

Thursday 19 January 2017

BUDDING BUSHCARE GROUP BREAKS NEW GROUND

A skilled, all-abilities bushcare group of four young people aged 22-28 will break new ground when they start work on the restoration of the natural environment along the creek line in Jim Walsh Park.

The project is the result of a new social inclusion partnership between Ryde Council and Bushlink, an environmental social enterprise that provides all-abilities training to equipment people for meaningful work in the community.

City of Ryde Mayor, Cllr Bill Pickering, who joined the group on their first dig, said: "The engagement of the Bushlink group is a great example of Ryde's social inclusion approach to providing equal opportunity for all.

"For the skilled group this project is their first experience of work in the Ryde area. It's a really great outcome because it's a win for them, a win for the environment and a win for the entire community who enjoy all the amenities of Jim Walsh Park."

Bushlink's Coordinator, Cathy Hockey, said direct contact with nature has a hugely positive physiological impact on everyone in the team. "We are dedicated to creating real and valued employment for people with disability, through a network of working environmental project teams.

"Jobs with Bushlink develop self-respect, a high degree of pride and a sense of self-worth. As a result, our employees are well trained, have a fantastic work ethic and a high attendance rate."

Commencing next week, the supervised team will meet monthly to continue a project completed by Council in 2016 to improve the water quality of Terrys Creek. They will remove weeds along the creekline and encourage the growth of the native plants to enhance the natural creekline. Additional planting of native acacia, grevillea and creekline species will improve the natural habitat for native birds and wildlife.

Bushlink is a social enterprise operated by Northside Enterprise Incorporated, a not-for-profit community organisation, highly regarded for its long standing services and support to people with disability. Bushlink is available for environmental project work and for their Schools Inclusion Program. For details www.bushlink.org.au

City of Ryde has a strong commitment to building just and inclusive communities with a focus on equality, human rights and freedoms. City of Ryde embraces diversity to ensure that our City is dynamic and innovative and a leader in environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Photo Opportunity: Bushlink Bushcare Team, Jim Walsh Park, entrance opposite 24 Graham Ave, Eastwood. Monday 23 January 2017, 11.00 am.

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