

ITEM 3 CONNECTING NEIGHBOURS GRANTS PROGRAM ROUND 4

In 2018 Council piloted a funding program to provide grants to community members and groups wanting to make a positive impact on their local area. The program, Connecting Neighbours, aimed to strengthen and celebrate neighbourhoods at the grass roots level, creating connections and encouraging collective action to build strong communities.

Following on from the previous three rounds, the Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 was open for grant applications from 25 February until 20 April 2020. Six Category 1 applications and nine Category 2 applications were received from suburbs across the City. The applications have been considered by a review panel and the General Manager.

This report provides a list of recommended successful recipients for Round 4 for activities to be implemented by March 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

Council note the successful recipients for Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Sue Savage, Manager Community Cultural + Economic Development
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 - Panel Recommendations (under \$250)
- 2 Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 - Panel Recommendations (up to \$1000)

BACKGROUND

The Connecting Neighbours Grants Program provides grants to community members and groups who want to make a positive impact in their local area. The program aims to build positive neighbourhoods and community connections, support creative, innovative and unique activities and events while providing opportunities for vulnerable groups and individuals. The program focuses on celebrating neighbourhoods at the grass roots level. The first three rounds of the program saw projects funded for delivery across our City in 2018-2020.

Building on the success of the first two rounds in 2018-2019, funding allocations were continued for 2019-2020 to provide grants to small groups of community members and smaller community groups across all suburbs of Wollongong. The grants have two categories:

- Category 1 Up to \$250 for an individual who, along with at least two other community members, shares an idea and wants to make it happen;
- Category 2 Up to \$1,000 for projects where community members have partnered with an incorporated organisation to auspice the funds and support the project.

Round 4 applications were assessed against the criteria on 30 April 2020 by a panel consisting of: Manager Community Cultural and Economic Development, Community Development and Engagement Manager and Coordinator Community Partnerships and Safety. The General Manager approved the panel's recommendations on 7 May 2020.

A total of 13 applications, including six Category 1 and seven Category 2 applications, are recommended for funding for a total of \$7,750.

PROPOSAL

Council notes the Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 successful recipients as listed.

Category	Project Title	Location
Up to \$250	Creative Corners	Austinmer
	Composting Heroes	North Wollongong
	Grand Court Reserve Rejuvenation	Fairy Meadow
	Grant Court Gardens	Fairy Meadow
	Maxwell Road Rest Spot	Austinmer
	Dapto Ambulance Station 50th Anniversary Community Party	Dapto
Up to \$1,000	Family Fun Day	Horsley
	BNC Boomerang Bags	Bellambi
	St Luke's Working Bee & Parent Networking	Dapto
	New Dapto Road Social Cohesion Program	Wollongong
	Gardening Community Care	Helensburgh
	Bundaleer Movie Nights	Warrawong
	Bellambi Community Garden	Bellambi

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 was promoted as follows:

- Council's website
- Social media activity
- Distribution through existing formal and informal networks
- The approach of 'community coaches' from the Community Development Team also continued in the process.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 Goal 3 - 'Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city', Goal 4 - 'We are a connected and engaged community' and Goal 5 - 'We are a healthy community in a liveable city'. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2018-2021	Operational Plan 2019-20
Strategy	3 Year Action	Operational Plan Actions
4.2.1 Support residents, business and visitors to be actively involved in diverse community activities helping to connect neighbours.	4.2.1.2 Support community participation in community activities.	4.2.1.2.3 Pilot, evaluate and implement a 'Connecting Neighbours' Grant program.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Connecting Neighbours Grants Program has been integrated into the Financial Assistance Procedures Management Policy in accordance with Council's resolution of 29 January 2019.

The provision of coaching and support by Council staff was an additional avenue to manage risk.

The approval process for applications has taken into account a risk assessment. The funding categories have been designed to increase the level of accountability and management in line with increased amounts and associated risk.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 has been delivered in accordance with the current budget allocation.

CONCLUSION

The Connecting Neighbours Grants Program Round 4 has provided a further opportunity for Council to expand the existing programs offered through the Financial Assistance Policy and create greater flexibility in how support is provided for small locally based activities. This grants program demonstrates Council's commitment to working with community members to build on local neighbourhood strengths and add an additional element to our place making initiatives.

