

Council supports small business during COVID-19

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City of Ryde Deputy Mayor, Clr Simon Zhou, Phoenix Beauty Group owner Lyn Lin who received a support grant, and City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale

More than 230 eligible businesses have received a support grant via the City of Ryde's Eastwood Small Business Hardship Fund.

The \$500,000 Eastwood Small Business Hardship Fund was established by Council to assist businesses that are experiencing significant financial hardship since the first case of coronavirus (COVID-19) was identified in Australia in January.

Eastwood was hit earlier and harder than most small businesses, with disinformation and rumours leading to the usually vibrant shopping precinct resembling a ghost town well before social distancing and lockdown measures were implemented.

Each eligible business that successfully applied for a grant received \$1,906, which represented an equal share of the total funding made available (\$450,000) under the Hardship Fund.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said Council was committed to helping businesses get through this extremely challenging period.

"These support grants will help more than 230 businesses keep their staff employed and keep their doors open," Clr Laxale said.

“Crucially, as the economic restrictions start to be lifted, these support grants will help businesses get back on the road to recovery faster.”

City of Ryde Deputy Mayor, Clr Simon Zhou, said the support grants have gone to a range of retail businesses as well as restaurants and cafes.

“Council has acted quickly in response to the worsening economic conditions and by creating a simple application process we have ensured the support grants have been distributed to the businesses that really needed them.”

In addition to the Hardship Fund support grants, Council also implemented its Small Business Support Package this week to support local businesses during the COVID-19 outbreak and assist in business recovery during the post-pandemic phase.

Under the Small Business Support package more than 40 different fees and charges will be waived for six months. This includes:

- Waiving outdoor dining fees payable by cafes and restaurants
- Waiving administration fees payable by food premises
- Waiving health inspection, health compliance and fire safety certification fees.
The inspections will still be undertaken during this time.

In addition, Council will also negotiate financial assistance support for café and restaurant owners operating from Council premises and other commercial tenants of Council. These negotiations will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis to develop a tailored solution for each tenant and may include rent waivers, rent deferrals or lease extensions.

Parking enforcement to resume from 1 June

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The City of Ryde will resume full parking enforcement from Monday, 1 June to ensure everyone has safe, fair and equal access to parking.

In April, Council made temporary changes to its parking enforcement guidelines to reflect coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions introduced by the NSW Government and advice from health authorities to stay at home where possible.

However, with the NSW Government now easing many of the COVID-19 restrictions, residents and businesses have told Council that it is now appropriate to resume enforcing parking restrictions across the local government area.

This means that from 1 June, everyone will be required to park legally, obey all parking signs (including time restrictions) and pay for parking in ticketed areas.

The decision to resume full parking enforcement will reduce parking congestion in the City of Ryde's major town centres and other areas of high traffic, such as schools.

Crucially, it will help local businesses with their economic recovery by providing adequate parking capacity for their customers and ensuring regular movement of traffic.

New playground opens at Anzac Park

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With playgrounds reopening across the City of Ryde, what better way to celebrate than with a new playground upgrade at Anzac Park in West Ryde.

The new play space is now a district-level playground and has been relocated to be situated within close proximity to the park's amenities building and near to parking.

Key features of the playground include a rope bridge, climbing tower, slides, swings, a shade cloth, a rocker as well as a nature play area that comprises balancing timber elements.

A dedicated toddler area is completely accessible and includes a sandstone water play feature that will no doubt be a hit with children when the weather starts to warm up once again.

Seating, naturally shaded areas and a drinking fountain are also featured as part of the upgrade.

The playground upgrade aligns with the strategic direction outlined within Council's Children's Play Plan which aims to ensure all families within the City of Ryde have access to safe, accessible and high-quality playgrounds.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said the new playground at Anzac Park caters for a broad range of ages and abilities with a wide range of features and inclusive elements.

“This latest playground upgrade is based on extensive consultation with the community and delivers on this Council’s promise to invest in new and improved playgrounds that cater to children of all ages,” Clr Laxale said.

“Relocating the playground allows for existing trees to provide vital shade for users of the playground. It also provides Council with additional opportunities to activate the remainder of Anzac Park, including transforming the previous playground into an open kick-about space.”

