their craft

Artist demands for space come at a time when pop-up spaces, short-term leases, and temporary exhibitions in

private/public spaces are experiencing great popularity across Australia. There are opportunities to explore: opening up access to existing spaces; planning for an outdoor performance stage; and the feasibility of additional cultural venues in Pittwater.

More generally, practitioners in Pittwater want increased support. Professional development, local opportunities, sales/earning/commission opportunities and grants are key priorities. Fantastic outcomes occur when artists are supported, and in recognition of this Council will continue to pursue options for increased training and support for artists.



Cultural policies are being developed at the local, state and federal level

Policy development at the national, state and local level is of interest to the Pittwater community. While the development of a national cultural policy speaks of a clearer direction and increased funding for the arts, at a state level funding through Arts NSW has reduced over the last few years. A move away from funding capital works has implications for Pittwater. In the current climate it would be difficult for Council to secure funding for arts infrastructure from Arts NSW.

Community members have highlighted the importance of art being on the agenda in planning, developing and building processes. At a local





level, there are opportunities to build the profile of art in planning and development processes. Potential also exists for Council to continue to support artists, and explore how

the community and Council can best work together to ensure that arts organisations can navigate compliance and risk issues associated with cultural events and spaces.

2 BACKGROUND, DEFINITIONS AND LOCAL CONTEXT

2.1 Background

This Arts Paper takes the form of an emerging issues paper within *Live. Connect. Participate. Pittwater's Social Plan 2012 – 2016*. Pittwater's *Social Plan* was developed as a living document, and has the capacity to be supplemented with additional papers during its four year life span.

An Arts Paper is timely. In 2011 *Living Pittwater: Our Cultural Plan 2006 – 2011*, Pittwater Council's first cultural plan expired. A review of the plan revealed that the process of developing a cultural plan had been as significant as the resulting document. The community consultation which fed into the previous cultural plan generated conversations, networks and projects at a grass roots level. With this in mind, Pittwater Council approached the new opportunity for arts planning and vision making with a sense of anticipation.

Live. Connect. Participate. Pittwater's Social Plan 2012 – 2016 is an appropriate avenue for discussing and promoting arts and cultural development. The *Social Plan* consists of a number of discussion

papers, addressing social and community trends and priorities in the Pittwater area, including recreational, lifestyle, health, cultural, housing and demographic trends. These themes are intrinsically linked with how and why communities access and create art, and the benefits communities enjoy as a result of art. The Arts Paper builds upon the research compiled through the *Social Plan*, and delves further into describing the local arts scene.

The Arts Paper takes a discussion form. It provides a snapshot of the local arts scene, and aims to drive activity by highlighting opportunities and challenges. It has the potential to be a tool for both Council staff, and for community groups seeking data for business or arts planning, and for individual practitioners looking to describe or frame their practice.

In practice, the opportunities and challenges highlighted in the Arts Paper and *Social Plan* will inform Council's planning and resource allocation through the Annual Delivery Plan and Budget.

Pittwater Council's Arts Paper



has been produced at a time where arts and culture policies are being developed by different levels of government. The Federal Government's *Creative Australia* released in March 2013 is the first national cultural policy in twenty years. A national cultural policy – and associated resource allocation – speaks of an increased understanding of the value, both social and economic, of the arts. At state

level, a working party to strengthen creative industries in NSW has been established, however funding to arts education through TAFE has been withdrawn. At Sydney level, Sydney City is developing its first cultural plan.

Pittwater has an interest in the priorities outlined in local, state and federal plans, and will continue to gauge how policy will play out at a local level.

2020 COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Informing the Strategies within the Community Strategic Plan





2.2 Arts Paper development

The Arts Paper has been developed through the following process.



Review of expired cultural plan (expired 2011)



Audit of existing arts assets in Pittwater and surrounding region



Literature Review of papers, articles, plans and legislation that relates to the arts. This includes: Pittwater Council planning documents; external council plans; state, national and international arts policy documents; legislation; research reports; exhibition and event collateral



Consultation with the community



Targeted interviews with peak bodies for the arts, and with local arts and culture organisations



Draft paper formulated



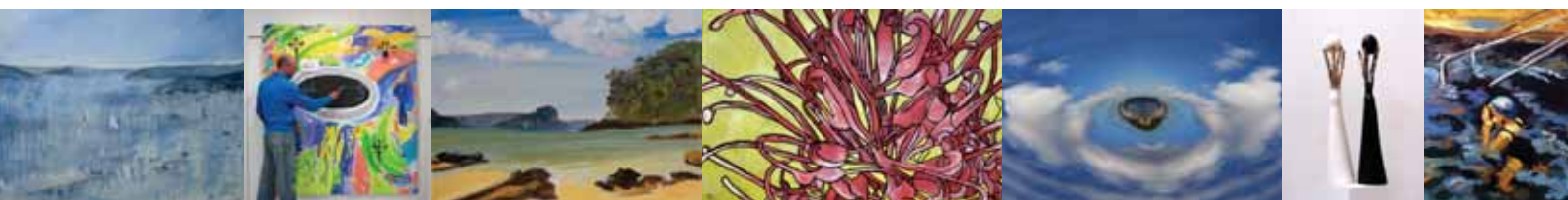
Draft paper on exhibition for 28 days - 3 June - 2 July 2013



Feedback from the exhibition period integrated into the paper



Final paper will go before Council in September 2013



A substantial body of community consultation underpins the Arts Paper.

Consultation has been conducted by Council through:

- Pittwater 2025 Community Strategic Plan (draft)
- Pittwater Open Space and Recreation Strategy
- *Live, Connect, Participate. Pittwater Social Plan 2012 -2016*
- An ongoing program of youth consultation
- Ongoing conversations and community development work

Additional consultation was devised to draw out community attitudes relating to the arts. Where possible the consultation program utilised and showcased the skills of local creative people. More than 350 submissions were received through the consultation process.

Community consultation included:

- Online audience survey through surveymonkey
- Creative spaces – a consultative exhibition. The consultation consisted of photographs depicting public art and creative use of space. Visitors to Avalon Recreation Centre were invited to put coloured dots on ideas and images that could translate to Pittwater.
- Makers forum – a workshop for local creative people to voice their priorities.

- Mona Vale Library – Writing on the wall. The entry foyer to Mona Vale Library was transformed into a blank canvas where residents could share their vision for the arts in Pittwater through pictures, words and symbols.
- Picnic Perfect - Village Park, Mona Vale was transformed into a picturesque picnic spot. People were encouraged to recline in a deck chair, sit in the shade of an umbrella and even participate in free tai chi classes. Picnic Perfect allowed locals to talk about their vision for the arts in a relaxed environment and consider different aspects of creativity by activating Village Park in a different way
- Facebook questions - The *I Love Pittwater* facebook page was utilised to show photos of different case studies of creative projects. “Fans” were invited to offer feedback.
- Conversations - Pittwater Council staff visited various events to ask the community about the arts in Pittwater. Staff engaged in conversations in person, over the phone and electronically.





2.3 Definitions

Defining art can be difficult. In 1917 Marcel Duchamp presented a urinal for exhibition titled *Fountain*, and created a stir about what constitutes art. The task of defining art is no easier today.

Art takes a great number of forms and means different things to different people. Some define art in philosophical terms, with expression of ideas and meanings as its key purpose or the artist's intention as paramount. Art can also be defined in aesthetic terms, or the word "art" can be used to indicate a genre.

Pittwater Council understands that art, culture and the creative industries are interconnected, and that definitions of these terms will continue to evolve as art and technology develop. The Arts Paper will not aim to provide exhaustive classification of these terms, focusing instead on opportunities and challenges which exist locally.

A broad approach is taken to the application of the word "art". It includes art forms used in Australia Council for the Arts research – broadly visual arts and crafts; theatre dance and circus; literature; and music³. Film-making, and design (object, jewellery) are also included under the umbrella of "art". Acting and performance, too, are represented in the paper.

This paper acknowledges that there is a broad range of industries and

activities that are creative. Examples include: architecture; web-design; advertising; make-up and fashion. This paper will touch briefly on the topic of creative industries and refers readers to Pittwater Council's *Economic Development Plan*, which has the capacity to use culture and creativity as a driver of economic outcomes. Pittwater Council's *Enliven Pittwater* project is activating public spaces and driving economic and social development through a strategic program of cultural, social and business events and networks.

The arts industry has ties with - and influence upon - sectors that are not traditionally perceived as creative. There is significant interplay between art and health, business, sustainability, urban planning, and diplomatic relations to name a few examples. Within the limited scope of an Arts Paper, these themes can only be given cursory attention. However, key opportunities and challenges as they relate to Pittwater's cultural development will be flagged, as will areas which require deeper analysis.

For the purpose of this paper, involvement in the arts will be described in terms of creative and receptive participation⁴. *Creative participation* means making or producing something. *Receptive participation* is experiencing art as an audience or viewer, for example watching a music gig or reading literature. This language has been adopted from the Australia Council for



the Arts' 2010 report *More than just bums on seats: Australian participation in the arts*, which constitutes the largest survey of arts participation conducted in Australian history.

2.4 Geography as part of Pittwater's identity

Understanding Pittwater's art scene in a broader geographic context is crucial to building new audiences locally, and developing opportunities for our local artists.

Pittwater's geography and natural environment play a defining role on our cultural identity. Pittwater's beaches, waterways and bush are a source of great inspiration for artists. There are a host of local artists that pay homage to the environment in their work – for example landscape painters Mark Rhodes and Neil Shennen, water-colourist Tracy Smith, and sculptor/painter Cindy Goode Milman.

Pittwater's geography affords creative practitioners a peaceful, relatively secluded place to work. Many artists express the desire to preserve and celebrate the local environment, flora and fauna. For some artists, this concern is evident in their work, such as Nick Hall's haunting depictions of native animals on the brink of extinction, or in Paul Ferman's photos of household waste awaiting pickup. Other artists have voiced a desire for cultural programs to be developed in consultation with environmental and sustainability experts.

Pittwater's population has stayed relatively stable over the last decade while Sydney and the Western suburbs have boomed. While technological advances make the world progressively "smaller", in Pittwater the surfer, environmentalist and creative cultures that emerged in the 1970s have been in some part maintained. The implication is that Pittwater continues to be a geographical and cultural haven for its residents, and highly attractive to holiday-making families.



*"Having grown up on the south coast, the northern beaches has held a mythic quality for me... the home of...surfing world magazine, and the world conquering surfers. The peninsula was 'home' in the early seventies to most of the film and artistic community at one time or another..."*³

There is potential to maintain and grow audiences by building on cultural tourism in the region. Coupling cultural experience with holiday experience is something that has been successfully delivered by Pittwater Council's ArtZpace project and Pittwater Community Art's Pittwater Artist Trail. The biennial ArtZpace exhibition capitalises upon the influx of summer holiday-makers to showcase local artists to a wider audience.





In the case of the Artist Trail, it is the combination of showcasing local artists and the environment that is attractive to locals and tourists alike.

2.5 Pittwater as part of the Northern Beaches and greater Sydney

Pittwater local government area shares borders with Kuringai and Warringah Councils, with Warringah acting as a corridor to Manly Council. Residents of Sydney's Northern Beaches move freely between Pittwater, Warringah and Manly for work and recreation.

As part of the Northern Beaches, Pittwater locals have access to a number of regional venues, including Glen Street Theatre, Frenchs Forest, Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Eramboo Artist Environment in Terrey Hills and the Tramshed Community Centre in Narrabeen. The cultural landscape in Northern Sydney has been enhanced by the opening of the Concourse in Chatswood in 2011. The Concourse includes a concert hall, theatre, visual art exhibition spaces, rehearsal rooms, and permanent outdoor screen.