CONNECTING NEIGHBOURS GRANTS 2020 - ROUND 4 – Up To \$250

REVIEW PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Appl No	Project Name	Name of Group	Project Co-Ordinator	Project Description	Suburb	Requested	Recommended
S1	Creative Corners	N/A	Imogen Ross	We want to make some free standing structures from locally sourced bamboo and various recycled/upcycled weaving materials, and install them as 'spontaneous sculptures' on the corner of Railway Avenue and Park Avenue/Wigram Roads in Austinmer, to delight the many walkers who pass by every day. Since Covid 19, the number of residents walking/jogging/strolling by has increased noticeably and they always stop and admire the 'guerrilla garden' created near the underpass. We think it would be fun to create some sculptural additions that enable passers by to see the area differently and get out community involved in making art from natural materials.	Austinmer	\$250	\$250
S2	Composting Heroes	N/A	Naomi Katz	On behalf of the community and my dear neighbours here in the North Wollongong region, I am asking for grant money to create a greener, more sustainable community. This idea all started when I saw my lovely next-door neighbour tossing out her organic food waste in the Green Bin with the good intention of separating the trash. We then got chatting about the absence of a composting system in our six-unit apartment complex. The lack of green responsibility from our Council made us both angry, this anger then took an inquisitive turn and became an opportunity to start looking into small urban composting systems. I took on the role of coming up with better solutions for us but still found it quite hard to do this without funding or support from the Council. Today, we are asking for a \$250 grant, to support our apartment complex with an urban composting system that could be utilised in our small backspace garden to create a small urban garden. The money granted will be used to purchase two in house Bokashi composting bins and one-year worth of Kokashi accelerator spray (necessary as it breaks down the waste through the anaerobic process). As a Sustainable Communities student at UOW, I find it crucial for waste management to be at the forefront of our communities responsibility. We want to take responsibility for our organic waste since it comprises roughly 70% of our waste. By implementing such a system, we will be in better cohesion with our environment by reducing harmful toxins that get released into the atmosphere when tossed into a landfill. We also hope that by making such a lifestyle change we will inspire the rest of our neighbours to implement a composting system in their homes as well. The benefits of composting are many, and we hope that you will take this on board and implement a communal composting system for further expansion and growth of a greener Wollongong.	North Wollongong	\$250	\$250

Appl No	Project Name	Name of Group	Project Co-Ordinator	Project Description	Suburb	Requested	Recommended
S3	Grand Court Reserve Rejuvenation	N/A	Ian Sheppard	<p>We are one of the first residents in Grand Court and have lived here for 8 years. We have maintained the reserve in Grand Court by mowing the grass, weeding the gardens, and keeping the area tidy and well kept as best we can. The reserve was planted with a range of trees and shrubs, but suffered severely during the period of construction of all the surrounding homes, when parts of it were used as a material storage area.</p> <p>During the recent drought and level 2 water restrictions in the last quarter of 2019, we bucketed water from our homes to all the trees and gardens in the park every day, just to keep the trees and plants alive.</p> <p>However, some of the trees and shrubs were heavily stressed and died during this period, and need to be replaced.</p> <p>In addition, the garden beds and borders need some maintenance with new edging as the original timber has rotted out. We have also acquired and installed three park seats in the reserve, but we now need to do some maintenance and repainting of the seats.</p> <p>There are 3 of us who look after the reserve, plus another 5 or 6 residents, that help us out from time to time, and would no doubt assist should we be successful with a grant. We have the enthusiasm, we just need some additional help to bring the reserve back to its best after the drought.</p> <p>Our neighbours use the park regularly. It is a play area for the children living in the street, who often play a game of soccer on the well manicured grass area (nicknamed "Wembley"). It is also a place where some of the older residents sit in the sunshine after a morning stroll, as well as providing a pleasant outlook for all those who visit or live in Grand Court.</p>	Fairy Meadow	\$250	\$250
S4	Grand Court Gardens	N/A	Phil Luskan	<p>We have been living in the estate established in 2013 and have been maintaining the Northern portion of a council supposed landscape area. at no time has the council ever mowed or given maintenance to this area. In that time we have established through our own costs and labour, gardens with a variety of plants, edging around the gardens made from recycled rubber and purchased from Bunnings at \$38 a metre and installed seating for both housing and the associated towers to encourage families to enjoy their surroundings and a feel good community spirit. All watering is done through our own home watering. We have had top soil and bark delivered over the years and as community we have enjoyed the fruits of our toils.</p> <p>We see this as an ongoing endeavour and have recently found out about the neighbourhood grants. Having said this the \$250 would go towards plant replacements further top soil, bark and compose. as residents we are very proud as a community as to the outcomes and the aesthetics and take pride in hearing all the positive feedback from neighbours and visitors to the estate. Both my wife and I and our neighbour would be more than happy to meet with a council representative on sit to show them what we have achieved. I am sure you are aware that there are continuing on-costs to keep up the maintenance and hope that your committee will look favourably on our application.</p>	Fairy Meadow	\$250	\$250

