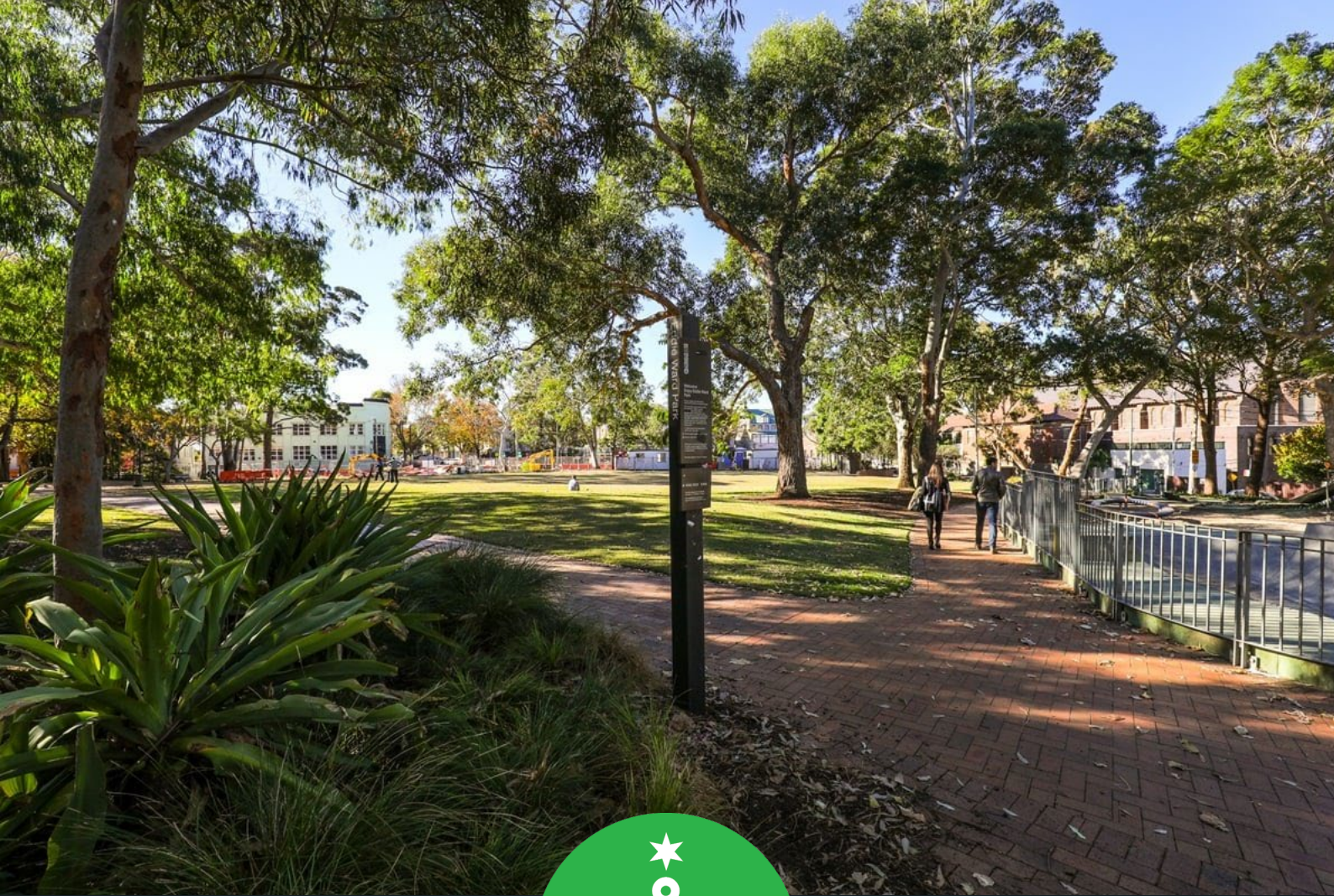


Attachment C

Engagement Report



Engagement report

Upgrading Ward Park, Surry Hills

June 2025

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Engagement summary

From 31 March to 12 May 2025, we asked the community for feedback on a concept plan to upgrade Ward Park, Surry Hills.