Pittwater lies on the outskirts of Sydney, some 30 kilometres from Sydney CBD. As an international city, tourist destination and cultural hub, Sydney boasts some of the state's – and nation's – premier cultural venues. Examples include: the Sydney Opera House; Art Gallery of NSW; Museum of Contemporary Art;

Sydney Dance Company; Bangarra Dance Theatre; Belvoir Street Theatre; State Theatre; Australian Museum; Australian National Maritime Museum; Fox Studios; and Enmore Theatre.

Sydney also delivers a strong program of festivals and events. Sydney Festival, Art Month, Art and About, Sydney Writers' Festival, the Biennale of Sydney and Vivid are some of art events which attract local, national and international guests. Some councils and venues have successfully positioned themselves as satellite locations to these events. For example, Mosman Art Gallery presented Megan Heyward's *Notes for walking*, a fusion of audio guide, history and adventure tour of Middle Head, as part of the 2013 Sydney Festival. Parramatta was a dual venue for the Sydney Festival in 2013. The possibility of operating as an outpost for existing activities is something that Pittwater Council may consider pursuing.

Sydney centre need not be the only site that Pittwater Council consider developing links with. Exploring opportunities to collaborate with sites with a similar geographic profile, for example Bondi, or social profile may yield interesting cultural, economic and social results for Pittwater.



3 PARTICIPATION, ACCESS AND MOTIVATION

3.1 Almost everyone participates in the arts

Everyone has a right to participate in the arts.

The right to participate in the cultural life of the community is enshrined in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights⁶. Pittwater Council appreciates that participation in the arts is a fundamental element of community well-being, and recognises there is substantial research that supports the premise that access to the arts has enormous community, health and economic benefits.

Whether Pittwater's residents think of themselves as "arty" or not, the fact remains that the vast majority of them are receptive participants in the arts. The bulk of residents are consuming art – be it through reading a book, seeing a play, watching dance or theatre, or listening to music – in some form or another.


Literature and libraries are particularly popular in Pittwater and nationally. 84% of Australians read literature each year. Given the Australia Council findings that 13% of Australians aged 15 and over participate in the arts exclusively through reading, there is opportunity to grow different kinds of art engagement within this demographic.

Importantly, Australia Council for the Arts research indicates that Australians' attitudes toward the arts are increasingly positive. Art is perceived as an important part of our education. Australians understand you can enjoy sports and the arts; and the belief that art is elitist or too expensive is decreasing.⁸

People aged 15 – 24 generally have higher rates of participation in the arts – particularly in creative participation. With Pittwater's youth and child heavy demographic, the incidence of creative participation stands to increase.



93%
of Australians
participate in the arts



93% of Australians participate in the arts in at least one art form each year⁷. This statistic is derived from research which does not include watching films or going to the movies. Had it done so, the percentage would have been higher still – cinema going continues to be the most popular form of participating in the arts.





3.2 Motivation for participation

People participate in the arts for all kinds of reasons, and sometimes for no reason at all. At one end of the spectrum, engagement with the arts can be accidental, brief, or fickle. At the other end it can be considered, contemplative, even spiritual.

Art can slow down the world to let an idea be contemplated. It can reflect, satirize, wound and wow! It can make people laugh, cry and dance. It can also leave people bewildered, and irritated. The sheer variety of forms that art can take mean that audiences participate for all kinds of reasons. Pittwater audiences are no different.

“An uplifting experience leading to a greater understanding of our culture, people, history, connections, and a better quality and richness of life”

Survey respondent



When asked what they get out of the arts, local residents indicated that they experienced multiple benefits. In order of preference participants identified: emotional experience; socialising with friends and family; connecting with the community; increased knowledge; self-improvement; and meeting new people.

The value of emotional engagement is reflected through the Pittwater Artist Trail. The trail sees local artists open

their homes to visitors, who are able to gain an insight into the creative process. Emotional connection is the Trail's strongest tool: audiences are attracted to an opportunity to connect with artists and to hear firsthand what inspires their work. Accounts from the Trail's organisers indicate that visitors have forged really strong bonds with the exhibiting artists, with audiences being moved to tears by their experiences on the Trail.

Audience research into attendance at galleries in Australia supports the idea that there are different audience segments with different motives for attendance⁹. The same learnings can be applied to Pittwater's receptive participants. Fundamentally there is not a one-size-fits-all solution for Pittwater's audiences, but rather a great variety of cultural needs, wants and interests.

3.3 Where and how audiences access art in Pittwater

There are many locations and manners in which audiences access art in Pittwater. Because of the breadth of art forms that exist, providing a comprehensive picture of how audiences access the arts is impossible. However, a range of observations can be made about the kinds of sites and activities that are most popular.

In short, Pittwater's libraries, community centres, open spaces, schools, businesses and cafes/bars are popular venues. In terms of



events, community cultural activities, outdoor events, exhibitions and music are well attended in the Pittwater region.

Pittwater's libraries – particularly **Mona Vale Library** – are cherished by the community. The Mona Vale library attracts 180 000 visitors annually. Increasingly libraries are moving from serving as academic spaces to serving as community spaces. This is true of Mona Vale, which alongside its core business of loans and managing a local history collection, runs a variety of additional outreach and on-site programs. Programs include: exhibitions; technological education; author talks; Lego workshops; reading for babies and children; writing workshops and competitions; HSC study sessions; and film nights. Rooms at Mona Vale Library are in high demand and the library struggles to provide quiet areas or study spaces in the face of this popularity. Keeping in

mind the popularity that Mona Vale Library enjoys, there is great potential to leverage Mona Vale Library as a site for other forms of cultural engagement.

Other Council buildings (see images on next page) are also sites for audiences to access arts. Community centres are utilised by a range of individuals and groups that present creative output. In the last five years, Council has enabled greater arts access by prioritising cultural bookings at given times during the year. The results have been positive. For example, each January the Avalon Recreation Centre is transformed into an exhibition space. In 2013 there were in excess of 25 artists exhibiting, with thousands of visitors attending, and impressive sales generated. There is opportunity to enhance and promote these types of events across Pittwater's villages, and to further utilise Council's buildings by turning blank walls into exhibition sites.





VENUES

Key cultural activities which audiences accessed 2012/2-13

AVALON RECREATION CENTRE

- ArtZpace
- Artspot
- Exhibitions
- Textiles
- Tibetan monks
- Dance
- Music performances
- Art and craft markets
- Art classes

COASTAL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

- Programs for children

MONA VALE MEMORIAL HALL

- Art and craft markets
- Exhibitions

NEWPORT COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Children's drama performance
- Art and crafts markets
- Exhibitions

MONA VALE LIBRARY

- Books for loan
- Free wifi
- Technology classes
- Lego at the library
- Author talks
- Film nights
- Writing competitions
- Exhibitions
- Book clubs
- Knitting groups
- Local history unit
- History talks

SCOTLAND ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Scotland Island Player theatre performances

AVALON ANNEX

- Arts consultations
- Exhibitions
- Dance

ELANORA HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CENTRE

- Elanora Players theatre performances

AVALON LIBRARY

- Author talks
- Exhibitions



The community enjoys exhibitions – this can be seen by the huge crowds that local exhibitions draw, as well as how many people travel out of the region to access exhibitions. Painters Gallery is a **commercial gallery** that provides an ongoing site for audiences to access exhibitions, and also delivers a program of talks, markets stalls, workshops and openings. Painters Gallery has endured, in contrast to a trend which has seen a significant number of commercial galleries close in Pittwater.

Other venues that are well-utilised by audiences in Pittwater include **schools, clubs, retail spaces and cafes and bars**. A number of schools in Pittwater act as key music venues, opening their doors to the wider community. Barrenjoey High School and Pittwater High School are notable examples. Both schools draw significant audiences through the Barrenjoey Music Room and Sydney Northern Beaches Symphonic Wind Ensemble respectively. Loquat Valley Anglican Primary School also acts as an important venue in hosting performers sourced by the Peninsular Music Club. Local RSL clubs play host to musicians and other types of performance.

Retail and business spaces also provide access to cultural experience. Book stores such as Bookoccino and Berkelouw Books couple retail with community programs, and Pittwater's cafes and bars often provide de-facto performance spaces for musicians.

Outdoor spaces are key venues for cultural events in Pittwater. In recognition of community wants, Council's planning processes have ensured that Pittwater's parks, recreation spaces and village greens are maintained and enhanced in a manner that is conducive to their use as locales for the arts. These sites play host to a range of events, and those which couple cultural activity and being outdoors always draw impressive crowds. Council facilitates a range of outdoor community events and often layers these events with arts activities. Some popular examples include Dog Day by the Bay, Carols in the Park, the weekly organic food market, twilight markets and annual Food and Wine Fair.

The community continues to demand that the program of outdoor cultural events be increased (see section 5.7). Outdoor cinema, drive in (to the park) cinema, festivals, projection and light shows, are just some of the suggestions the community submitted.

While there are a range of venues that provide access to the arts locally, there is opportunity to improve the level of access. Potential strategies include: awareness promotion; delivering more programs; and developing more sites where arts activities occur.

Pittwater Council delivers a strong program of **community and cultural events** (see section 7.1). Some of these events, such as Youth Saving the World and Youth Week, are



aligned with national and international programs. Regionally, Pittwater Council works with Manly, Warringah and Mosman Councils to deliver the annual 24/7 Youth Film Festival and film-making workshops. Pittwater collaborates with ten other local governments and dozens of not-for-profit organisations to produce the annual Guringai Festival.

Pittwater Council's cultural program includes repeat and one-off events. ArtZpace, for example, is a biennial project which sees emerging artists develop an exhibition under the guidance of a professional Coordinator. Responsive programming has enabled Council to deliver events such as 100YPP, an online photo competition encouraging young people to share a day in their lives.

Audiences in Pittwater enjoy a range of **programs which are run by local arts groups**. Pittwater Community Arts (PCA), for example, oversees the much loved biennial ArtFest and Art in the Park; annual PCA exhibition; heritage week activities; the Pittwater Artist Trail and school arts prizes. Elanora Players, Barrenjoey Music Room, Sydney Northern Beaches Symphonic Wind Ensemble (SNBSWE) and the Peninsula Music Club deliver a number of performances throughout each year. The Royal Motor Yacht Club's annual Marine Exhibition is unparalleled in the number of nautical images presented.

Community cultural events tend to be very popular in Pittwater. Events that are inclusive, family-friendly, and bring people of different ages together are well attended. Local students have offered feedback that there is potential to grow existing events into more of a festival atmosphere by adding music or performance. For example, Big Air School organised a skate competition in Avalon in late 2012, which included MCing by hip-hop artist Morganics. The event harnessed music, live rhymes and a dance-off to make the skate comp more exciting and dynamic.

Pittwater audiences are **excited about the possibility of new and increased** cultural experiences in their own locality. Residents emphatically reject the stereotype of the "insular peninsula", and insist that Pittwater residents would embrace increased access to cultural experience. There was feedback from residents that the provision of art experiences was not as great as it should be, and that particularly public art, experimental art, exhibitions and dynamic art experiences were lacking. The observation has also been made that there is a sameness about the art on offer – that in public spaces and exhibitions it is often the same artists' work on display.

A wealth of ideas has been generated by audience members as to how they would like Pittwater's arts scene to look. The strongest demands were for increased art and performance in





public or outdoor spaces (see section 5 - Creative Spaces). Interest was expressed in greater access to music, performance and exhibitions; targeted projects for teenaged and ageing residents; and increased opportunities for local creatives.