For the safety of the community please note that when utilising City of Ryde parks and playgrounds users are strongly encouraged to adhere to the health authorities' physical distancing recommendations.

Park and playground users must ensure there is a maximum of one person per four square metres and keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres from others, with a maximum of 10 people gathering in the same space.

Playground users are also reminded to practice good personal hygiene, including washing hands and using hand sanitiser and/or disinfectant wipes before and after using Council equipment.

Ryde community protects our bushlands during coronavirus while at home

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Although COVID-19 may be isolating us in our homes, the City of Ryde community has finally had time to focus on something closer to home—weeds. Weeds are unwanted plants that can rapidly take over our bushland areas and waterways, and in turn negatively impact our local ecosystem. As weeds vary in invasiveness and abundance, Council has a targeted approach to dealing with them. We are concentrating our efforts on managing priority weeds listed in our newly adopted [Local Priority Weed Management Plan](#).

Many households that adjoin our local bushlands have engaged with Council during their free weeds inspection, gaining advice and information on weed issues on their property.

This is where our community is stepping up to learn more about priority weeds and how to control them on their own land. Our collective effort greatly reduces the risk of weeds spreading into our protected bushlands.

The inspection process involves a Council officer inspecting the front yard and backyard with the resident to identify priority weeds that require urgent treatment. The officer will also explain how to effectively treat identified weeds, answer queries and provide educational material. A small number of properties may also benefit from a weed management plan that can be collaboratively developed with council.

Council's Biosecurity Weeds Officer, Viniana, says, "It's amazing to see first-hand the enthusiasm and efforts of people in our community in tackling the spread of weeds. These times, as tough as they may be, have given our residents the opportunity to make a difference in their own backyards that have positive flow-on effects on our natural environment.

Although weeding may seem like a mundane task, the more contained the spread is the greater chance our native flora and fauna have to survive."

Council's priority weed inspections on private properties are available to residents whose homes adjoin our protected bushlands and/or have serious weed problems. To find out more, visit our [Weeds on Private Properties](#) page.

Libraries and Customer Service Centre to reopen from 1 June

Published on 27 May 2020

Ryde Library Service and the City of Ryde Customer Service Centre will be reopening their doors on Monday 1 June following the easing of restrictions by the NSW State Government.

Each City of Ryde library branch and the Customer Service Centre will strictly adhere to social distancing measures to help stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

This will mean some changes to normal operations.

Starting Monday, 1 June, Ryde, West Ryde, Eastwood and North Ryde libraries will be open weekdays between 10am and 4pm, while Gladesville Library will reopen between 1pm and 4pm on Tuesday to Thursday and between 9am and 1.30pm on Fridays.

During operating hours, each library branch will have a 'Drop and Collect' service model and will limit the duration of visits and the number of people at any one time. There will also be increased cleaning of all touch surfaces and all items will be quarantined for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to circulation.

Access to computers and printing will be restricted and follow strict social distancing protocol and hygiene practices. Screens will also be in place at each library branch counter.

Library events, programs and learning activities will continue to be delivered online at this stage.

To support those who are over 65 or more vulnerable to COVID-19 in our community, the library service will continue to provide an expanded Home Library Service until the pandemic status is completely lifted.

In addition, the new and popular Library2U service will also continue to operate until the libraries return to standard hours of operation.

Both of these services will ensure that everyone in the community can access items without the need to come into the library and to be able to stay home and stay safe.

Meanwhile, Council's Customer Service Centre at 1A Pope Street, Ryde, will open every weekday between 10am and 4pm. Strict social distancing measures will be in place, including a requirement to provide four square metres of space per person, with screens in place at each cashier counter.

Face-to-face meetings with the Building and Development advisory service remain suspended.

As has been the case throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, members of the public can also seek assistance with council services by calling the Customer Service Call Centre on 9952 8222 or [report an issue here](#).

The Ryde Library after-hours return chute also remains operational 24 hours a day to allow documents to be dropped off for customer service.

For more information visit the [City of Ryde COVID-19 page](#).