Consultation on the plan provided an opportunity for stakeholders and the community to review and comment on the design.

Consultation activities included:

- Letters to nearby residents and businesses
- project signage in the park
- a pop-up event in the park (attended by approximately 20 residents)
- a presentation at the Lord Mayor's Surry Hills Community Housing Forum
- a presentation Inner-City Network Meeting (community food and other support) at the Northcott Community Centre on Friday 11 April from 3pm.
- Specific reach out to the Boys and Girls Brigade.
- emails to key stakeholders

This report outlines the community engagement activities that took place to support the consultation and summarises the key findings from the consultation.

Purpose of the engagement

The purpose of the engagement was to:

- gather feedback from stakeholders and the community about the proposed upgrade.
 - determine the level of satisfaction with the concept design.
-

Outcomes from the engagement

Submissions received during consultation

We received a total of 51 submissions during the consultation period.

31 submissions were received via the Sydney Your Say survey portal and 20 email submissions.

The Sydney Your Say page was visited 712 times during the consultation period.

Key findings

Online feedback form – rating the design and elements of the proposed upgrade

Respondents who completed the online feedback form were asked whether they supported the proposed design as well as to rate how important elements of the proposed design were to them.

The overall design was strongly supported by **80.65%** of survey responders.

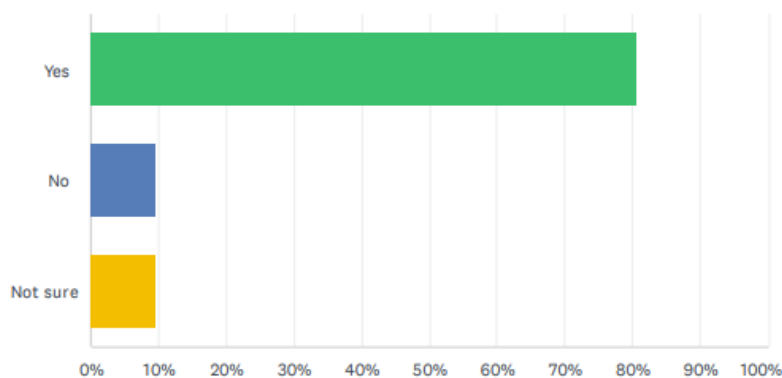
The four design elements in the park were also strongly supported or supported by survey responders:

- new and improved playground strongly supported or supported by **71%** of survey responders
- improved park furniture strongly supported or supported by **93%** of survey responders
- improved lighting through the park **97%** playground strongly supported or supported by 71% of survey responders
- upgraded pathways strongly supported or supported by **83%** of survey responders

The full results are below:

Q1 Do you support the proposed improvements to Ward Park?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0

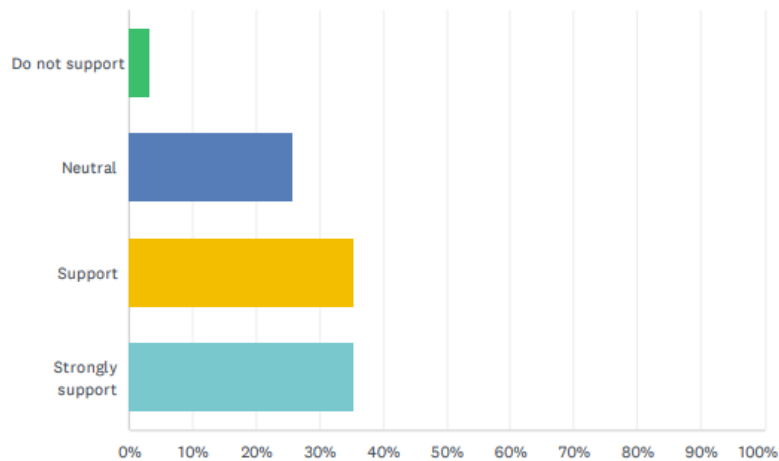


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	80.65%	25
No	9.68%	3
Not sure	9.68%	3
TOTAL		31

