



GREENWICH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

We have pleasure in warmly inviting you to attend the **NEXT PUBLIC MEETING**, which will take place on **Wednesday, 15 June 2016**, in the **Greenwich Community Centre, 46 Greenwich Road**, at **7.30 pm**.

We are also inviting the North Sydney federal election candidates to attend our meeting. As yet, we don't know who will attend – we hope for a good roll up of candidates so we can hear something of their priorities and we can let them know of ours. So come along, participate in the discussions, and find out more about issues which are currently challenging this beautiful part of Sydney we call home. Refreshments will be served throughout the evening and we would love to see you there.

FORCED COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS - LANE COVE COUNCIL STEPS UP ITS FIGHT

It took a while but Lane Cove Council has finally come out fighting against the NSW government's planned forced merger with Ryde and Hunters Hill councils. We have put together a timeline so that you (and we) can make better sense of what is happening.

The NSW government had been talking about council amalgamation for some time – voluntary amalgamations, not forced ones. All this changed on 6 January 2016 when the government announced planned merger proposals, including that of Lane Cove, Ryde and Hunters Hill. Clearly these mergers were not going to be voluntary. The government knew exactly what it wanted to achieve and it wanted to move fast. Looking back now, the time frame was extraordinary, given the impact of the proposals. The announcement was made in the middle of school holidays and “consultation” and report finalisation had to be completed by 18 March!

Lane Cove, Ryde and Hunters Hill councils did not support a forced merger, but in an effort to meet the government's objectives, suggested the concept of a joint authority, which was rejected. The government then ran a “community consultation” process, appointing a delegate to hear submissions for each proposed merger. At a public hearing on 2 February 2016, Dr Rob Lang, the delegate for the Lane Cove, Ryde and Hunters Hill proposal, would have been left in no doubt that the community did not support the planned merger.

Given the government's obvious determination to force mergers through, some councils commenced legal action in the Land and Environment Court to halt the merger process – Hunters Hill was the only council to challenge the Lane Cove, Ryde and Hunters Hill proposal, with North Sydney and Mosman challenging the planned merger of North Sydney, Willoughby and Mosman.

The government has consistently defended its merger decision by referencing a hastily written KPMG report that allegedly demonstrates significant savings achievable through council amalgamation. But government has blocked access to this report. Lane Cove councillor, Scott Bennison, initiated action in his own right to secure access to this report under GIPA (formerly FOI) legislation and he has had some recent success in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT), with further hearings scheduled in an effort to secure more of the report. On 12 May the NSW government shocked us all with the immediate sacking of many NSW councils, immediate mergers and appointment of administrators until elections in September 2017. Those connected in some way with litigation were spared – but only for the short term. Lane Cove avoided ‘the chop’ because Hunters Hill had a court case pending, as was the case with the North Sydney, Willoughby and Mosman merger. But the Minister has made it quite clear that, if the cases are decided in the government's favour, mergers will proceed as planned.

Faced with this surprise development, Lane Cove Council voted 5-4 on 20 May to commence its own legal action in the Land and Environment Court to halt the merger with Hunters Hill and Ryde. This action appears likely to continue for some time as the NSW government has been required to provide more detail about the KPMG report.

AND OUR PLAN B: PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE EAST WARD WITH THE COUNCIL THAT WILL CONTROL ST LEONARDS

East Ward is feeling the impacts of developments approved by the three councils that currently control St Leonards, and East Ward residents strongly feel the need to be represented in the council that controls this area, not by a merged council headquartered in Ryde. At its last meeting the GCA resolved to put a proposal to the Minister for Local Government that, in the event of amalgamation being forced upon Lane Cove Council, East Ward be incorporated into the local government area that will control St Leonards.

Over 360 electors signed the proposal which is now with the Minister and the GCA is seeking an urgent meeting with him in advance of a decision by the Land and Environment Court.

GAMES FEVER GRIPS GREENWICH

While Australia's Olympic athletes are packing their bags for Rio, the residents of Greenwich are limbering up for an event of even greater significance: the 2016 Greenwich Village Games which are on again this year, over the weekend of 2 - 4 December.

The Games are a much loved highlight of the community calendar, with games and activities to suit participants of all ages and abilities. However, it's about much more than competing; it's about having fun with friends and neighbours, making new friends, renewing past acquaintances and enjoying the Games' unique community spirit.

This year the Games will feature a number of new events including Paper Plane Throwing, a Slow Bicycle Race, and Boule as well as all of the old favourites including the Entertainment Revue, Caber Tossing and Tug O' War.

This year the Games promise to be bigger and better than ever with eight teams taking to the field: the Governators, the Natives, Tribe, the Heroes, the Engineers, the Builders, Commerce and the Anarchists. All teams have begun planning their campaigns and are looking for enthusiastic recruits of all ages.

In particular, the Games Organising Committee is keen to hear from Greenwich residents or anyone with a strong connection to Greenwich who have not competed in the Games before and are interested in joining a team. If you don't know which team to join, the organisers can allocate you.

Registrations for the Games are now open and for the first time they are being processed via a simple and convenient online event registration system called Trybooking.com. To participate, visit the Trybooking.com website and under the 'Buy Tickets' tab search for Greenwich and follow the simple registration instructions.

The direct booking link is available at:
<https://www.trybooking.com/BookingBookingEventSummary.aspx?eid=185244>

You can also follow the Games and many of the teams on Facebook or at the Games website www.gvg.org.au

You can contact the Greenwich Games Recruiting Team at recruitme@gvg.org.au



CALLING ALL Greenwich Artists

The Greenwich Arts Trail is a group of local artists who have been exhibiting together since 2005 and they welcome new talent. If you work out of a space within the boundaries of Greenwich, you will be eligible to participate in the Open Studio weekend on 5-6 November 2016 - a popular and well attended event. Art forms of all description are welcomed.

Contact Amanda Harrison 0409 398 128 or alharison@hotmail.com for more details

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KEEP YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS UP

A timely reminder for those who have yet to pay their 2016 subscriptions. The GCA wants you and needs you to support us in our endeavours to keep Greenwich a great place to live. You will find subscription details on the payment slip enclosed with this newsletter.

STAY IN TOUCH

And we encourage ALL residents to stay in touch with regular visits to our website: www.greenwich.org.au and to that of Lane Cove Council: www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au
 If you register your email address on the GCA's website you will also receive newsletters and updates electronically.
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