The New Heart of Ryde to honour Edna Wilde OAM

Published on 21 May 2020



City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, with Edna Wilde OAM

Long-serving Ryde Eisteddfod Chairman and former City of Ryde Councillor, Edna Wilde OAM, will be recognised for her service to the community with The New Heart of Ryde's performance centre to be named in her honour.

Council resolved to name the venue after Ms Wilde OAM due to her long contribution to the City of Ryde, the community and the local arts.

The performance centre is one of the key components of The New Heart of Ryde, which will redevelop the current Ryde Civic Centre site to deliver a four-fold increase in community space for local residents.

Ms Wilde OAM served as a City of Ryde Councillor for 34 years. In 1980, Ms Wilde OAM became the City of Ryde's first female Mayor and held that role on three separate occasions between 1980-1982,

1999-2000 and 2002-2004.

Throughout her civic life, Ms Wilde OAM has also been a dedicated supporter of the local arts scene in the City of Ryde, both through her role as Chairman of the Ryde Eisteddfod and volunteering her time to serve in senior roles for a large number of community organisations.

In 2000, Ms Wilde OAM was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to local government and to the community of Ryde. A year later, she was awarded the Centenary Medal for her service as the first female Mayor of the City of Ryde.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, said Ms Wilde OAM epitomises the community spirit that Ryde is famous for.

"Edna is a legend of the City of Ryde, having dedicated so many years to serving the community and representing our talented artistic community. Once built, The New Heart of the Ryde will be the focal point for the community and civic life in the City of Ryde, so it is only fitting that Edna is honoured as part of the project," Cllr Laxale said.

Ms Wilde OAM said she was deeply humbled to be recognised as part of such a significant project for the City of Ryde.

"The New Heart of Ryde ticks all the boxes. It will resolve the chronic shortage of community space that Ryde currently suffers from and will also provide groups like the Ryde Eisteddfod with new and modern facilities," Ms Wilde OAM said.

In addition to the performance centre, The New Heart of Ryde will also include contemporary office accommodation, commercial floor space, a public plaza, on-site parking and better access to the Top Ryde Shopping Centre and its surrounds.

Council's decision to proceed with The New Heart of Ryde follows a comprehensive community consultation process undertaken through 2019, which found there was overwhelming support for the project, with 85 percent of respondents in favour.

The New Heart of Ryde will be financially sustainable, it will not result in increased rates or a reduction in any services. Council will also retain complete ownership of the site.

Support the Ryde Salvos' Digital Doorknock in May

Published on 18 May 2020



Due to the current COVID-19 situation, the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal is being done a little differently this year. The appeal will still be happening during the month of May as a 'Digital Doorknock.'

The City of Ryde has started its own fundraiser as part of the Red Shield Appeal, with all funds going to the Ryde Salvos team, which covers from Epping through to Hunters Hill/Gladesville and down through Eastwood, West Ryde to Meadowbank and Putney.

The Salvos will be assisting those who are living in extreme hardship; people who have never needed us before the devastating impacts of this pandemic; and the people who have never felt so isolated and alone as they do right now.

Donations may go towards:

- Helping a child at risk with an after school program
- Providing a food hamper for a family in need
- Providing emergency accommodation for a person in crisis
- Providing two weeks' rent for a disadvantaged person.

To donate, visit the [City of Ryde Digital Doornock Page](#) and donate online.

Granny Smith celebrations to take new form in 2020

Published on 14 May 2020

The City of Ryde has made the extremely tough decision to cancel this year's [Granny Smith Festival](#).

The annual event, which was due to be held on 17 October this year, will instead be replaced with a series of new events staged throughout October that will celebrate the life and legacy of Granny Smith.

The new series of smaller events will allow for a more controlled environment that will allow people to participate safely. Council will, however, be guided by federal and state health advice at the time and will therefore have contingencies in place to move some events online if required to do so.

The full details of the revised celebrations will be announced in due course.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Jerome Laxale, said the decision to cancel the Granny Smith Festival was the only course of action that could be taken.

"An event the size of Granny Smith Festival takes months to plan and organise, involving thousands of performers, vendors, volunteers and community members. Without guidance on when large-scale events will be able to resume safely in NSW, we have reached the point where we have had to make the decision to cancel," Cllr Laxale said.