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Q2 New and improved playground

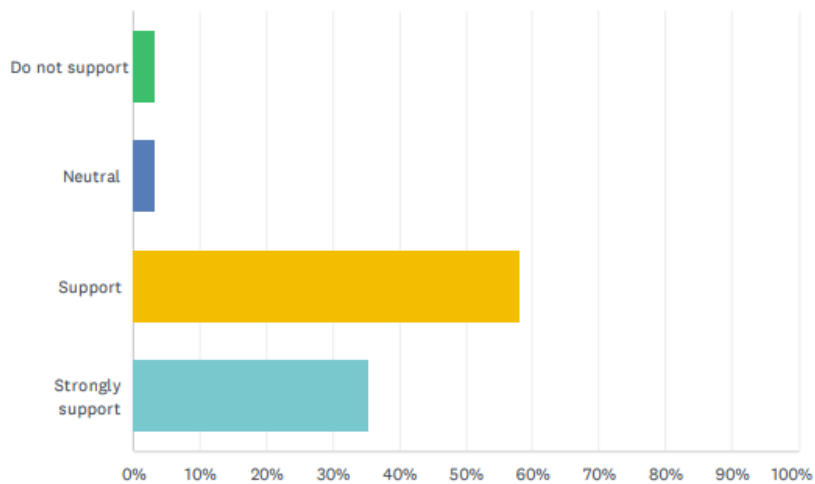
Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not support	3.23%	1
Neutral	25.81%	8
Support	35.48%	11
Strongly support	35.48%	11
TOTAL		31

Q3 Improved park furniture

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0

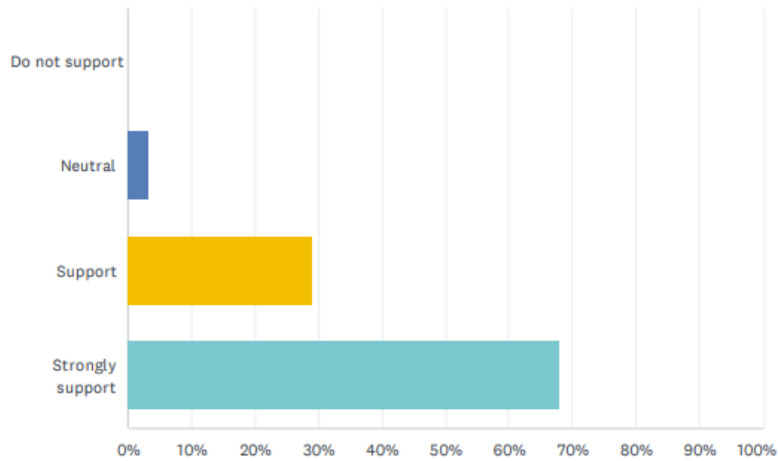


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not support	3.23%	1
Neutral	3.23%	1
Support	58.06%	18
Strongly support	35.48%	11
TOTAL		31

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Q4 Improved lighting through the park

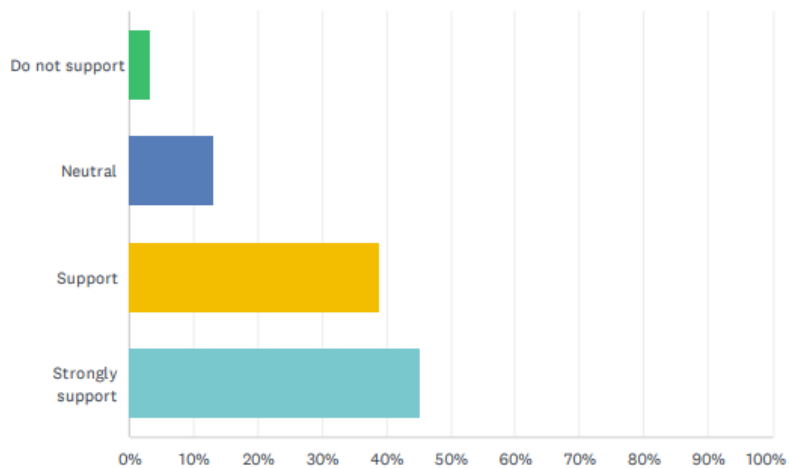
Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not support	0.00%	0
Neutral	3.23%	1
Support	29.03%	9
Strongly support	67.74%	21
TOTAL		31