3.4 Travelling out of the region to access culture

Many people supplement local experience by travelling out of Pittwater to access the arts. Of the 90% of survey respondents who indicated that they left the region to attend art events, the majority indicated that some form of music – gigs, concerts, jazz – would entice them from the peninsular. Exhibitions, theatre and festivals were also activities residents would travel to.

Survey respondents tended to identify a willingness to travel to events or venues outside the Northern Beaches, most particularly Sydney city. Large cultural venues like the Art Gallery of NSW, Opera House and the Museum of Contemporary Art were highlighted, as were contemporary music and comedy venues such as the Enmore Theatre and the Basement. Large scale festivals and popular exhibitions were also draw cards for Pittwater audiences, including: the Biennale of Sydney, Bondi's Sculpture by the Sea, Sydney Festival, Tropfest and Vivid.

venues
Concerts Gigs
dance Performances
Theatre **Festivals** Sydney
Trail **Live** Jazz
Exhibitions

Key words generated in community consultation about what draws audiences out of the area.



It is not surprising to discover that local audiences travel to the city to access events. Sydney plays host to some of the country's richest collections and cultural venues. The pull that these venues have – in terms of attracting international performances, exhibitions and artists – and the sheer variety of cultural activities on offer are appealing to a wide range of audiences.

There is value in recognising that Pittwater residents will continue to be attracted to events outside the region, at the same time as acknowledging the necessity to provide access to culture at a local level. The challenge for Pittwater is to identify what events we want to align ourselves with, and what programs located closer to home can best supplement what is accessible in the city.

3.5 Access to the arts – proximity, quality and regularity

The proximity, quality and regularity of arts access all contribute to the overall impression of a local arts scene. As the community has confirmed, each of these facets of arts access are equally important. It is vital to recognise that Pittwater's cultural scene will not reach its full potential without offering regular access to high quality art experience in the local area.

Proximity to cultural experience is becoming increasingly important with Australia's various generational profiles. Generation X residents

have a desire to live in walkable neighbourhoods with a high level of amenity. This demographic represents roughly 30% of Pittwater's population. For the ageing population too, proximity and mobility constraints can inform how easily they access the arts. In Pittwater, where post-retirement, seniors and frail aged people are over-represented compared to Sydney averages, local service provision is important.

The frequency or regularity of arts access is also important. In Pittwater there tends to be a trend towards festivals and community events which are very well attended, rather than dedicated sites where culture can be accessed regularly. Audiences feel strongly about maintaining the festivals, markets and community events, but have indicated that there is merit in augmenting this with a range of ongoing programs.



"It should be easy to come across and frequent. In the city it is easy to come by any type of art with no real effort"

Survey respondent reflecting on making Pittwater's villages more vibrant

Quality is a key facet of access to the arts. Addressed in some detail in section **Art(ists) at the heart**, quality and innovation is what underpins the most successful art engagement. Audiences are attracted to excellence, to experiences which move them, and allow them to look at the world in a different light. Audiences in





Pittwater have indicated that there is possibility to improve the quality of art experiences available locally (see section 5 - Creative Spaces).

3.6 Creative participation

Over 40% of Australians creatively participate in the arts – meaning that they create or produce something each year. This percentage is greater in people aged 15 to 24 years, where 60% creatively participate each year. Creative participation is largely undertaken as a hobby. Craft pursuits like jewellery and sewing are popular, as are art forms which have a social component such as dance¹⁰.

Research undertaken by City of Sydney reflected a boom in creative participation in its locality. Its preliminary findings suggest “individual creative participation/skills development is growing at exponential rates”, particularly in craft fields such as jewellery¹¹.

Increased participation in craft aligns with current social and fashion trends. An ethos of DIY, thriftiness, and with an appreciation of good design is a burgeoning in Australia. One need look no further than *Meet me at Mike's* – a popular book showcasing craft projects – to see these values in practise. The rising popularity of craft and DIY projects can be felt on the Northern Beaches too.

Observing arts trends – and the fashion and social trends that underpin them – can be useful for programming. It is worth recognising

that trends can be temporary, and important for Council to aim to be responsive and adaptive to new modes of expression and creativity as they arise.

Art classes are a very popular mode of participation in Pittwater. 65% of survey respondents participate in “art” classes (where the term “art” is used broadly). In addition to this, many participate in informal learning environments, such as book clubs and craft circles. Most people attend classes to improve their skills (68%), while social interaction and critical feedback were motivators for others. Classes tend to be populated by locals. The majority of Pittwater residents attending classes do so in Pittwater or Warringah. The exception is where they are learning a highly specialised skill or gaining an accreditation. In addition to the classes that are available, young people have expressed interest in laid-back learning environments and drop in classes.

In Pittwater and surrounding areas there are a variety of classes and learning environments available. Private classes and tuition are available through individual's studios/workshops and through Council's community centres. Classes cover a broad range of creative disciplines, with music, painting, drawing, photography, drama and dance being well represented. Across the Northern Beaches, Eramboo Artist Environment, the Tramshed Community Centre,



Manly Art Gallery and the Northern Beaches Orchestra provide education and professional development opportunities.

Art teachers have indicated that there are some barriers to running classes locally. Some teachers have indicated insurance can be a hurdle, while others have indicated that they require more specialised equipment or spaces. Opportunities exist to explore creative solutions to these challenges – such as a communal insurance policy, a register of existing studios/spaces and equipment, or communicating between teachers about available spaces for rent.

Professional artists are interested in opportunities to learn from their peers. One local writer reflected that while she felt that a writers' circle would be popular, she was reticent to coordinate a group, and be responsible for arranging a venue and managing participants. A number of local creative people would welcome opportunities to link in with other artists, and engage in critique, discussion and even collaboration. Eramboo provides an important service in this regard, opening its doors on a monthly basis to artists seeking critical feedback. Local artists indicated in addition to what Eramboo provides, a forum for interdisciplinary connection (be it in person or virtual) would be welcome. There is opportunity for gauging how networks and connections between artists can

be facilitated, and for investigating what platforms are best suited to this purpose.

3.7 Barriers to participation

Understanding the barriers to arts participation in Pittwater requires an understanding of the local arts scene, along with local social, geographic and demographic phenomena that are at play.

Historically, consultation with the community – particularly with young people – has indicated that geographic isolation and limited transport can be inhibitors to participation. With 20% of the population aged under 20, it is important to consider providing cultural experiences locally. This also stands true for older and potentially less mobile residents.

Cost is often cited as a prohibitive factor in arts participation. Australia Council research demonstrates that aside from reading, households with incomes of less than \$30 000 annually are much less likely to participate in “each of the main art forms that required attendance at a venue outside the home”¹². It is not illogical to conclude that low-income households are deterred by entrance fees. They are not deterred by the venue in and of itself. The Museums & Galleries NSW Audience Participation study reflected that galleries can be hubs for people of all different income levels¹³.





While there are small pockets of economic disadvantage in Pittwater, by and large the residents of Pittwater experience above average earnings. Despite this, when asked to rank a list of factors which might inhibit their participation, local survey respondents nominated cost as a factor. This finding requires more research, but it may be that the cost of travel to an event, or on costs such as parking and childcare figure in peoples' decisions to attend or not attend art events and programs.

Many Pittwater residents indicated that a lack of time made it difficult to participate in the arts. Pittwater's residents are busy. Consultation with students reflects that young people are heavily committed time-wise through study, employment and extra-curricular activities. Many adults in Pittwater that are working, commuting and managing social and family commitments feel that they cannot afford to set aside time to attend art events. With this finding in mind, it becomes increasingly important to provide art locally that can be quickly – even accidentally – accessed.

In the community survey, the issue that the most people identified as a barrier to participation was location. 35% of respondents indicated that the fact that a lack of local availability of art limited their participation in the arts. This response indicates a perception that there is a lack of local arts activity. The fact that this perception exists, particularly when Pittwater boasts such a large community of artists, indicates that there are real possibilities to grow audience participation in local art activities. See **section 5** for more detail.

As outlined in 3.5, the regularity and quality of art experiences on offer can also be significant hurdles to participation.



4 ART(ISTS) AT THE HEART

4.1 Creative people at the heart of artistic excellence

Creative people are the driving force behind cultural activities and engagement. Pittwater's community has advocated strongly for more opportunities for local artists. The community appreciates that where creative people are given support, amazing outcomes will flourish.

As noted in 6.2, in Australia and internationally arts programming is becoming more and more important. Governments, galleries, libraries and museums employ public programs as a mechanism for connecting and growing audiences. Increasingly, audiences have come to expect varied offerings in cultural programming in their communities in the form of talks, events, workshops and festivals. It is important to recognise that creative people are at the heart of successful programming. As identified in 3.5, there is opportunity to increase arts and cultural programs in Pittwater. Likewise, opportunities exist to ensure that artists are key drivers of arts programs.

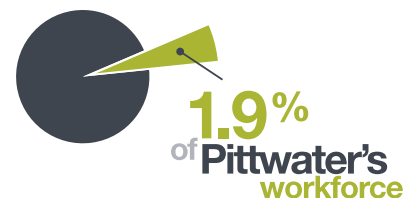
4.2 Pittwater's creators

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates 535 of Pittwater's residents are listed as working in arts and recreation. This represents 1.9% of Pittwater's workforce. This statistic is significant when compared to the

greater Sydney statistical division, where 1.6% of the workforce is employed in arts and recreation.

Pittwater Arts&Recreation

535                   **WORKERS**



Pittwater Economic Development Plan 2012 - 2016 indicates that there are an equivalent to 243 full-time arts and heritage jobs in Pittwater. This represents 1% of local jobs. Proportionally arts and heritage jobs are more prevalent in Pittwater than in greater Sydney, where they represent 0.7% of jobs.

243  **jobs**
arts&heritage
in Pittwater





Pittwater has an incredible wealth of creative people.

Pittwater boasts large numbers of visual artists. Painters, illustrators, print-makers, sculptors and photographers are well represented, with the community of artists ranging from amateur to professional. In line with Pittwater's demographic and housing profile, there is a trend towards artists working from home studios, and typically young emerging artists (18 – 30) are being drawn out of the local government area to study or access cheaper housing. A lack of industrial spaces (warehouses) or high-density dwellings means that shared or sub-divided studio spaces have not proliferated in the same way they have in Sydney centre and the inner west. In Pittwater shared studio spaces are the exception rather than the rule. Challenges exist for local artists in finding affordable studio space for hire.

Because creative people often produce work from home, they are often working in isolation. Opportunities exist to support existing artists' networks, such as Pittwater Community Arts and Eramboo, to ensure artists are professionally and artistically supported.

Pittwater's visual artists, sculptors and public artists are represented in collections, retail spaces, exhibitions, public forums and tours in Australia and internationally. Examples include: Simon Barlow, Julie Hickson, Mark Rhodes, Michael Kitching, Susan

Milne and Greg Stonehouse. While there is great work produced locally, there is a disconnect between what is made in Pittwater versus what is exhibited in Pittwater. Many of Pittwater's more established visual artists exhibit and sell their work outside of the region, and the majority of community members are unaware of the range and quality of work that is produced locally.

"Pittwater provides a nurturing environment for artists, local art is valued, pride around local artists who are known outside of Pittwater"

Survey respondent reflecting on the strength of Pittwater's arts scene

Pittwater's music community is particularly strong, with world class music exports across a range of genres. The culture of musical excellence is in part due to the local schools, and the staff and families that have been connected with them. John Stone, Barrenjoey High School, and Martin Hardy, Pittwater High School have championed local musicians, and developed opportunities for musicians to perform through the mechanisms of the Northern Beaches Orchestra, Sydney Northern Beaches Philharmonic Wind Ensemble, and the Barrenjoey Music Room.