"While we will not be able to stage the Granny Smith Festival this year, the revised events that the City of Ryde events team is preparing will allow us all to stay safe while acknowledging the life of Granny Smith, one of our City's most famous icons, in a fun and unique way.

"I would like to thank everyone for their understanding during what has been an extremely challenging period."

City of Ryde park facilities to reopen to the public

Published on 14 May 2020



In line with the NSW Government's easing of COVID-19-related restrictions, all City of Ryde [playgrounds](#), [outdoor fitness equipment](#), park barbecues and shelters, and the [Meadowbank Skate Park](#) will open to the public as of Friday 15 May 2020.

Social distancing requirements remain in force and park users are reminded to practice good personal hygiene. Please wash your hands and use hand sanitiser and/or disinfectant wipes before and after using Council equipment, and assume the person who has used the equipment before you has the virus.

Park and playground users must ensure there is a maximum of one person per four square metres and keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres from others. You cannot gather in an outdoor public space in groups of more than 10.

Council is working closely with NSW Police to monitor compliance with social distancing and Public Health Order requirements, and will continue to take advice from authorities. If you think an individual or organisation is in breach of a [Public Health Order](#), please contact Crime Stoppers. Complaints can be reported online or by phone on 1800 333 000.

Council to switch on sporting field lights

Published on 13 May 2020

The lights at popular sporting fields in the City of Ryde will be switched on weeknights to help members of the community stay active and adhere to social distancing measures during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Under the trial being undertaken by the City of Ryde, lights will be in operation between 5pm and 8pm, Monday to Friday at the following fields:

- Eastwood Park Upper, Eastwood
- ELS Hall Park Field 1 and 3, North Ryde
- Marsfield Park Field 1, Marsfield
- Meadowbank Park Field 9, Meadowbank
- North Ryde Park, North Ryde
- Ryde Park Field 1, Ryde
- Westminster Park, Gladesville

In addition, lights will be in operation between 5pm and 8pm Monday to Thursday at the following fields:

- Meadowbank Park Netball Courts, Meadowbank
- Morrison Bay Park Fields 4 and 5, Putney
- Waterloo Park, Marsfield

All members of the public will be able to use the fields for exercise during these times provided they comply with strict social distancing measures introduced by the Federal Government to help limit the spread of COVID-19.

Under current social distancing measures, people are allowed to exercise in public spaces in groups of no more than two people.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said the trial would provide the community with more options and access to open space, while also reducing the number of people using the parks during daylight hours.

“Council has launched this trial to give everyone in the community the chance to safely exercise outdoors, while keeping a safe distance from others,” Clr Laxale said.

“While there have been some minor breaches, we are generally happy with the way our community has embraced social distancing measures. This trial will allow more in our community to get much needed exercise, however, Council staff will monitor the night time use. If social distancing measures are flouted, we will be forced to turn off the lights.

“I would like to thank Clr Penny Pedersen who lobbied for the trial to be undertaken.”

Council's Rangers will undertake patrols at the five parks throughout the duration of the trial to ensure social distancing measures are being complied with.

Anyone with concerns about breaches of social distancing guidelines are advised to call the NSW Police on 1800 333 000.

The New Heart of Ryde to deliver boost to economy

Published on 06 May 2020



Indicative image of how the redeveloped Ryde Civic Centre site could look

The City of Ryde continues to progress with the Ryde Central project in what will be a major boost to the local economy as it recovers from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Known as the 'The New Heart of Ryde', the project will redevelop the current Ryde Civic Centre site to deliver a four-fold increase in community space, as well as contemporary office accommodation, commercial floor space, a public plaza and on-site parking all within easy reach of Top Ryde Shopping Centre and its surrounds.

The tender to design and construct The New Heart of Ryde has been awarded to Taylor Construction Group, a highly regarded and experienced delivery partner that has completed many significant commercial, community and residential projects across NSW.

The tender was awarded following a comprehensive Expression of Interest and tender process that commenced in October last year.

Council's decision to proceed with The New Heart of Ryde follows a comprehensive community consultation process undertaken through 2019, which found there was overwhelming support for the project, with 85 percent of respondents in favour.