Appl No	Project Name	Name of Group	Project Co-Ordinator	Project Description	Suburb	Requested	Recommended
S5	Maxwell Road Rest Spot	N/A	Ineka Gow	<p>Maxwell Rd is a hilly street in Austinmer with lovely views from the top. I was talking to a neighbour (Colleen Barclay) about how lovely it would be to have a rest spot where walkers/cyclists could sit and rest after the big walk and enjoy the view- maybe even seeing some whales!</p> <p>I will let ask neighbours if they'd like to get involved with planting and the project will benefit the neighbourhood by providing a communal space to sit and chat.</p> <p>There is also a patch of grass that has died and I would love to plant some native flowers there (preferably native to the Illawarra- I have asked "planting natives Illawarra" about this.</p> <p>I have tried to budget to \$250 exactly but if there are extra charges to be incurred I will cover these myself.</p>	Austinmer	\$250	\$250
S6	Dapto Ambulance Station 50th Anniversary Community Party	N/A	Nicole Colquhoun	<p>Dapto Ambulance Station is built on land donated by the community 50 years ago. The 50th opening anniversary is on 25th July and we would like to hold an event at the station to acknowledge the anniversary.</p> <p>Local paramedics past and present, supporters of the station, local Rotary and Lions members and local residents will be invited to attend. Both Rotary and Lions have raised funds for the station in the past. We plan to provide food, refreshments and a cake on site.</p> <p>There is no funding available by the ambulance service for this event so costs will be covered by the paramedic staff unless funding can be obtained. We love the Dapto community but feel sometimes there is a disconnection between the community and the workers who service this area. We feel this would be a good opportunity for us to thank the community and also for them to show their appreciation to the local ambulance staff. All paramedics live in the Illawarra with most in the Wollongong area.</p>	Dapto	\$250	\$250

APPROVED BY



Greg Doyle
General Manager

Date

0/5/2020

CONNECTING NEIGHBOURS GRANTS 2020 - ROUND 4 - Up To \$1,000

REVIEW PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Application No.	Project Name	Name of Group	Project Co-Ordinator	Auspice	Project Description	Suburb	Requested	Recommended
S1	Together Apart Playpatch (Covid19 - 2020)	Playpatch	Heather Boardman	Dapto Anglican Church	Playgroup suspended due to Covid-19. Project - 1. Facebook Page - promote local, free family activities - Upload video stories for children - Invite families to submit ideas and pictures. 2. Monthly eNewsletter - Craft photos, book ideas, children's birthday wishes. 3. Outdoor Play space Open - regularly cleaned. 4. Weekly craft kits for families to collect Origin: Idea need for connection during Covid-19 suspension. Benefit to Neighbourhood - connection for families during social distancing due to Covid-19. ** Outdoor Play space open - if permitted at time (Covid-19 dependent).	Dapto	\$1000	NIL
S2	Family Fun Day		Paul Elanjickel	Illawarra Kerala Samajam	We would like to hold a BBQ & Lunch in Horsley Local park to welcome and join our Indian community new neighbours and organise games like cricket and football. From this we can talk and understand if they need any help as they are new to our community. We have 65 families in our organisation, so we can help them in many ways.	Horsley	\$1000	\$1000
S3	St Luke's Working Bee & Parent Networking	N/A	Carleigh Pett	St Luke's Preschool	At St Luke's Preschool we believe in creating an environment where all stakeholders feel like they belong, are valued and important. At St Luke's we have large and engaging yard, which is a draw card for many of the people who are part of our St Luke's community. We have decided this year to hold a Preschool Working Bee to help build the partnership with our families and support them in networking. As many of our families are working parents, there is little opportunity for them to form relationships or communicate with one another. We acknowledge that parenting can be an isolating process, particularly in the early years. We also acknowledge that not all families have a support network of friends and family around them. We believe that people who work together for common goal form a closeness and bond, and believe that our working be will do exactly that - connect our families and support them in a laid back, positive, team environment, to form friendships and build connection. This project will also benefit our preschool, by providing maintenance of our outdoor environment from both an aesthetic and safety point of view.	Dapto	\$1000	\$250
S4	BNC Boomerang Bags	N/A	Janet Mitchelson	Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre	Our idea came from recognising the amount of plastic bags that are used by our community centre, whilst supporting the local community of Bellambi. We would LOVE to make REUSABLE BAGS, from recycled material, for our shop: Bellambi Community Centre Pantry, to enable our clients, and our centre, to cut-down on our plastic bag use.	Bellambi	\$1000	\$1000

