

## Newcastle Greens policy on Arts, Culture, Public Places, Recreation and Sport



### Vibrant and activated public places and communities

Newcastle is a welcoming, safe and vibrant place embracing diversity and inclusiveness. Our lively public places have been created by establishing and supporting entertainment, cultural festivals, community celebrations and sporting events throughout the local government area (LGA).

Newcastle has an innovative and active arts and cultural scene that is encouraged by fostering and supporting creative artists, particularly those in local and small-scale artistic endeavours. It is supported by a strong institutional foundation provided by the art gallery, regional museum, libraries, University, TAFE, and Civic Theatre, among others.

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 the need for additional recreational and sporting facilities.

### Newcastle Greens believe that:

- Creative artistic expression and cultural experience are fundamental to social wellbeing
- 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
- Local libraries, galleries, theatres and museums contribute significantly to our sense of community, and should be maintained and developed
- The Newcastle Solution has been successful in reducing violence but has also reduced nightlife patronage in some respects, however experience in other cities shows that distributed small venues offering a diversity of music, food and entertainment could revitalise the night-time economy while maintaining community safety
- To allow a vibrant music scene to flourish in an increasingly dense city, a permanent office for the night-time economy should be established, supported by Council and with resident and venue representatives, to set guidelines and negotiate conflicts between residents and venues
- The demands for public space change with time of day and season, and maximum public use should be encouraged for compatible activities
- Public transport is an essential component of ensuring public spaces are accessible and that venues that attract large crowds or operate late at night can be exited safely
- Sport provides an important component for building social engagement and cohesion through sporting and recreation clubs
- Physical activity is a necessary part of healthy lifestyles for all sections of the community and is known to prevent and reduce health problems
- Sport and recreational activities and venues need to be accessible to Indigenous Australians, women, people with disabilities, older people and people of non-English speaking backgrounds
- Sporting, cultural and artistic events and institutions attract thousands of visitors to the city every year, adding to the local economy and helping to support local artists and sports clubs

### Newcastle Greens will work with the community and Council 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 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 (TINA - creative arts), Shoot Out (short film), Newcastle Writers Festival, Art Bazaar, and local cultural initiatives such as NIMA (Newcastle Improvised Music Association), the Newcastle Poetry Prize and Catchfire Press
- Help resolve conflicts between venues and residents by applying the “agent of change” principle that new developments and residents need to adapt to existing venues, and new or changing venues need to adapt to existing residents
- 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 in developing creativity and innovation, in managing community spaces such as art centres and youth venues, and in identifying funding and other support needs for creative workers
- Create more activities and venues and provide ongoing funding for existing programs and venues specifically for young people
- 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, migrant and refugee groups, Transition Towns, community gardens and business improvement associations
- Provide and expand support for local projects in indigenous music and art including through resourcing indigenous art projects and cultural events, exhibiting indigenous public art works, supporting existing programs such as those at the University and museum, and using indigenous place names and other cultural references in Council promotions

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

**Review** the progress on existing strategies such as Newcastle After Dark and broader Newcastle plans in supporting a diversity of venues across Newcastle that increase the vibrancy of cultural life.

**Develop** a Sport and Recreation Plan for Council that will:

- Expand the opportunities and options for healthy all-ability recreation and sport including informal exercise, non-competitive sport and emerging sports by better sharing of existing facilities and providing new facilities and equipment
- Engage with community sporting groups to ensure an equitable distribution of sporting facilities throughout the LGA
- Ensure that facilities for active and passive recreation are considered effectively in planning processes, and new and expanding communities are provided with all-ability sporting fields, playgrounds, recreation facilities and open space
- Build on and initiate programs to target inactive members of the community, particularly new migrants, children and young people not otherwise engaged in active sport or other 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
- Retain public sporting and recreation facilities such as the Newcastle Showground and Council swimming pools in public ownership and control

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

**Make** the use of all Council venues for sports and entertainment conditional on no single-use plastics, reduction of other consumables, and 100% collection and recycling of all other materials.

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

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