The project has already undergone rigorous checks and balances. This includes consideration by the independent Urban Design Review Panel and documentation

submitted to the Office of Local Government under its Capital Expenditure Review Guidelines.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said The New Heart of Ryde would generate more jobs, boost growth and revitalise the Ryde Civic Centre site, at a time when the local economy needs it most.

"The New Heart of Ryde will be a key component to our economic recovery and joins a range of initiatives Council has introduced that will help local residents and businesses get through this extremely challenging period," Clr Laxale said.

"Not only will The New Heart of Ryde be a major shot in the arm for workers, it will also address the chronic shortage of community facilities in the City of Ryde. This once in a generation project is an investment in people and workers.

"Crucially, The New Heart of Ryde will be financially sustainable, it will not result in increased rates or a reduction in any services. Council will also retain complete ownership of the site.

"Council intends to partner with the federal and state governments to help speed up delivery of the project, and I would encourage other levels of Government partner with us given the enormous social benefits The New Heart of Ryde will bring to the entire city."

Taylor CEO Mark Taylor said: "We are excited to be working with the City of Ryde on such a vitally important project that, once completed, will provide the community with a modern facility that will deliver a range of economic and social benefits."

City of Ryde launches Library2U

Published on 06 May 2020



The City of Ryde has launched the new [Library2U](#) service, which will deliver books direct to the homes of library members in the City of Ryde as part of Council's continued support for the community during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Run by the City of Ryde Libraries, with assistance from Council Rangers and staff from the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, the free Library2U service allows members to reserve up to 10 items and then a Library staff member will phone and book a delivery window for members to receive the items.

All deliveries will be contactless and abide by strict social distancing measures that are currently in place. One of the new electric vehicles recently introduced to Council's fleet will also be used to undertake the deliveries,

Reservations under the Library2U service will open on Wednesday 6 May with deliveries commencing from Monday 11 May. Members will be able to reserve items [online](#) or by calling 9952 8352.

Those who borrow through the Library2U service will be able to return the items at one of the contactless return chutes found at each of the five City of Ryde Library branches. Generous renewal limits are also available for extending loans.

In addition to the Library2U service, City of Ryde Libraries has also expanded the eligibility criteria for its Home Library Service to any City of Ryde resident over 65 years of age while COVID-19 restrictions are in place.

Traditionally for people who are unable to attend the library due to a disability or illness, the expansion of the Home Library Service recognises that those aged over

65 are some of our most vulnerable community members during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Deliveries and collections under the Home Library Service occur every four weeks and like the Library2U service, is a contactless service which adheres to social distancing measures.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said the new Library2U service and expansion of the Home Library Service were the latest initiatives undertaken by Council to support members of the community during the COVID-19 outbreak.

“I am delighted that we can offer our community this new door to door library service during this challenging time. Another added bonus is that our delivery drivers are Council staff whose roles have been somewhat reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions,” Clr Laxale said.

“Keeping our hardworking and loyal staff in a meaningful and rewarding job is incredibly important for me, and a nice little added benefit of this Library 2U service.

“I would like to remind everyone that they can still become a library member even though our branches are closed, by signing up [online](#). By becoming a member you will become eligible for a range of services including our Online Library which has a great range of eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines.”

[Click here](#) for more information on the Library2U service.

'No Place Like Home' art exhibition applications open

Published on 05 May 2020

Council, in collaboration with community housing provider Link Housing, is calling upon local residents across Sydney to participate in the 'No Place Like Home' art exhibition this May.

Since the exhibition's inception four years ago by Link Housing, 2020 marks a transition to the digital online space virtual in order to adhere to current COVID-19 restrictions and for the safety of the community. The virtual event will feature a walk-through of the actual exhibition set up in a community art space in Ryde, as well as photographs of the individual artworks showcased on the [Link Housing website](#) and [social media channels](#).

The 'No Place Like Home' exhibition highlights the importance of affordable, safe and secure housing and through art shows how a home can transform lives. The theme takes on new meaning at this time as we all continue to self-isolate in our homes. We invite applicants to reflect on what a home means to them at this time.

Applications are open until 5.00pm Friday 29 May 2020. It's free to enter with no experience required and participants can choose to sell their artworks privately. To enquire about submitting an artwork, contact Link Housing on 9412 5111 or email enquiries@linkhousing.org.au.