As is the case for visual arts, there is a sense that the music performed locally is just the tip of the talent iceberg.



The argument presented by musicians is that the availability of venues is limited. Musicians are pleased that alterations to licensing laws have allowed more small bars to open, which in turn has allowed for more venues to play. The national SLAM Day campaign¹⁶, which advocates for live music in small venues, is testimony to the fact that music has been unfairly linked with anti-social behaviour at venues, and that as a result artists and audiences are often denied the opportunity to perform and access performances. Music advocates have argued that additional spaces for performance – such as an outdoor stage or purpose built music centre – would be a boon for Pittwater audiences and musicians alike. This is addressed in more detail in section **5.6 Arts Precinct**.

Musicians have also cited limited earning potential as one of the drawbacks of performing in Pittwater. Because of the limited population and geographic isolation in Pittwater, audience numbers – and associated income – tend not to be as great as in other areas. There are possibilities to explore how to make performing in Pittwater more lucrative for musicians.

Pittwater's population includes art managers, lecturers, curators, philanthropists, actors, producers, writers, architects, and film-makers. Actors such as Peter Phelps, Richard Roxburgh, and Rachael Griffiths have homes in the area, and Baz Luhrmann cut his teeth with local theatre

group the Elanora Players. A recent anthology of poetry from Pittwater writers, *Heartsong*, is a testimony to the talented writers that live in the region. Some of the country's premier architects reside in Pittwater, with their influence being felt through a legacy of iconic houses, such as Alexander Stewart Jolly's home on Whale Beach.

Given the talent, expertise and experiences that exist locally, there is great opportunity to elevate the local arts scene and those that work within it. Some options are described in section **5 Creative Spaces**.

While acknowledging this opportunity, it can be a challenge to have industry leaders contribute to the local arts scene. For many local creatives, Pittwater is the place for their home, family and personal privacy. This is reflected in the fact that significant numbers of Pittwater's population only live here for parts of the year. Encouraging industry professionals to participate locally can be a challenge – as often their professional lives centre around where greater audiences, communities, client-bases and remuneration can be accessed.





4.3 Support organisations

Creative people in Pittwater are supported through a range of informal and formal structures.

Artspot **Probus**
Friends Sydney Northern Beaches Symphonic Wind Ensemble (SNBSWE)
Pittwater Artist Trail **rotary** *Families Camera Collective*
Pittwater Community Arts Inc **Peninsular Music Club**
University of the third age **Northern**
TAFE **Beaches** **Philanthropists**
Local schools **Knitters Guild** **Orchestra** **Peninsula**
Aboriginal Heritage Office **Residents associations** **Community of Schools**
Barrenjoey Music Room **Chambers of Commerce**
Manly Warringah Pittwater Aboriginal Support Group **Pittwater Stitches** **Elanora**
Art collectors **Players**
Guringai Festival committee
Artists and Craftsmen of Pittwater **Local business**

Some of the key support organisations include:

- Pittwater Council (see in more detail at section 7.1 **How Pittwater Council supports arts development**)
- Pittwater Community Arts Inc (PCA) – a volunteer run not-for-profit organisation. PCA supports artists through its program of activities, which includes showcasing artists, promoting young artists, and community cultural development events (Earth Hour, Guringai Festival). They facilitate professional development events, and play an important role as an
- auspicing body. Its governance and insurance structure has been a crucial support to local endeavours such as the Pittwater Artist Trail and Artspot exhibition. PCA advocates for local artists in its campaign for an arts space.
- Eramboo Artist Environment – a non-profits arts centre, which weaves a dynamic program in and around its studio, workshop and gallery spaces. Eramboo serves the creative community by providing professional development events ranging from critique sessions through to lectures and workshops. Eramboo showcases



the work of local artists and fosters artwork networks locally and internationally.

- Northern Beaches Orchestra (NBO) – a not-for-profit organisation. NBO was created to provide opportunities for musicians on the Northern Beaches to excel musically, as well as to enhance the cultural life of the local community. It was initiated with funding from Pittwater, Warringah and Manly Councils, and is now successfully self-funded. It supports local musicians by providing pathways for musical development and to gain performance experience
- Elanora Players – an incorporated theatre group. While providing the governance structure required to licence plays, manage budgets and cover insurance, the Players also support local actors, set designers, producers, stage-hands and technicians by providing a supportive framework to gain experience. The twofold mentoring around governance and theatre is great professional development support for aspiring artists.
- National Association for the Visual Arts Ltd (NAVA) – provides advocacy, advice and professional practice resources for the Australian visual arts, craft and design sector. Many of these services are well utilised by Pittwater artists.
- MusicNSW - the Peak Body for Contemporary Music in NSW. Set

up to represent, promote and develop the contemporary music industry in New South Wales, Australia, in addition to managing a number of Music Development projects (including grant programs such as Indent).

- Arts NSW - the NSW Government's arts policy and funding body.
- Australia Council for the Arts –the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body. It supports Australia's arts through funding, strengthening and developing the arts sector. It is one of the more common sources of grants funding individual artists.



4.4 Creative peoples' priorities

Consultation has revealed that many Pittwater artists do not feel adequately supported at a local level. One of the most common complaints was the issue of insurance. Artists indicated that they are confused as to what insurance policies they need, and find the cost of public liability insurance (which is a requirement for all hirers using Council sites) prohibitive.

Creative people in Pittwater experience a shortfall in the variety and availability of spaces to present their craft. Across all art forms, artists' feedback is that they are interested in more venues and opportunities to present their work. As addressed in **Section 5 Creative**





Spaces, there are opportunities to use existing spaces and develop new sites for the presentation of work. There are also significant financial challenges implicit in developing and running art spaces.

Creators are interested in more space for developing work, including shared studio spaces. See **section 5 - Creative Spaces** for detail. The desire for shared studio space speaks not only of an area in which artists can work, but also of a need to interact with other creative people for artistic support.

This need was reinforced in consultation with the local arts community. Artists value coming together to learn, network and collaborate. The monthly critique sessions organised through Eramboo are an excellent tool for networking creative people who might otherwise work in isolation. The creative community expressed an interest in spaces – real and virtual – where meetings with other creative practitioners could occur. “Speed dating”, a writers’ circle, an insurance cooperative, and a social-media type platform were all suggestions of how artists can be brought together. Cross-artform collaboration was also highly sought after.

Artists have expressed a desire for increased professional development. Mentoring and skills development in grant writing, marketing, social media and developing an electronic portfolio

all emerged as desired skills. When artists are supported to develop their career skills, they can sustain their creative practise more successfully, and this has positive run-on affects for the broader community.

Many artists were very concerned about the funding cuts to arts courses at TAFE. Despite vehement opposition, the NSW Government has removed funding from creative courses. The impact is already being felt at a local level, where a number of courses have not been offered in 2013. NAVA is campaigning against this move – stressing the short-sightedness of under investing in the arts at a time when the growth in creative industries is outstripping almost all other industries. Local creative people seeking further education in creative fields will now be forced into the university system, and into university fees and commuting.

In summary, there is immense creative capital in Pittwater. A desire for increased local opportunity has been articulated clearly by musicians, visual artists and performers. Most particularly, creative people want to share their produce and skills locally, and enjoy increased community well-being, a sense of purpose, and reap sales as a result. There is ample opportunity to nourish this local talent, grow local audiences and strengthen the local creative economy.



4.5 Young artists

Demographic analysis reveals that 18 – 35 year olds artists are under-represented in Pittwater. A combination of high housing costs, limited studio availability, and limited arts education are factors in young and emerging artists leaving the region. A flow-on effect is that young artists experience a lack of informal mentoring and role-modelling. Pittwater Council sees the importance of having young artists working locally and recognises the energy and vitality that young, emerging artists inject into a community. Pittwater Council provides ArtZpace as a vehicle for young and emerging artists to gain experience and mentoring, as they plan, market and manage a professional group exhibition. There are opportunities to make art practise in Pittwater more sustainable and viable for artists generally, and for emerging artists particularly.

Student age artists receive considerable support in Pittwater. Local high schools showcase their young creative people through “MADD” (Music, Art, Drama and Design) evenings, performances and exhibitions. Students at Barrenjoey High School have access to a professional standard recording studio and visual arts gallery. At Pittwater High, there are great opportunities afforded by the new performance space, as well as connections with Northern Beaches Orchestra and SNBSWE. Additional support and promotion exist in the form of Pittwater Community Arts annual awards program as well as Manly Gallery’s *Express Yourself* exhibition – a local version of *Art Express*.

There is opportunity to build on the support offered to students, such as with the provision of promotional support, career guidance and mentoring programs.



5 CREATIVE SPACES

5.1 Place making

Pittwater residents want creativity in their village centres, in urban spaces and in the natural environment.

Pittwater’s village centres, parks and playgrounds have a distinctive style. Council’s improvement plans include landscaping and beautification, and within this scope Council has commissioned a number of sculptures and decorative features throughout the local government area. The result

has been that Pittwater’s villages, parks and playgrounds are attractive, amenable spaces. Feedback from the community is that arts and creativity can be further harnessed to showcase, represent and shape the character of Pittwater in our public spaces.

There is a real mood of excitement in the community about making parts of Pittwater more distinct, and more reflective of the colourful





people that live here. Residents want contemporary public art (not monuments) - including temporary, ephemeral and interactive art works and performances. In particular, feedback through the community survey was that encountering art work in the public domain by chance was highly desirable.

"It is often the highlight of a day out if I see interesting street performance or innovative artwork by chance"

Survey respondent

Successful place-making builds from the foundation of showcasing local distinctiveness. Pittwater, with its population of creative people, is ripe for finding new modes for expression in the public arena. This is expressed through the launch of Emma Anna's *imag_ne* artwork in Park Street, Mona Vale. The 4.5 metre long artwork, on display from June – August 2013, invited conversation about the possibilities for the local area.

5.2 Public art

Public art can be utilised in place making.

Public art is "regarded as the artistic expression of a contemporary art practitioner presented within the public arena, outside the traditional gallery system, where it is accessible to a broad audience"¹⁷.

The local community is overwhelmingly positive about increased public art in Pittwater. Survey respondents indicated that art in our villages and urban spaces was their number one priority for Pittwater's arts scene. The majority of survey respondents expressed a desire for interactive art, site specific art, installations and projection/light art in public spaces.

The local arts community has expressed a desire that the medium of aerosol art be treated with greater tolerance. This sentiment has not only been expressed by young people – although student consultations consistently indicate a desire for graffiti programs and legal walls – but from all different age groups. This is in line with international trends which have witnessed a democratisation in arts access. Aerosol art is immensely exciting because it allows people who might otherwise be reluctant to enter the "white cube" of the gallery space to participate in the arts. Sections of the community have strongly asserted that aerosol art – or graffiti style art – should not be treated as synonymous with vandalism.

Consultation has indicated that the community is attracted to 'street art'. Rather than being wed to a particular medium, feedback has been provided that high quality art and sculpture could make laneways and walls in our villages more attractive. Favourable comments have been made about Melbourne's laneways, and about May Street in St Peters, Sydney.



A temporary paper stick up in Mona Vale, artist unknown



Many councils enshrine place making and public art in their planning processes. There is opportunity for development funds to channel into the commissioning of public art and for art to figure into Council's planning processes. There is great potential for these processes to be formalised through the development of a public art policy.

Through *Enliven Pittwater* (see section 5.3), Council, community and business will work together to achieve public art and placemaking outcomes.

