

# SOCIAL PLAN 2019 – 2024 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 1,100 people contributed to the development of the City of Ryde Social Plan 2019-2024. The aim of this Plan is to ensure that our community and places are inclusive, connected and progress is measured not just by economic prosperity but also equally in terms of social justice and the wellbeing of our community.

Partnership and collaboration are at the heart of achieving social wellbeing outcomes. Only by working across Council and with our community, service providers and other government and non-government agencies will be able to address the needs and aspirations of our diverse peoples and places.

This Plan provides a strategic roadmap to sustain and improve social wellbeing and support delivery of the 2028 Community Strategic Plan, and other Council strategies, policies and activities.

The Social Plan vision, strategic directions and objectives have been informed through extensive research and consultation with our diverse community and key stakeholders and best practice research.

## EMERGING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

From the background research and community engagement undertaken, a number of issues and opportunities emerged that have informed the strategic directions and objectives.

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS TO SERVICES:

The City of Ryde residents' perceived quality of life is strong. Safety measures also exceed metropolitan Sydney benchmarks. There is also a higher proportion of residents that actively volunteer compared to the average across Greater Sydney. However, there remains opportunity to further build on these strengths and increase a sense of community, connectivity and social participation. Social isolation is a serious but often invisible problem in cities worldwide and was identified as a key issue for community and service providers, particularly for our culturally and linguistically diverse, newly arrived, older populations and for those living in high-density developments.

**AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE COMMUNITY:** The City of Ryde is a diverse community, with 48.6% of residents born overseas. This was an attribute identified as being a major strength for the area. The community highlighted the vibrancy and character that cultural events, festivals, food, businesses and people bring to our neighbourhoods and communities. However, there is a need to support cross-cultural connections, build a stronger feeling of welcome and sharing amongst groups to connect our established and emerging groups and newly arrived residents into the community and to appropriate services.

While the majority of residents did not have any problems accessing general services in their local area, a lack of youth services and LGBTQI+ specific services in the area is a challenge for our community.

### LIVING IN A CHANGING AND INCREASINGLY DENSE URBAN ENVIRONMENT:

Cost of living is increasing across Greater Sydney and affordable housing is also a key issue for the City of Ryde. Our area has slightly higher levels of rental housing stress compared to Greater Sydney, and there is a strong perception amongst consulted community and stakeholders that there is a lack of affordable housing. With increasing high-density apartment living within the City of Ryde, residents will need access to social and recreational spaces outside of the home to connect with each other, learn and play. This includes multipurpose community infrastructure with co-located services and community spaces, as well as welcoming and safe civic plazas, urban parks, and music practice rooms within high-density developments.

### DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES OF SAFETY AND SENSE OF BELONGING:

While the majority of people feel safe living in the City of Ryde, there are varying perceptions of safety depending on the time of day and night or location within the area. Service providers indicated that the lack of domestic violence and homelessness refuges located within the Local Government Area (LGA) is a key challenge and data indicated increasing levels of reported domestic violence incidents, particularly in high-density areas (between January 2017 and December 2018). While 81% of telephone survey respondents indicated that they had not seen or experienced discriminatory behaviours towards themselves or others because of race, religion, gender or age, people, and in particular women, in Eastwood, indicated the highest incidence of discrimination.

### STRONG FOUNDATIONS TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OUTCOMES:

Overall, our residents are relatively active and healthy, with 70% of telephone survey respondents stating they participate in 30 minutes or more physical activity, three or more times a week. The City of Ryde is within the Northern Sydney Local Health District, which has some of the lowest rates of obesity and alcohol consumption in NSW, but a higher incidence of smoking and teenage pregnancy. There are also opportunities to leverage our open space and natural environment assets to further connect and encourage our residents to participate in more healthy activities and increase wellbeing outcomes.

## HOW OUR COMMUNITY DEFINED SOCIAL WELLBEING ....

**COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND BELONGING** are foundations of social wellbeing and support a sense of place and belonging.

**DIVERSITY AND CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTION** strengths, and we want the City of Ryde to be a place where everyone feels welcome and can express their difference and share their backgrounds and stories, traditions and beliefs regardless of where you're from, where you live, what you earn, or who you are.

**SERVICES AND PROGRAMS THAT MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS** play a crucial role in supporting social wellbeing and increasing the quality of life for everyone.

**INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY** are the foundation of a strong community by providing opportunities for everyone in the community to be supported and prosper.

**SPACES AND PLACES** and the quality of the environment we live in greatly influence our social wellbeing. Physical spaces provide the opportunity for people to come together to interact, connect, share experiences, access services and participate in civic and community life.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY** including the physical, mental and emotional health of the community is a key aspect of social wellbeing. The City of Ryde is a great place to live, and providing a welcoming and safe place helps to build an active, healthy community.

# SOCIAL PLAN STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

City of Ryde's Community Strategic Plan and Delivery / Operational Plan



## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