Council is proud to support this community initiative.

Council's Home Waste and Sustainability Service goes online

Published on 05 May 2020



The City of Ryde's Home Waste and Sustainability Advisory Service, which helps residents reduce their home running costs, continues to be delivered by Council despite the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The Home Waste and Sustainability Advisory Service undertakes a free assessment of a household's energy and water consumption and identifies ways in which people can save money on their bills and improve the comfort and environmental performance of their household.

Normally a face-to-face service, it was initially feared that the Home Waste and Sustainability Advisory Service would have to be significantly reduced during the COVID-19 outbreak.

However, a decision by staff in Council's Sustainability Team to move the service to an online environment has had an overwhelmingly positive response.

Under the change, people who apply for an assessment can now have it undertaken all online and following one phone conversation with Council's qualified advisors.

During the assessment, the advisor will review energy and water bills and discuss the home



layout with the applicant. Based on this, a personalised Action Plan is developed and emailed to the resident recommending what actions the household can take to improve its efficiency and better manage its waste.

Home Waste Sustainability Officer Elizabeth Pearce, who oversees the service, said there had been an increase in the number of people using the service in recent weeks.

“We initially thought the Home Waste and Sustainability Service would be severely impacted due to inability for face-to-face engagement, but in the initial weeks of rolling out the service online we have found positive uptake of the program,” Ms Pearce said.

“We attribute this increase to people staying at home and undertaking home improvements, but also driven by the economic crisis and given we now provide an online platform which would appeal to some over face-to-face engagement.”

Ms Pearce said based on recent data, the Home Waste and Sustainability Service is saving the average home between \$600 and \$800 per annum in energy costs.

For more information visit the [Home Waste and Sustainability Service](#) and to sign up for a free assessment.

Council to provide financial relief to those who need it most

Published on 04 May 2020

Approved Jobseeker and Jobkeeper applicants will be eligible for a \$400 council rate rebate as part of the City of Ryde's new Financial Hardship Policy. In addition, eligible pensioners will receive an extra \$150 voluntary pensioner subsidy to supplement the \$250 statutory pensioner subsidy they already receive.

The City of Ryde endorsed the new policy at last week's Council meeting as part of its continued efforts to support the community impacted from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The policy aims to simplify the application process that is required for someone to be assessed for financial hardship.

In addition to the \$400 rate rebate, which will be provided as part of the November 2020 rates instalment, the policy also allows Council to not charge interest or commence debt recovery on overdue rates for those who qualify for financial hardship.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said Council has moved quickly to provide appropriate support to the community.

"This policy ensures that the bulk of support during the COVID-19 crisis goes to people who need it most. Council's strong financial position means we can assist those in need during this crisis, and where we can help, we will do so," Clr Laxale said.

Council has always provided assistance to anyone in financial difficulty so ratepayers who are not a pensioner or an approved Jobseeker or Jobkeeper applicant can continue to provide access to rate relief via a mutually acceptable payment plan.

The Financial Hardship Policy is the latest support measure endorsed by the City of Ryde in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

In addition to the financial rate relief for City of Ryde ratepayers (residents and businesses), Council is also proposing a range of other financial measures to assist local businesses during the COVID-19 outbreak. Over the next six months, these include:

- Waiving outdoor dining fees payable by cafes and restaurants due to social distancing restrictions
- Waiving health inspection and compliance fees, however, these inspections will still be undertaken during this time for the safety of the public
- Waiving fire safety certification application fees even though these applications will still need to be submitted to Council
- Waiving filming fees on an application
- Considering all applications for rent deferrals submitted by café and restaurant owners operating from a Council premise.

"As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, Council will continue to support everyone in the community to get through this crisis," Clr Laxale added.

[Click here](#) for more information and to apply for assistance.

Ratepayers who do not have access to the internet to assist staff access their application can call Customer Service on 9952 8222.

Children in Ryde create positive messages during the pandemic

Published on 04 May 2020

The City of Ryde invited writer Lucy Nelson to lead digital workshops to help children in Ryde channel their creativity to create positive messages while we face the pandemic. The hour-long workshops, held on 16 and 23 April 2020, became a virtual gathering space where 9 to 12-year-olds could learn new skills, interact and share their ideas.