5.3 Enlivening villages

Pittwater residents have articulated a sense of enthusiasm about creativity being harnessed to activate and enliven our villages. In the course of consultation, community members identified areas (locally and externally) where art and creativity have been used to make urban spaces more attractive, playful and safe. The community's vision for Pittwater ranges from low-impact strategies, such as a friendlier busking policy and more music, through to more festivals, markets and exhibitions, along to hard-infrastructure solutions with sensitive design and landscaping to foster social, community oriented spaces.

Pittwater's village centres are unique in that they tend to include park/grass areas in close proximity to shopping facilities. Activating these village greens has emerged as a community priority. Residents have outlined

a vision for building on Pittwater's existing program of outdoor events with a rotation of outdoor music and theatre performances, outdoor cinema, market days and festivals.

Residents in Pittwater have identified laneways in Mona Vale and Avalon, and pathways in Avalon, as unattractive and potentially unsafe, and view art as a prospective vehicle to addressing these issues.

City of Sydney's Laneway Art Project had its origins in making laneways in the city safer. The project has seen City of Sydney commission artists – often international artists – to create work which reframes or reactivates existing spaces. A laneway becomes a playground when a series of bouncing beanbags take up residence; a set of concrete stairs becomes a visual highlight when adorned with multicoloured geometric knitting; and Angel Place has become a haven for alfresco dining as the bird cages and related soundscape of birds influence the space.

“buskers, pop-up art, interactive art, all engage closely with the audience and challenge perceptions that art is stuffy, expensive or belongs indoors. Having said that, small, regular, relaxed, inviting performances or exhibitions can raise awareness and a committed following rather than random, big annual events/exhibitions”

Respondent, community survey





Laneway art in the form of installations, murals and aerosol art, has been identified as having applicability to Pittwater. Residents have commenced planning – and even creating work – to this end. A group of artists and businesses in Avalon are developing plans for local laneways.

Enliven Pittwater is a new project that will see creativity harnessed as a tool for enlivening our villages. The project, which is an initiative of Pittwater Council, sees community, business and Council representatives working towards a program of activation for Pittwater's villages. Economic, social and cultural development are the key components of the project. There is great opportunity for findings from the Arts Paper to feed into the *Enliven Pittwater* and inform the activities that are driven through that project.

5.4 Activating spaces

Linked with the theme of enlivening Pittwater is the activation of community and public spaces.

Recently Eramboo Artist Environment hosted Kendal Henry, artist, curator and public art specialist from America. A group of artists from across the Northern Beaches worked with Kendal Henry in a week-long workshop at Eramboo in Terrey Hills. The artists' mission was to use art as a mechanism for activating or reinterpreting existing spaces

(predominantly in Manly). The result was a range of temporary installations that gave sites a new visibility or use.

As part of the Arts Paper consultation Pittwater Council held Picnic Perfect in Village Park, Mona Vale. Village Park is a large, open park which makes it conducive to holding events such as markets or the annual Carols by Candlelight. However, because the park does not have a great deal of shade, day time visitors tend to gravitate to the edges of the park where there are trees. In recognition of the fact that the park could be better utilised – and inspired by similar activities in New York – Pittwater Council popped in some chairs, tables, deck chairs and beach umbrellas, and turned Village Park into a picturesque picnic location. Free tai chi, water, fruit and pastries were on offer for all, and a local knitting group set up an impromptu knitting class.

Picnic Perfect was met with a really positive response, and a genuine mood of community connectedness. Visitors were keen to see the event repeated. Residents really responded to the idea that our villages can be made more vibrant through a variety of creative methods. Picnic furniture might be one strategy, but tai chi, performance, installations in shop windows, and buskers on buses are all examples that the community has provided as possibilities for activating spaces in Pittwater.



5.5 Pop-ups and existing spaces

In NSW and further afield there is a growing trend of pop-ups and short-term lease creative spaces. These projects are increasingly legitimized with Planning NSW having developed guides to support revitalisation. One example is *Renew Newcastle* which enables artists, cultural and community projects to use and maintain vacant buildings. Leaseholders typically find short and long term uses for the buildings until they are rented, sold or redeveloped. From its inception some six years ago, *Renew Newcastle* has supported hundreds of artists and dozens of businesses with the provision of space. Projects that have been housed include fashion designers, galleries, studios, architects, photographers, small bars, craft workshops and much more. Hunter Street and the surrounding area have enjoyed increased vibrancy and improved economic and social outcomes. The *Renew Newcastle* model has been adopted in a variety of sites around Australia and the world with similar success.

A great number of local councils in Australia are supporting local economic and cultural development through facilitating pop-up spaces or short term leases. Some councils have made retail buildings that they own available for short-term lease or residency programs (eg North Sydney Council), while other councils have acted as an intermediary between

landlords and lessees (eg Oxford Street rejuvenation program, City of Sydney). Some councils engage very closely with the lessees, while others like to devolve responsibility to a third party for attracting and managing tenants. There is much to learn from such models and their applicability to Pittwater.

Several councils support local festivals which see artists perform or exhibit in shopfronts. As distinct from a lease arrangement, this model requires a collaboration or agreement between local businesses and artists. One local example is Mosman's *In Situ* program, where art is displayed in the shopfronts. Erskineville Village has a wonderful festival in *Tiny Stadiums*, which is curated by QuarterBred as auspiced by P.A.C.T. Theatre. In *Tiny Stadiums* the artists do not just display their work in the shops – art takes over the whole village. During this weekend festival you might find that the display in the deli window isn't the normal baked goods – but performance artist Rosita Holmes buried in flour. Or as you walk through the village, you might find yourself invited to a public hairstyling, or asked to participate in building an enormous model of the ideal Erskineville (complete with flying foxes and slippery slides). There is every possibility that shopfront exhibitions can succeed in Pittwater.

Creative Spaces is an online resource (www.creativespaces.net.au) which acts as classifieds for listing and





seeking spaces. It's a great tool for marrying willing space owners/managers with artists seeking performance/exhibition/retail/rehearsal spaces. There are some excellent projects showcased on the website which challenge conventional thinking around a space as a four-walled, permanent structure. Showcased projects include a car park which is used as an exhibition/retail site, and train platforms being used as a gallery. It is exciting to apply similar thinking to sites in Pittwater. What spaces exist that might be free for creative use at different times of day? What artists would leap at the opportunity to stage a temporary work in one of Pittwater's parks or villages? City of Sydney has identified that they plan to licence the Creative Spaces model. Pittwater Council will watch with interest to see what opportunities we can pursue to link artists with different sites.

Many artists and audiences members have expressed excitement about pop-up spaces. Residents enjoy the energy and vibrancy that pop-up spaces bring to a community, and love the idea of chancing upon something new in their villages. A very small number of the visual arts community are hesitant about pop-up spaces. This hesitancy is based on the concern that a temporary-lease site would require resources from the lessee to fit out the site without guarantees of economic return. To an extent this concern is valid and artists would need to determine for

themselves if they want to participate in this pop-up format. Pop-up spaces are most successful where there is an acute demand for affordable creative space, coupled with willingness for an individual/group to drive the space.

5.6 Arts precinct

Pittwater does not have an arts precinct. Its best utilised cultural venue is Mona Vale Library. The library is in close proximity to Village Park and Mona Vale Memorial Hall, both which are often – though not exclusively – employed for arts events. This site is also the location of Pittwater Council's customer service and has acted as a civic hub, but has hitherto not been considered as a cultural precinct. The possibility of rebranding, reprogramming and even redeveloping this site could be explored by Council.

As Pittwater's main commercial centre, and by virtue of its existing infrastructure, Mona Vale emerges as the most likely site for an arts precinct. However, there are other sites in Pittwater which have acted as hubs for arts and cultural activity, such as the Avalon Recreation Centre and adjacent Dunbar Park. The development of a cultural precinct, should that occur in the future, should not be to the detriment of other pockets of cultural activity in Pittwater.

As described previously, the community generally and the creative community particularly have articulated a desire for exhibition and



performance space. Consultation indicates that hard infrastructure to support music, exhibition and performance would play an important role in promoting community access to and participation in the arts. By having a specific site or hub that plays host to cultural activities, the community would have a recognised go-to place for cultural experience.

Musicians continue to advocate for an outdoor performance stage – as has been included in the Dunbar Park Plan of Management. Musicians are excited about the development of a performance stage and see it not only as a great opportunity for music of different genres to be showcased, but also for other genres of performing arts. Musicians did caution that any music facility needs to be developed in consultation with experts, and that only with efficient sound projection and amplifiers figuring in the design will a performance stage cater to a broad range of musicians. It is important that the stage has the capacity to cater for small acts, as well as orchestra groups and other performance art forms.

Considered within the scope of arts precinct, there is cause to argue that a performance stage would be well suited to Village Park in Mona Vale. Village Park's existing profile as a site for events would be consolidated and it would enhance the profile of this area as a cultural precinct. This is an issue that requires further consideration.

The visual arts community, and particularly Pittwater Community Arts, have advocated for an arts space. PCA has presented Hazelhurst Arts Centre as their ideal model. Hazelhurst, in Sutherland, is a large arts centre developed on a site which was bequeathed to Council. It incorporates galleries, classrooms, auditorium, shop, residency space and café, and is staffed by a team of professionals including curatorial, management and education staff. The centre has an annual running cost of \$1.8 million.

Discussion with PCA has elucidated what needs are experienced by visual arts locally. The interest in a formal gallery is borne primarily of: a desire to show and sell work; a desire to avoid the labour and cost associated with sourcing and mounting exhibition furniture; and a desire to provide artists with somewhere to meet, network and exchange ideas (see **section 3.6**). The staffing, curatorial and support structures that are typically provided through public galleries are also attractive to PCA.

The type of cultural facilities that can be developed in Pittwater are determined by our geography, population, grant opportunities, and community priorities. For a performance stage or for a gallery, there are implications in design and capital works costs, as well as costs for ongoing maintenance and staffing. For this reason, there are significant challenges attached to developing an arts centre of Hazelhurst's magnitude.





Any plans which Council develops for arts facilities and their management may include strategies for generating income to offset costs.

In the short-term, there is opportunity for finding creative solutions to the creativity community's wants. Pop-up and temporary spaces (see section 5.5), increased arts programming, and support with staging and equipment are possibilities.

5.7 Art in nature

The natural environment is an integral part of Pittwater's identity. Many residents believe that the natural environment is a logical backdrop to cultural activities. It is recognised that there is great potential to couple Pittwater's beachside tourism with cultural tourism.

Community members consistently indicate that they want a Pittwater version of Sculpture by the Sea. Similarly, there are suggestions for a jazz barge to float down Narrabeen Lagoon with spectators picnicking on the water's edge. It is clear that many

locals believe Pittwater's glorious coastlines and bushwalks could be enhanced with art. Some people seemed to like the idea of art being less easily accessible – just finding it during a bush walk – while others enjoyed the egalitarianism of having art out in the open for everyone to enjoy.

Nature was not only viewed as a potential backdrop to other activities, but potentially a theme or source of inspiration for arts activities. Community members and groups saw possibilities to work with recycled art, build links with Kimbriki and research or replicate the Addison Road Centre, Marrickville (including Reverse Garbage Centre).

While there are clear opportunities to leverage the beautiful natural environment as a backdrop to cultural events, Pittwater Council recognises the strong conservation ethos that exists in Pittwater and appreciates the need to make outdoor cultural events environmentally sustainable.