Q5 Upgraded pathways

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not support	3.23%	1
Neutral	12.90%	4
Support	38.71%	12
Strongly support	45.16%	14
TOTAL		31

Subjects/topics raised in submissions

Several subjects/topics were raised in the feedback received. These were presented as concerns, suggestions and/or requests.

This feedback was received through the survey as well as individual emails during the consultation period and discussions with the community at onsite events and is summarised below.

Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
Feedback on the playground design		
Incorporate more activities for older children such as handball/netball/basketball courts	4	Hardcourt facilities were previously installed in the park; however, they were decommissioned due to noise complaints from nearby residents. Ward Park is located between Prince Alfred Park and Moore Park, both of which offer netball and basketball courts. During detailed design, the project team will review the feasibility of including a handball court.
Fully fence the playground to keep children in and dogs out	4	The concept design includes fencing the playground. The design will consider different fence heights and ensure there are adequate entry and exit points.
Consider enhancing the skate bowl in the park as it is very well used	3	The existing skate bowl has been reviewed and is deemed satisfactory for use, and it will not be upgraded, and no enhancements are to be included as part of the works.
Include more swings and rope climbing structures	3	The project team will review the inclusion of swings and rope climbing structures as part of the play equipment during detailed design.
Support the relocation of the playground	2	Noted.
The playground area needs to be shaded more adequately	2	The playground will be integrated around the existing mature trees. Additional trees will be planted to enhance shade.
More seating for parents around the playground	2	The project team will review the inclusion of additional seating for parents/carers during detailed design.

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Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
Use rubber soft fall in the playground	2	Rubber softfall will be utilised in the playground. During detailed design, the extent of the softfall will be determined in accordance with safety standards and maintenance requirements.
Do not use sand in the playground as it attracts rats	2	Sand will not be used in the playground.
Include more nature play elements	1	The project team will explore opportunities to include nature play elements in the playground design
Avoid cubby like structures in the playground due to concerns around drug use	1	The project team will avoid enclosed cubby-like structures in the design, to support safety and passive surveillance.
Install a water bubbler	1	There are existing water bubblers within the park. No additional water bubbler will be included within the park.
Retain the flying fox and blue rope pyramid	1	The existing flying fox and rope pyramid are approaching the end of their service life. To ensure the safety of users, these elements will be removed and replaced with new play equipment. The final selection of equipment will be determined during detailed design.
The playground should remain near the community room to make it easier for parents to watch children during community events	1	The current sightlines between the current play space and the community room are limited and do not support adequate supervision. The new location consolidates the two playgrounds into one central area, enhancing play value and safety. This avoids separating families across two smaller playgrounds and improves overall usability.
The playground should minimise plastic and concrete in the design and use more natural materials	1	The design will aim to minimise the use of plastic and concrete, and incorporate more natural and sustainable materials where possible

Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
Feedback on overall park design		
Install exercise equipment in the park	7	While there are several large sporting facilities with exercise equipment located nearby, space within the park is constrained and access is limited. The project team will review the feasibility of incorporating exercise equipment and additional activities for older children into Ward Park.
Install CCTV and corresponding signage throughout the park to increase user safety	6	The project team notes this request and will confirm current City policy. Improved lighting throughout the park to increase user safety is within the upgrade of the park
Install more seating throughout the park	5	The park upgrade is to include a variety of seating options and locations, connecting the plaza to the park and incorporating several bench seats around the turf area. The location for seating will be further investigated during detailed design.
Create barrier such as heavy planting or fencing between the park and Devonshire Street to stop dogs and children running out	5	Dense planting and fencing will separate the park from Devonshire Street to prevent children and dogs from running out, with the playground fully fenced to keep children in and dogs out. Additional fencing is included in the concept design, with further improvements to be considered during detailed design.
Increased pest control measures to address the current rat problem eg. reduce tall grasses, plants that attract	4	Planting to be reduced and selected species introduced to reduce and mitigate this issue.
Keep dog bag dispensers and bins on both sides of the park so they are readily available	3	Existing dog bag dispensers will be retained. Additional bins may be added at park entrances, particularly Belvoir Street where food vans operate.
Upgrade lighting to increase safety for park users at night	3	Improved lighting throughout the park is within the upgrade of the park.
The grass area currently doesn't drain well in wet weather and should be investigated during the upgrade	3	Drainage and irrigation upgrade works are part of the upgrade of the park.

Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
Fence the off-leash area to keep dogs separated from children	2	The project includes upgraded fencing, with the playground fully enclosed. Further fencing improvements will be explored during detailed design.
Included gardenias as part of the planting	2	Planting selection will be based on what is deemed suitable for the park. Final planting choices will be determined during detailed design.
Minimise dense or tall shrubs to maintain open sightlines and a sense of safety	2	Planting may be reduced to maintain sightlines, with final design reviewed during detailed design.
Include a running track around the perimeter of the park	1	Park users will be able to use the path network to complete loops within the park. A dedicated running track is not suitable for Ward Park
Introducing a small commercial stall near the train stop, such as a pop-up food van or coffee stand to help with activation	1	A commercial stall is not within the scope of the project. However, a commercial business may apply for a mobile food vending permit if they wish to operate in the area.
Install goal posts that can be used for soccer/football	1	While there are several large sporting facilities located nearby, such as Moore park space within the park is constrained and access is limited. Ward park it not suitable to install turf fields with goals.
Review path alignments to ensure they reflect actual pedestrian desire lines across the park	1	Path alignments will be reviewed and refined during the detailed design stage of the project.
Investigate bicycle rerouting / speed humps / obstacles etc	1	The City supports the use of bicycles throughout Ward Park.
Maintain pedestrian access from Marlborough Street into the park	1	One access point along Marlborough street is to be maintained.
Consider upgrading Marlborough Street to a raised shared zone for improved pedestrian amenity and safety	1	The extent of works for the park upgrade does not extend to Marlborough Street. However, the City is currently reviewing options for a continuous raised footpath treatment along Marlborough Street

Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
Consider scaling back some of the existing trees to create a more open and balanced space	1	Existing trees will be assessed for health and lifespan. Tree removal, pruning or removal will be based on arborist recommendations.
Include a wall that can be used for graffiti	1	No additional walls will be added specifically for a dedicated mural or graffiti wall. Throughout the detailed design phase, the project team will explore options to repurpose an existing wall for use as a mural and graffiti art space.
Maintain and widen the path from Lansdowne St to Devonshire St to follow pedestrian desire lines	1	Path widths will be reviewed during the detailed design phase and widened where appropriate.
Provide seating along Lansdowne Street to support elderly residents	1	Additional seating will be added along the park edge, particularly along Lansdowne Street.
Shift the BBQ closer to the community room for better connection between the spaces	1	The City will work with Homes NSW to relocate the BBQ closer to the community room entrance to strengthen the connection between these spaces.
Use a more durable grass species that will survive the heavy use	1	The project team will review turf species during the detailed design stage to ensure durability under frequent use.
Install more sheltered seating	1	A variety of seating will be provided, with a mix of shaded areas beneath trees and open, unshaded areas throughout the park.
Dedicated area for share bike parking near light rail stop	1	There will not be a dedicated area within Ward Park for private company-operated shared bike facilities.
Dedicated area for charity trucks and food distribution	1	Service vans are advised not to park within the park boundaries and should use nearby street parking. Paving along Belvoir Street will be widened to accommodate the congregation of people accessing these services.
More benches around the edge of the grass looking inwards to create more of a community space	1	The proposal has been updated to include a variety of seating options connecting the plaza to the park, with several bench seats around the turf area. Additional seating opportunities will be explored during detailed design.

