

**Newcastle Greens policy on  
Vibrant and activated public places  
Arts & Culture, Public Places & Tourism, Recreation & Sport**



Newcastle can become a welcoming, safe and vibrant place through embracing diversity and inclusiveness. Vibrant public places in Newcastle can be created by establishing diverse public events and supporting entertainment in public spaces throughout the local government area (LGA), especially in the CBD. Newcastle has an innovative and active cultural scene that could be enhanced by fostering and supporting creative artists, particularly those in local and small-scale artistic endeavours. The Greens recognise that Newcastle is one of the premier sports areas in Australia and has world-class facilities. Newcastle City Council has a pivotal role to play in maintaining existing, and identifying needed, recreational and sporting facilities.

Newcastle Greens believe that:

- Creative artistic expression and cultural experience are fundamental to social well-being;
- Access to diverse, innovative artistic and cultural experiences need to be protected and promoted;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists express specific cultural and heritage, knowledge, and their artistic works and enterprises should be appropriately supported and respected; and
- Local libraries and museums contribute significantly to our sense of community, and should be maintained and developed.

Newcastle Greens believe that planning principles for tourism should:

- Be based on local knowledge and thorough research to identify sites suitable for tourism;
- Protect and enhance the environment; and,
- Create community harmony.

Newcastle Greens believe that recreation and sport:

- Provide an important component for building social engagement and cohesion through sporting and recreation clubs;
- Assist the promotion of healthy lifestyles for all sections of the community and are known to prevent and reduce health problems; and,
- Needs to be accessible to Indigenous Australians, women, people with disabilities, older people and people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

**Newcastle Greens will work to:**

***Develop an Arts and Cultural Development Plan for Council that will:***

- Broaden and diversify community participation in artistic and cultural activities.
- Ensure total Council funding to arts organisations and activities is maintained and where possible increased.
- Democratise the consultation base for decisions regarding projects that obtain financial support from Council.
- Maintain council oversight of the “L!vesites” program of cultural events, to ensure its innovative and creative focus, and broaden its coverage across the LGA.
- Support the revitalisation of Newcastle’s performing arts scene, and explore the viability of establishing a professional local theatre.
- Foster innovation and development of emerging local talent by supporting events such as Short and Sweet (theatre), This Is Not Art (creative arts), Shoot-Out (short film), Art Bazaar, and local cultural initiatives like NIMA (Newcastle Improvised Music Association), the Newcastle Poetry Prize and Catchfire Press.
- Provide opportunities for artists and cultural community groups to participate in planning cultural priorities for the city.
- Commission and support public art that celebrates diversity, contributes to sense of place and artistically breaks new ground.

- Recognise and support the important role of community-based organisations such as Octapod, Renew Newcastle, the Community Arts Centre and Tantrum Theatre in developing creativity and innovation.
- Encourage and foster the involvement of the full range of Newcastle community groups in contributing to the city's cultural life, including organisations such as service clubs, resident groups, Transition Towns, community gardens and business improvement associations.
- Support ongoing funding for The Loft Youth Arts and Cultural Centre, including as a focus for fostering involvement in creative activities by young people.
- Protect and encourage the provision of live music and entertainment in pubs and clubs.
- Provide and expand support for local projects in Indigenous music and arts, by The Loft, the Museum, and other bodies.

**Advocate** for and work with state and federal funding bodies to support programs in schools and community and youth centres for visiting writers, artists and musicians.

**Investigate** the contribution that small bars can make to enlivening Newcastle's cultural life, in a way that enhances a sense of community.

**Develop** a plan for Council that will:

- Provide further opportunities for health-enhancing recreation and sport, including non-competitive sport.
- Engage with community sporting groups to ensure an equitable distribution of sporting facilities throughout the local government area.
- Ensure that facilities for active and passive recreation are considered effectively in planning processes.
- Build on and initiates, where possible, programs that target children and young people not otherwise engaged in active sport or other recreational activities.
- Promote and develop strategies to engage inactive members of the community in sport and recreational activities.
- Carry out an audit of facilities available in Newcastle for people with disabilities to engage in a broad range of recreational facilities, particularly outdoor and adventure opportunities.

**Oppose** the state government's plans to privatise or commercialise public coastal assets in the inner city, and review the Coastal Revitalisation Plan.

**Investigate** options to make swimming pools accessible and affordable for all, especially for families with young children.

**Ensure** the CBD and small-scale village shopping centres are supported to create open and safe community gathering places by:

- Providing adequate lighting in public spaces and streets to promote safe night-time activity, including walking and cycling.
- Constructing and maintaining public toilet facilities in the CBD, including along the foreshore.
- Requiring developers to provide and maintain public toilet facilities as part of their approval to operate.
- Supporting a cultural use of Newcastle post office.
- Supporting Renew Newcastle initiatives.
- Supporting free parking in the CBD and foreshore at weekends, and free parking in council parking stations at weekends.
- Reopening Nobbys to the public as an historic site with modest commercial activity and transfer it to NPWS as a historic site.
- Supporting projects and initiatives by local business improvement associations that aim to make local village shopping areas more vibrant and activated for local communities.

For more information about Newcastle Greens policies, visit [www.newcastlegreens.org.au/policies](http://www.newcastlegreens.org.au/policies), or contact our Councillors.