"I would like to see more sculpture around Narrabeen Lake at our beaches and in our villages"

Community member at Writing on the Wall consultation



6 POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 Policy directions at a local, state and federal level

At the local, state and federal level, arts planning is a priority at present.

The Federal Government released its national cultural policy, *Creative Australia*, in March 2013. A national policy is a positive thing: it indicates that the arts are a priority; it gives direction; and additional money has been allocated to the arts as a result of its adoption.

Creative Australia has “five equally important and linked goals”¹⁵. One: respecting and celebrating the centrality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to Australian identity. Two: ensure that all citizens have access to shape and access culture. Three: Support artists as a source of original work and ideas. Four: strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector to contribute to national life, well-being and the economy. Five: Ensure Australian creativity thrives in the digitally enabled 21st century.

At the local level, *Creative Australia* means increased potential for grants through the Australia Council. The five goals which are at the heart of the policy will inform how the Federal Government spends and distributes arts funding. Australia Council’s grants program will be restructured. It is reasonable to anticipate new grant categories will be developed to align with digital advances.

The NSW Government has announced that it will develop a cultural plan and overhaul its current funding system. NSW arts organisations have felt frustration in recent years as a result of reduced arts funding through Arts NSW. Under the NSW Government, Arts NSW has been moving away from funding capital works programs. This means that Pittwater Council cannot rely on state funding to assist in the costs associated with building arts facilities. The onus for the development and operation of cultural facilities on local government is reinforced by Cultural Accord 4, an agreement between Local Government and Shires Association NSW and Arts NSW. The Accord states: “local government has the primary responsibility for the planning, development and operation of cultural facilities at a local level”¹⁸.

The NSW Government has axed funding to creative arts programs at TAFE. As described above, this move has provoked strong opposition from the arts community. The impact for Pittwater residents will become clearer as 2013 progresses.

Closer to home, the City of Sydney is developing its first cultural plan, and has released *Creative City Cultural Policy Discussion Paper*. Many of Pittwater’s residents work, visit or play in Sydney city. The cultural experiences they have in Sydney often inform what they want in their own local government area. As such,





Pittwater will continue to be interested in trends, events and activities occurring in Sydney and other city locations.

6.2 Priority groups

Programming is a key focus in the arts across all levels of government. While historically funding might have been directed into building galleries or concert halls, today it is well-resourced, dynamic programming that is supported by funding bodies. Collaboration, cross-disciplinary and bang-for-buck projects are on trend at present.

Building new audiences and increasing access to the arts have been on the State and Federal agenda for a number of years. In particular, Arts NSW has been concerned with improving access for “priority groups”, which include people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, young people, people with a disability, people in regional and remote areas, and Aboriginal people. Any submission to State and Federal agencies would be strengthened by including a strong vision for how to build and maintain audiences, particularly amongst the identified priority groups.

7 PITTWATER COUNCIL'S ROLE IN ARTS DEVELOPMENT

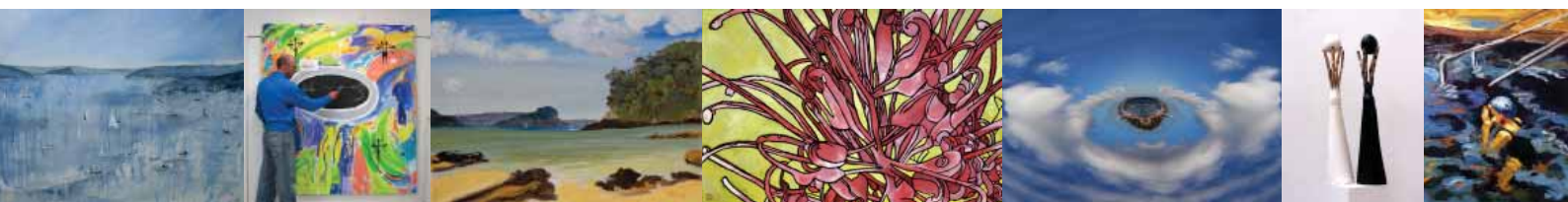
7.1 How Pittwater Council supports arts development

For our community to have access to arts experiences we need to ensure that artists are producing

and presenting work in our region, and that creative industries have the opportunity to thrive in Pittwater.

Historically Pittwater Council's focus has been local. Supporting local artists and organisations has been a logical means of bolstering arts development, and providing greater offerings for local audiences. Consultation with Pittwater residents reveals that there is room for some of these tendencies to evolve, for example by bringing creative product or expertise into the region for the benefit and growth of our audiences and artists.

There are several core arguments which local governments should be involved in stimulating arts and cultural activities. Firstly, there is a legislative mandate. Secondly, there is a risk of losing the creative edge that comes with a sense of place. Finally, it meets the demands and needs of existing and new constituents by contributing towards community wellbeing¹⁴



Pittwater Council supports cultural development through a range of strategies, including: provision of Community Development Officers; capital works and maintenance of community cultural venues; commissioning works; arts and cultural planning; and an ongoing program of arts events, capacity building strategies and community development work.

The table below lists some of council's key activities and achievements:

COUNCIL PROVIDES CULTURAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATES ARTS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY.



- Author talks
- Book launches
- Markets, eg twilight markets, artisan markets
- Youth week events, eg 100YPP online photo competition, Pittwater clothes exchange
- Writing competitions
- Exhibitions eg ArtZpace, social history exhibitions
- Festivals eg Guringai Festival, 24/7 Youth Film Festival, Winterval
- Community programs, eg Picnic Perfect

COUNCIL CONNECTS PEOPLE TO CULTURE THROUGH COMMUNICATION, PROMOTION AND COORDINATION OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES.



- Disseminates information on cultural news and opportunities eg *Pittwater Feed* – an electronic e-bulletin outlining news and opportunities in the cultural sector
- Profiles arts activities, eg Pittwater Council website, Pittwater Council electronic events calendar, I Love Pittwater facebook page, Pittwater Council Twitter, council noticeboards, Manly Daily Community Notice Board, advertisements in Pittwater Life and Peninsula Living
- Council is represented on cultural committees and inter-agencies
- Coordinates cultural weeks across all council community centres





COUNCIL ENCOURAGES CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH IMPROVING ACCESS TO CULTURAL SPACES.

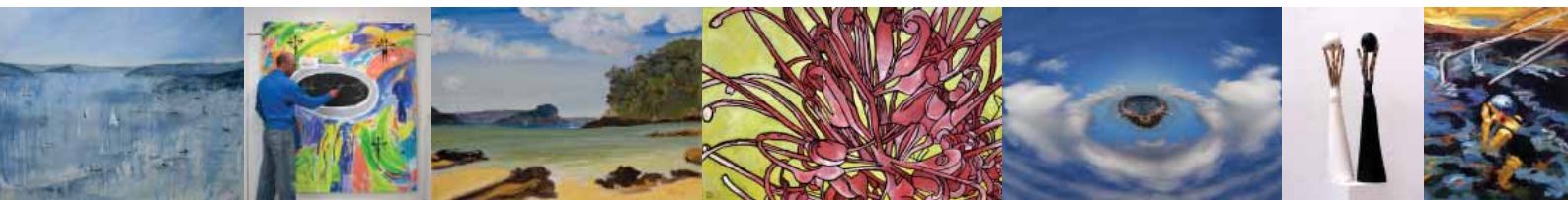


- Designates periods of the year where Council venues are used for cultural activity
- Sources screens, lighting and related exhibition equipment to enhance exhibition opportunities in community centres
- Piloting the display of temporary public art pieces, eg Emma Anna's *imag_ne* at Mona Vale
- Piloting the reactivation of spaces through creative projects, eg Picnic Perfect
- Applying for loans of additional public art sculptures from Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority
- Improving knowledge of existing cultural spaces
- Working with the community and chambers of commerce for more laneway art in Avalon
- Builds and redevelops community centres, eg Avalon Recreation Centre, Avalon Annex, Newport Community Centre, Mona Vale Library

COUNCIL ENCOURAGES SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE BENEFIT OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



- Runs an ongoing program of community development, which sees arts organisations and individuals build their capacity
- Undertakes and disseminates cultural research
- Develops arts planning
- Drives key projects which elevate the arts, such as Enliven Pittwater
- Provides referrals to experts
- Builds and maintains networks across the region and with key arts organisations
- Distributes Mayoral donations to arts and community groups
- Facilitates training and education opportunities
- Council representatives sit on ClubGrants advisory committee
- Council has links with local chambers of commerce, Pittwater Business Limited, and other key networks
- Invests in cultural development projects such as ArtZpace, which see local artists build skills and networks



7.2 A whole of council commitment

There is clear evidence that the best cultural outcomes are achieved through local government when there is a whole of organisation commitment.¹⁹

Pittwater Council has a strong history of collaboration across its business units to achieve fantastic cultural and community goals. Newport Community Centre, Avalon Recreation Centre, Avalon Annex and the Mona Vale Library are some of the community facilities which have been built or renovated in the last ten years due to a commitment from Council.

There are many possibilities for Council to build on this history to achieve more arts outcomes for our community.

7.3 Helping artists with Council processes

Artists and Artist Run Initiatives (ARIs) often come up against challenges in the form of compliance and risk management when trying to initiate and manage programs, spaces and events. Pittwater Council staff play a key role in supporting artists with these challenges. Staff aim to build the capacity of arts organisations and individuals to ensure that they have the skills to run safe, successful events and programs. However, instances occur where artists operate outside of compliance regulations, or find regulatory processes onerous.

Artists and audiences have given feedback on some areas in which Council processes and policies might evolve or change to facilitate more cultural activity. Suggestions include a friendlier busking policy; more banners and signage permitted for arts activities; and increased flexibility around outdoor cinema.

There is opportunity to reduce the red-tape that artists and arts groups experience and to provide information and education on the importance of compliance. Possibilities exist for Council and the arts community to work together to explore the kind of support and advice required to get more arts spaces and events up and running, and operating safely.

7.4 Council networks

Pittwater Council is a key player in supporting and facilitating cultural development in the region. As described at 7.1, Pittwater Council has an ongoing program of social, community and economic development. In practice, this means that Council staff possess knowledge and networks across the social and community sectors. Staff are constantly seeking opportunities to support local and regional organisations, and to help a range of initiatives get off the ground in Pittwater. Opportunities exist to continue to build our ties with business and community networks, and to ensure that creative interests are actively pursued in these forums.





7.5 Regional positioning

There is merit in recognising opportunities at a regional level whilst celebrating and enhancing what is unique to Pittwater. In terms of the arts, Pittwater's audiences and artists enjoy access to regional facilities such as Manly Art Gallery and Museum, Glen Street Theatre and Eramboo Artist Environment. Manly Art Gallery and Eramboo have a regional outlook as part of their mode of operation. This is demonstrated by the fact that artists from Pittwater have exhibited, undertaken workshops and masterclasses in both venues.

Pittwater Council enjoys good communication with art contacts at neighbouring councils. Cultural officers across the Northern Sydney region have started meeting at semi-regular intervals, which has resulted in a greater understanding of Northern Sydney's cultural assets and will yield opportunities for greater collaboration.

On the Northern Beaches, the cultural workers at Pittwater, Warringah and Manly have identified opportunities for working together to develop a professional development series for artists. This is an example of how relationships and communication ensure that events are not unnecessarily duplicated across the Northern Beaches.

Just as events in Manly and Warringah draw Pittwater audiences, so too do activities in Pittwater attract people from outside the region. The Pittwater Artist Trail, ArtZspace, Barrenjoey Music Room and Artspot are some of the key events which attract artists and arts appreciators into Pittwater. Council promotes and champions these initiatives, and will continue to support key events which attract regional audiences.