Comments	Total	City of Sydney Response
Convert the northern end of Marlborough Street into parking	1	The extent of works for the park upgrade does not extend to Marlborough Street. However, the City is currently reviewing options along Marlborough Street.
A dedicated area for large dogs, small dogs, and no-dog zones to help manage the park better	1	Ward Park is currently identified as an off-leash dog park. Dogs are prohibited in areas such as the playground. Fencing has been included in the concept design to mitigate concerns, and further fencing improvements will be considered during detailed design. Dog litter bag dispensers are also provided in all off-leash areas.
Minimise the use of decompressed granite as it gets muddy and runs in the rain	1	The location and use of decomposed granite will be limited to suitable areas. These locations will be reviewed by the project team during detailed design.
Avoid placing picnic tables too close to the Northcott Towers and community centre to reduce the risk of people gathering late in the evening and disturbing nearby residents	1	Picnic tables will be relocated away from the boundary line near Northcott Towers to reduce the risk of late-night gatherings.
Relocate picnic tables closer to BBQs	1	Picnic tables will be set away from BBQs to prevent one group dominating both. Distances will be refined during detailed design to balance access and use.
Relocate ping pong tables away from the Northcott building so the noise does not impact residents	1	The anticipated noise from ping pong tables is expected to be minimal. Nevertheless, relocation will be considered.
Place the ping pong table in a sheltered area protected from wind	1	The table tennis facility will be relocated near the community centre for better shelter and wind protection.

Preconcept consultation

Prior to undertaking community consultation on the concept design, the City undertook some early consultation work in mid-2024 to ask residents how often they use the park and what they would like to see in the new design.

81 submissions were received during the early consultation period. Ideas and suggestions received during this time helped to shape the concept plan. Key themes from the pre-consultation were:

- **Park Usage & Amenities:** Enhance the playground away from the community centre, add shaded areas, increase seating including picnic tables, and improve lighting for comfort and safety.
- **Dog-Friendly & Accessibility Features:** Preserve dog-friendly areas, improve fencing near roads and improve pathways. Balance the needs of families and dog owners.
- **Safety & Community Amenities:** Improve skate bowl barriers, improve lighting, improve bathroom/water bubblers and add flexible spaces for community events.

Engagement activities

Overview of engagement

1. Sydney Your Say webpage

A Sydney Your Say webpage, "[Your say on the proposed design for Ward Park, Surry Hills](#)" was created. The page included an electronic copy of the revised concept design, survey and other key information about the consultation.

2. Online feedback form via Survey Monkey

The community and stakeholders were able to give feedback using an online feedback form. A link to the feedback form was provided on the Sydney Your Say website.

3. Consultation letter

A letter was posted to residents in properties surrounding the park, inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. 2,400 letters were distributed.

4. Signage

Four signs were placed in the park directing people online to leave their feedback.

5. Park pop-up

City staff attended the park on Tuesday 8 April from 4pm to 5:30pm. This was attended by approximately 20 residents.

6. Lord Mayor's Surry Hills Social Housing Forum

City staff attended the Lord Mayor's Surry Hills Social Housing Forum at the Northcott Community Centre on Thursday 10 April from 11am to 12:30pm

7. Inner-City Network Meeting

City staff presented to the Inner-City Network Meeting (community food and other support) at the Northcott Community Centre on Friday 11 April from 3pm

8. Sydney Your Say e-newsletter

An email was sent to 6643 of our Sydney Your Say e newsletter