Over 50 young participants enjoyed a series of writing exercises and used their imagination to build dream universes that were brought to life through words. Their final works were artistic messages that share their positive energy and give advice for all of us during the current health crisis.

See a selection of their inspiring messages below.



Hunter's Hill and Ryde team up with Harris Farm to deliver hampers

Published on 03 May 2020



Hunter's Hill Mayor Clr Mark Bennett and City of Ryde Mayor Clr Jerome Laxale

Hunter's Hill Council and the City of Ryde have partnered with Harris Farm Markets at Boronia Park to deliver 100 hampers every weekday to help those most in need during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The free hampers are part of Harris Farm Markets' 100 Box Program and include fresh produce and vital food items to be distributed to vulnerable communities throughout Hunters Hill and the City of Ryde.

Both councils have been working with local community organisations this week to distribute the Harris Farm Markets' hampers. Organisations which received the hampers include:

- CASS Group for seniors from CALD backgrounds
- Link Housing. The Salvation Army will include the hampers in the care packages it currently provides to Link Housing tenants
- Macquarie University for international students
- North Ryde Community Aid for senior citizens and financially disadvantaged community members
- Relationships Australia for disadvantaged families

- Resolution Community Services for newly arrived migrants, refugees and people impacted by domestic violence
- Sydney Community Services for disabled and vulnerable members of the community

Hunter's Hill Council Mayor, Clr Mark Bennett, said the 100 hampers would help many within the community who are struggling as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

"The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak has been significant and far-reaching throughout our community, and the delivery of these hampers will help those experiencing hardship during this challenging time," Clr Bennett said.

"I would like to thank Harris Farm Markets for its extreme generosity. It is one of the many organisations that goes above and beyond to help those most in need in both Hunters Hill and the City of Ryde.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, also thanked Harris Farm Markets for providing the hampers.

"Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, it has been extremely heartening to see businesses and residents in the Ryde and Hunters Hill communities come together to help those who need assistance," Clr Laxale said.

"In thanking Harris Farm Markets I would also like to thank Hunter's Hill Council for partnering with the City of Ryde to ensure the hampers reach those who need them the most."

Council welcomes two new electric vehicles to its fleet

Published on 01 May 2020



The City of Ryde continues to invest in a cleaner and greener future, with the introduction of two electric vehicles (EVs) and accompanying charging stations into its fleet.

The introduction of the two EVs builds on the City of Ryde's efforts to reduce its own carbon footprint as part of Council's commitment towards becoming Net Zero Emissions by 2050, which is being led by staff in Council's Environment team.

This project also supports Council's pledge under the Cities Power Partnership program towards encouraging sustainable transport use.

The charging stations for the new EVs will be powered by solar energy generated at a Council facility to ensure the process is renewably sourced. This means both EVs will have zero emissions produced from their use and fuel source compared to more than one tonne of carbon emissions that their fuel-based versions would produce per year combined.

City of Ryde Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, said the new EVs were an important first step in transitioning away from fuel-based cars.

"The devastating impacts caused by climate change have shown that we need authorities at all levels of government to start demonstrating leadership and embrace new technology to reduce carbon emissions. In fact, the Ryde community has told us directly that they want Council to take a leading role on environmental

issues – such as reducing carbon emissions – and the purchase of these EVs does exactly that,” Clr Laxale said.

“The City of Ryde will continue to lead the way in implementing policies that will benefit the environment and deliver real action on climate change for the benefit of the local community both today and well into the future.”

Clr Christopher Gordon, who proposed the electric vehicle project to Council, said EVs bring a range of benefits to the community and to the environment, and are also a long term cost-effective solution.

“The benefits of EVs include reduced air pollution, removal away from fossil fuel based sources of transport as well as long term benefits such as significantly lower fuel and ongoing maintenance costs. I hope the introduction of EVs to Council’s fleet will convince others to follow suit and make the transition to EVs faster,” Clr Gordon said.

In addition to the purchase of the EVs, the City of Ryde intends to roll out public EV charging stations in the near future that will complement existing community charging locations at key spots across the local government area.