8 TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

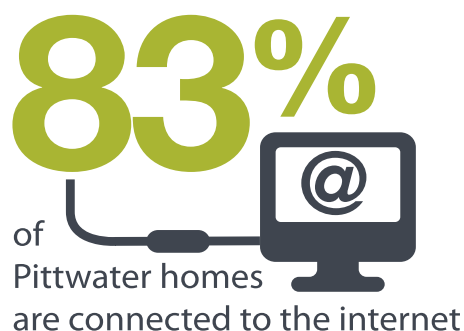
8.1 Technological advancement and how we participate in arts

Pittwater Council recognises that the way people participate in culture has been, and will continue to be, affected by developments in technology.

One in three Australians use the internet for art activities, and this increased to over 50% for 15 – 24 year olds. In Pittwater, where internet connection is higher than the national

average (83% compared with 77%) it stands to reason that these figures may be even higher.

83%
of
Pittwater homes
are connected to the internet



Australia has the second highest percentage of smartphone penetration in the world at 37% and Australians are consuming more apps²⁰. Pittwater Council recognises that smartphones are now part of people's everyday experience and is progressive in terms of its provision of free wifi in public areas. This service is popular – particularly with our younger residents. There are boundless opportunities afforded by mobile technology, such as opportunities to promote cultural activity and creative business through apps.

Local students indicate they used the internet for a range of art activities, including: purchasing/downloading music, images, films and shows; buying arts equipment and tools; uploading videos and photos; researching art activity such as artists and gigs; blogging; purchasing tickets; and reading. Young peoples' engagement in the arts is influenced by the effortlessness with which they navigate technology, and affected by the power of word-of-mouth recommendations through social media.

Pittwater Council's 100YPP project reflects some of these growing trends. 100YPP was an online photo competition held over the course of a weekend to celebrate Youth Week in April 2013. Participants were encouraged to show Pittwater from a young person's point of view. The exposure the online forum afforded the young photographers

was impressive: almost 1000 votes were submitted, and the reach of *I Love Pittwater* facebook page during the week of voting was over 7100. Mainstream media followed, with young artists being showcased in the *Manly Daily*.

8.2 Digital advancements and new art forms

The rapid advancements in technology have changed the way we consume art, and the ease with which certain art forms can be presented. Audiences are au fait with projection and sound art – once the domain of galleries – through festivals such as *Vivid* and Newcastle's *Electrofringe* and *This Is Not Art (TINA) Festival*. With familiarity comes demand: young residents have been particularly passionate about the possibility of light and projection festivals in Pittwater.

New forms of artistic expression will be opened up through digital advances, and our audiences' demands will evolve in tandem. There is opportunity for Council to consider how to showcase new art and experimental art forms.

The way art is produced and distributed has also been affected. Digital advances have caused an explosion in photography, home recording, home-graphic design and more. Copyright laws lag behind the contemporary realities, which include everything from endorsed file sharing through sites such as Creative Commons, to illegal downloading.





At a local level, there is merit in Pittwater Council monitoring and understanding these developments. We are best placed to support our artists and consumers if we can provide – or refer to – relevant current information and best practice guidelines.

8.3 Connectivity and creative industry

The creative industries sector in Pittwater stands to benefit from the roll-out of the National Broadband Network (NBN). The digital economy and background information on the NBN is addressed in section 3.4 *Pittwater Economic Development Plan 2012 – 2016*. The importance of the creative industries business sector in the local economy is also referred to in section 4.4 of the *Economic Development Plan*.

75% of all NSW employment in the creative industry sector work in design, publishing, advertising,

architecture. For people from this important business sector, particularly those working in media rich formats or practitioners working with a national or international client base, there are great opportunities afforded by high connectivity and an extensive, fast and affordable network.

NBNCo has identified that construction of fibre will commence in areas of Pittwater from March 2015. Proposed roll-out dates are listed at www.nbnco.com.au.

Technology has been recognised by the arts community as a prospective tool for professional networking. While many artists indicate that they look at YouTube and facebook, they are less likely to utilise local online local platforms.

How technology might be applied to facilitate networking and connection to the professional benefit of Pittwater's artists requires additional research.

9 VALUING THE ARTS

Pittwater Council acknowledges that art enriches our community and that creativity adds value across a range of sectors. Literature supports that the arts are key to community wellbeing. Art has demonstrated successes in rehabilitation and health environments, as well as in education and training environments. Art is a vital facet of tourism industry; and creative thinking is increasingly being sought in the business world.

In the local region, there are some notable examples of organisations which utilise arts to encourage well-being. The Be Centre, Warriewood, employs creative therapy to encourage self-expression in children and young people. Art and play are used as a non-threatening form of therapy. The Be Centre is unique in that the whole centre is devoted to this mode of therapy. Eramboo Artist Environment also delivers a number of programs



in conjunction with local health services, and reports that participants experience increased well-being and a sense of purpose through artistic expression.

St Lucy's is an example of a local school which utilises art as an education tool across a range of subjects. St Lucy's School is located in Wairoonga and has satellite classes on the Northern Beaches. The school caters for children with disabilities and special needs, and is fitted with a creativity centre. Creativity, physical activity and therapy interplay to assist students to reach their full potential. Feedback indicates that many students experience personal and physical breakthroughs as a result of participating in creative processes.

For art appreciators, the value of the arts is manifold.

Survey respondents say that art gives them:

“professional involvement”

“joy”

“income”

“Inspiration”

“another point of view of the world”

“an uplifting experience leading to a greater understanding of our culture, people, history, connections, and a better quality and richness of life, spiritual uplifting, fun, happiness”

The benefits that art offers range from the intellectual to the sensory. Art activates our imaginations and can tickle our funny bones. It is democratic – everyone can be moved by the beat of a drum, or a scene in a film. Art is part of the way we relax, celebrate, mourn and live. We are surrounded by arts: it is melded in with our communities, our environments, our institutions and our way of thinking.

Despite the fact that culture is ubiquitous – or perhaps because of it – art is too often viewed as a luxury, or superfluous to a community's needs. This view persists despite ample proof to the contrary. Culture is a pillar of human development and Millennium Summits convened by the UN General Assembly have worked hard for this to be recognised by governments internationally²¹.

In his 2001 book *The fourth pillar of sustainability: Culture's essential role in public planning*, Jon Hawkes describes how governments are increasingly realising “economic benchmarks alone are an insufficient framework upon which to evaluate progress or to plan for the future”.²² He goes on to describe how public planning has developed to include concepts such as social capital, community wellbeing, community capacity, integrated local area





planning, liveability and community connectedness²³.

Such benchmarking developments can be seen at a local level, where Pittwater Council has adopted integrated planning processes. Council's *Social Plan* informs delivery plans across all Council business units and firmly incorporates consideration of social outcomes afforded by all Council decisions.

Even as governments acknowledge that social and community indicators figure in planning, there is still often an expectation that the value of arts be demonstrated in economic terms. Aside from the philosophical difficulties with this as outlined above, there are practical issues in trying to value the arts. One is that creativity is embedded across so many industries. Another is that aside from the economic value which can be ascribed to creative produce, consumption and jobs, art tends to generate positive flow-on effects that are difficult to quantify. For example at a very local level, if an arts program reduces

vandalism and enhances community connectedness, there may be value in reduced expenditure on maintenance/cleaning and increased health and well being as a result of participation.

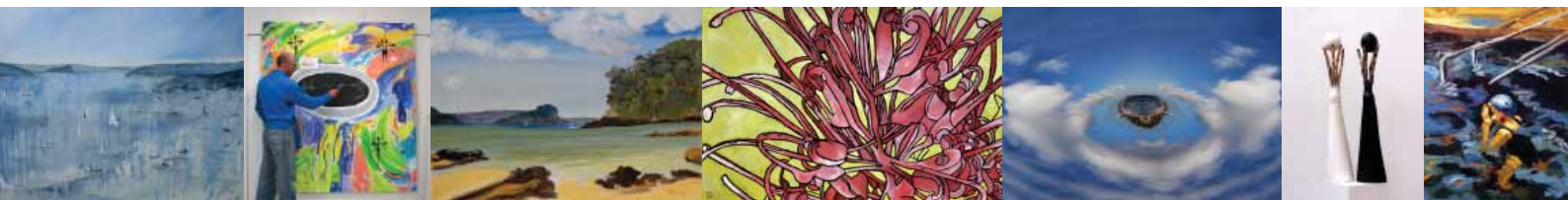
One of the fastest growing sectors in Australia, and that 5.3% of Australia's workforce is made up of cultural workers (more than the agriculture, electricity and gas sectors).²⁴ "Culture is an important element in the jobs of more than 3.7 million Australians"²⁵, and 4% of Australian household income was spent on cultural goods and services in 2009 – 2010. Art adds values to a range of other sectors, such as tourism, health and construction.

"Culture is an important element in the jobs of more than 3.7 million Australians"

The National Association for the Arts (NAA) reports that the creative mode of thinking that artists employ is being increasingly valued as an asset in traditional corporate environments, and that artists are being more readily engaged in business and corporate work environments.

Armed with the proof that the arts don't just make us feel good – they promote jobs, health, a prosperous economy and a connected community – Pittwater Council will continue to champion the intrinsic value of the arts for our community.

4%
of Australian
household income was spent on
cultural goods and services 2009-2010



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11 FINAL SUMMARY - EMERGING ISSUES ARTS PAPER

This is a summary of the challenges, opportunities and key discussion points which will guide the development of actions over the next three years responding to the social and community priorities of Pittwater.

PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS CHALLENGES

Audiences have expressed a demand for regular high quality art experiences. They have indicated that the current program of art activities in Pittwater tend not to occur at regular intervals, and there is merit in building a more regular program of events.

Audiences have indicated that they want to see new art forms and that there is a tendency to see the same artists' work frequently in Pittwater.

Pittwater's post-retirement, senior and frail age population is higher than the greater Sydney average. At present the median age is 42, and is increasing.

The social implications of our ageing population are addressed in other discussion papers in the *Social Plan*.

From an arts perspective, the challenge is to ensure that social isolation, mobility issues and impairments, and transport and geographic limitations do not preclude participation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Build awareness of existing arts events and activities so as to combat the perception that there is not regular activity. Community groups may be encouraged to undertake joint promotional activity under the banner of a festival, so that a joint marketing campaign can provide greater exposure for individual events.

Develop a more regular program of activity with Council and community driven activities.

Pilot a range of activities through *Enliven Pittwater*, including public art and site activation.

Explore ways to encourage new and dynamic work to be showcased locally, for example through touring exhibitions.

There is potential to utilise art programs as a mechanism for maintaining health and connectedness in the community.

Provide support and referrals to groups such as Avalon Active Seniors.

Consultation confirms that Pittwater's audiences have a range of creative and cultural wants and needs. How do we ensure that there is opportunity to access a range of experiences?

There is great opportunity borne from the community's desire to be exposed to new art forms and new experience.

Explore opportunities for profiling and showcasing innovative arts projects.

Recognise that audiences are attracted to events and cultural produce from outside of the region. Consider strategies for facilitating access, such as through outreach, or by establishing Pittwater as a satellite to major events.





ART(ISTS) AT THE HEART CHALLENGES

Pittwater's housing profile means that the majority of creative people develop work and or teach from their homes.

For many creative people, a home studio presents a range of challenges. One significant challenge is using the house for domestic and artistic purposes, another is that a home studio does not afford the social and professional contact that a shared space permits.

Pittwater's creative people are often drawn out of the region by greater opportunities for remuneration and exposure.

Pittwater's creative community have expressed a desire for more opportunities at a local level.

Creative people feel that their opportunities to exhibit, perform and teach in Council venues are not being fully realised because of the requirement that hirers have public liability insurance

Pittwater's arts sector is populated with people that volunteer their time to deliver large scale community cultural events. With the amazing commitment of volunteers comes associated risks of burnout.

Pittwater's social infrastructure is responsible for driving a great deal of cultural activity. It is key that local incorporated groups have strong governance and succession plans to ensure their continuation.

OPPORTUNITIES

Support organisations and groups which provide artists with the chance to network and meet.

Provide professional development advice on grant writing and developing a donor base.

Seek advice from Creative Partnerships as to how to attract funding into local arts organisations.

Advocate for and create opportunities for public art commissions and ensure that tender opportunities are well advertised.

Investigate the possibility of providing an exemption to public liability insurance requirements for not-for-profit cultural activities.

Explore how to support or facilitate developing an insurance cooperative for local creative people.

Building and maintaining relationships with local groups will enable Council staff to respond to volunteer fatigue with referrals, advice or resources.

Develop skills in volunteers for that organisations have strong succession possibilities.

Advise local groups of professional development and governance training opportunities.

Include local groups in events and databases which increase opportunities to increase member base (eg Volunteer Expo).

Creative people feel that there are not enough opportunities to present their work in Pittwater. A desire for increased opportunities for presenting creative produce (music, performance, retail objects, exhibitions, books, installations etc) has been expressed across all art forms, but most particularly by musicians and visual artists.

Support local initiatives where businesses are making space available for creative people. Work with Chambers of Commerce on possible shopfront exhibitions.

Investigate opportunities for short term leases with property owners.

Establish revolving exhibition space in Council's customer service centres and key community centres.

Encourage creative thinking about spaces and how they might be utilised to house art and performance. Support artists and arts groups with Council processes relating to booking parks, open spaces and venues.

Investigate the potential of an arts precinct for Pittwater, which may include gallery, performance space, lecture theatre.

For Pittwater's art scene to thrive, opportunities need to exist for all parts of the artistic community to work and display work locally. At present young artists are getting drawn out of the area to study and work, but also because there is limited affordable housing and studio space. Anecdotally, young artists experience a lack of peer to peer mentoring, because of the reduced numbers of people aged 18 – 35 living in Pittwater.

Young artists may be encouraged to work locally through the provision of subsidised studio spaces, or through residency or grant programs.

Investigate the possibility of making empty commercial or public spaces available to artists that can demonstrate greater need (eg young, emerging).

Supporting opportunities for mentoring and positive showcasing of young artists.

Pittwater's creative population have expressed a need for more spaces for developing work.

Investigate opportunities for pairing existing spaces or venues with interested artists/creative people.

Local creative people have identified the challenge in accessing studio spaces, rehearsal spaces, and tuition rooms.

Enable communication about existing spaces for hire.



CREATIVE SPACES CHALLENGES

Pittwater's villages are beautifully designed, landscaped and maintained, but the community has expressed a desire to see our urban spaces better reflect our colourful community.

The community has articulated a desire for increased cultural venues. The community has expressed interest in pop-up spaces, and more music venues, and gallery spaces.

Visual arts and music groups have been strong advocates for an arts centre and performance stage respectively.

The vision that has been articulated for an arts centre is for a site which can accommodate community and touring exhibitions, public programs and workshops. Achieving this vision would require significant expenditure on capital works, as well as an ongoing commitment from Council to engage relevant staff for curatorial, management and programming tasks.

Pittwater Council faces the challenge of weighing up community priorities, including competing cultural priorities.

Pittwater has a strong ethos of conservation, and art and cultural programs need to align with the community's priority to preserve the natural environment.

Some sites in Pittwater are not used to their full capacity.

OPPORTUNITIES

There are opportunities for including public art – ranging from temporary through to permanent – in our village centres, greens and parks.

Space enhancement outcomes can be achieved through *Enliven Pittwater*, and longer term projects through ensuring that arts and culture are identified as priorities in planning processes.

Explore opportunities to develop public art as a part of the development process.

There is opportunity to think creatively about the provision of arts venues.

Opportunities range from thinking laterally about the existing sites in Pittwater – both public and private – and how they might be better harnessed for short and long term cultural venues.

Possibilities exist to think of new nexuses and collaborations to offset the costs of an arts centre. Current models in Australia see public galleries – like libraries – run at loss. There are opportunities to rethink existing models, so as to gain greater support from the business sector.

Many people see Pittwater's natural environment as a logical backdrop to arts activities. There is potential to utilise the temperate climate, beautiful village centres, and amazing bush waterways and beach locations as sites for arts activity.

Encourage reactivation and reinterpretation of existing spaces with cultural, social and economic development programs.

ROLE OF COUNCIL, TECHNOLOGY AND VALUING THE ARTS

CHALLENGES

OPPORTUNITIES

The arts community experiences challenges associated with compliance and risk management when establishing and maintaining arts spaces and events.

Feedback indicates that artists and organisations often feel daunted by processes associated with risk management.

There is opportunity for Council and community to work together to ensure that arts organisations and individuals have the skills and knowledge to deliver safe, compliant events and run safe, compliant spaces.

Council can build on its existing community development practices, to ensure that groups and individuals develop the skills and confidence to negotiate regulatory processes.

Technological advancements have bounded ahead at rates that have often left laws and institutions lagging.

Pittwater has a higher rate than the national average of internet connection, with 88% of homes connected. Pittwater Council has been successful in ensuring that free wifi is available in its villages.

Despite these successes, there is a lag in the provision of new media art, interactive art, and cultural experience that integrates with smart phone usage at a local level.

The incredible advancements in technology have meant a democratisation in media that were once the domain of professionals only. Pittwater's creators now enjoy digital SLR cameras, film cameras, editing and music production software that makes swift, home product entirely achievable.

With these technological developments comes new professional needs. There is possibility to explore and understand these needs, and provide appropriate support where possible.

Also, an increased familiarity with digital arts is evident in Pittwater's audiences – particularly its young people. There are great opportunities to showcase film, digital art, sound art, interactive art, digital projections (indoors and outdoors) and light shows.

There is a strong community of creative people and art appreciators in Pittwater. Despite this, there are sections of the community that do not realise when they are accessing the arts, or undervalue cultural experience.

Build community awareness about what constitutes arts participation, and showcase local arts and culture offerings.

Reframe the community's understanding of "art", and encourage the community to value art.



THINK ABOUT...

How can we ensure that local audiences have greater access to quality arts experiences?

How can we ensure that local students know about career options in the creative industries?

What are the best ways to profile and enhance Pittwater's unique arts scene?

What strategies are required to develop an arts precinct, complete with cultural venues? How can the financial impact of resourcing cultural venues be mitigated and managed?

What opportunities are there for collaboration with other local government areas and organisations to increase arts-related outreach activities in Pittwater?

What are the best strategies for ensuring that our audiences get to access a varied, dynamic program of arts activities?

How do we best balance the cultural wants of the community with resident concerns (such as noise from performances, parking difficulties etc)?

How do you satisfy the demands of local artists for increased local exposure, whilst satisfying audience demand for seeing new work that is sourced from outside the region?

How do we ensure that living and working in Pittwater is feasible for artists?

What spaces exist in Pittwater that could be used for developing and presenting creative work? Are there sites that we overlook because they are time-dependant/private owned/not-fixed/not-central/scheduled for redevelopment?

IMAGE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Footer images

Gemma Rasdall, *Yachtman's Paradise*, acrylic paint and charcoal on sailcloth, 2012

Ceasius Kakius with *Bote de Hule \$35*, 2012

Michelle Holmes, *Lion Island*, acrylic, 2007

Julie Hickson, *Grevillia and sky III*, acrylic on canvas, 2010

Tanja Zalenko, *Planet Round*, photograph, 2012

Mike Kitching, *Gai- um- Garm*, pigmented polyester resin and natural wood, 2005, photographed by Amina Leslie

Cindy Goode Milman, *Treading water*, oil on board, 2012

Celia Ci, *Wake up see*, pencil on paper

Willi Michalski, ceramics

Diezel, *A dog's life 6*, acrylic and spray paint on canvas,

Mike Kitching, *Dancing Angophoras*, pigmented polyester resin and natural wood, 2006, photographed by Amina Leslie

Anonymous, paper stick up

Mike Kitching, *Rain Poem*, polished stainless steel and plexy glass, 2011, photographed by Antonia Hoddle

Cindy Goode Milman, detail *Blue Capped Swimmer*, oil on canvas, 2012

Emma Anna, *imag_ne*, 2012, photographed by Michael Mannington, Volunteer Photography

Page 4 Pittwater Council Twilight Markets

Page 5 ArtFest 2012, photography by Michael Mannington, Volunteer Photography

Page 6 Emma Anna, *imag_ne*, installation at Mona Vale

Page 7 Renew Newcastle

Page 11 Consultation techniques, images by Pittwater Council

Page 12 Shutterstock image

Page 13 Cindy Goode Milman, *Treading water*, oil on board, 2012

Page 14 Vivid Sydney, photography by the Commons Getty Collection Galleries

Page 15 The Monotones, photography by Michael Mannington, Volunteer Photography

Page 16 Elanora Players production of *Blithe Spirit*, written by Noel Coward, directed by Wade Orth, photography by Tim Pascoe

Page 17 ArtZpace 2011 opening

Page 20 Jessica Watts, *Start the conversation*, 2013, at Mona Vale Library



Pittwater Social Plan 2012-2016 Emerging Issues Paper: Arts

- Page 21 Pittwater Annual Food and Wine Fair
- Page 21 Pittwater Community Arts 2012 exhibition, photography by Bill Holmes
- Page 23 Shutterstock
- Page 24 Ceasius Kakius, Patricia Acevedo Llosa and guests, "action painting" at opening of Ceasius Kakius exhibition *Enlightenment II*, perspex and mixed media, 2012
- Page 25 Mona Vale Library, image by Pittwater Council
- Page 26 Diezel, *A dog's life 6*, acrylic and spray paint on canvas, 2012
- Page 28 Meret Hassanen, *Oscar singing at a party*, photograph, 2013
- Page 29 Elanora Players production of *Gaslight*. written by Patrick Hamilton, directed by Wade Orth, photography by Bill Akhurst
- Page 31 Christopher Pollock, *Lightening over Bungan*, photograph, 2013
- Page 32 Tina Hunter, painting for *Three worlds* exhibition, 2012
- Page 33 Christopher Benjamin McColm, *What do I love about Pittwater? My friends*, photograph, 2013
- Page 34 Anonymous, image by Pittwater Council
- Page 35 Emma Anna, *imag_ne*, photographed by Michael Mannington, Volunteer Photography
- Page 36 Enliven Pittwater logo, trademark of Pittwater Council
- Page 36 Picnic Perfect, photography by Mike O'Flynn, Volunteer Photography
- Page 37 Tiny Stadiums Festival, QuarterBred, P.A.C.T Theatre
- Page 38 Magda Saveg, *Knits the stairs*
- Page 39 Bayview Baths
- Page 40 Dennis Kalous, *Bondi Venus*, recycled sandstone boulders
- Page 41 Shutterstock
- Page 45 Avalon Recreation Centre
- Page 46 24/7 Youth Film Festival 2012, Finalists and committee, image by Mosman Council
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- Page 48 Consultation responses, photography by Pittwater Council
- Page 53 Julie Hickson, *Gum blossom*, acrylic on canvas, 2013
- Page 53 Shutterstock
- Page 61 Jarrad Duffy, *Beautiful morning on Pittwater*, photography, 2013