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					<p>Bellambi Community Centre Pantry caters for up to 80 families and individual members each week. We sell heavily discounted grocery items. alongside approximately 100 kgs of free - for - our community donated, fruit, vegetables and bread.</p> <p>Our shop supports the vast majority of our community members, including those that live in Bellambi's approx 850 social housing homes.</p> <p>Further to our current plastic bag over-use - We feed many people in our community, a nutritious free lunch each Wednesday. This means we use a further 10 plastic bags a week, to transport our shopping from the local supermarket to our centre.</p>			
S5	Community Will and Funeral Pre-Arrangement Symposiums	N/A	Tessha Mearing	Our Community Project – Port Kembla	<p>I want to hire a solicitor to come and do a workshop in Port Kembla, where I live, which runs through the process of creating a legal will. The aim is for people to leave the session with a completed legal will as well as establish Enduring Power of Attorney and Appointment of Enduring Guardian.</p> <p>I know there are many people in the community who don't have these important documents and I hope this will get people to "get around to it" in a way that is not intimidating. I would like to run a second session in a similar manner that focuses on funeral pre-arrangement so that people can learn, express and record their wishes for what happens when they die.</p> <p>I have spoken to a solicitor who is willing and able to present the will and other legal document creation as a group workshop for a reduced fee of \$220 per hour. I have spoken to a funeral director who has agreed to present the second session on funeral pre-arrangement.</p> <p>The solicitor estimates it will take 3 hours and she will provide templates for the three different types of wills, and the forms for power of attorney and appointment of enduring guardian from the relevant government bodies. She will present the documents, provide information on their completion and witness the documents of any people wishing to appoint an attorney or an enduring guardian. She will then store the documents free of charge and can see anyone who doesn't have their appointed person with them on the day at a later date and witness the appointed guardian's signature at no cost.</p> <p>In summary, all attendees should be able to obtain at no cost, a completed legal will and power of attorney and enduring guardian documents which are stored safely by a solicitor.</p> <p>I would like to run a second session where we get people together to pre-arrange their funeral. This involves discussing all the options and keeping a record of them for when the time comes along with</p>	Port Kembla	\$950	NIL

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					<p>completing the family history paperwork required when somebody dies. I would like to employ a funeral director from Tender Funerals to run this session and go over the funeral prearrangement process while attendees complete their own documents which they can take home or they could store them at Tender Funerals (or both) with no obligation to use Tender when the time comes, of course. The purpose is to allow people to have an informed choice in what happens after they pass and to record their wishes for their loved ones to act on when the time comes.</p> <p>I would have liked to do these in the next 2 months, however, do to Covid 19 I am putting a November date down.</p>			
S6	New Dapto Road Social Cohesion Program	N/A	Cheryl Ellison	Housing Trust	<p>We have 26 units here at New Dapto Road, and there is a big space out the back that is not being utilised. The units are managed by the Housing Trust. We recently had a block meeting, to discuss how to get people to get along better and stop arguing over things like parking and rubbish. We had about 12 tenants at the meeting and we discussed different ideas around projects to bring everyone together. Nearly everyone wanted to clear out the space out the back and turn it into vegetable and herb gardens.</p> <p>Housing Trust have agreed to do the heavy work of putting in sleepers and the soil. Once that is done we will create a flyer and invite every tenant of new Dapto Road to come down for the planning of the gardens, and agree on a planting schedule.</p> <p>We expect this project to bring a lot of our neighbours together, to get to know one another better. We know there are a lot of lonely people in this complex that don't get out much, particularly those with disabilities and illness, and we hope they will take the opportunity to join in. It is hoped working together they will feel safer getting out and about in the complex more and help us make the back area beautiful. We can all share the skills we have with each other and learn from one another and share the produce we grow.</p>	Wollongong	\$1000	\$1000
S7	Gardening Community Care	N/A	Nicole Burrill	Helensburgh & Stanwell Park Anglican Church	<p>Helensburgh and Stanwell Park Anglican Church is a church who is active in the 2508 region of Illawarra, with members who care to look out for people in practical ways.</p> <p>Recently, a small team of friends from the church have combined their passion for gardening, with the desire to care for our neighbours (in the broader community sense). We have organised several small gardening projects, for people who need it including (but not limited to):</p> <p>1) For a full-time carer of an autistic son: planting, mulching and edging her front garden</p>	Helensburgh	\$1000	\$1000

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					<p>2) For an elderly neighbour straight out of hospital to transforming his front garden into a stone pathway, with a bench seat where he is able to wait easily for his taxi pickup service</p> <p>3) For a mum with terminal cancer: weeding, mulching and planting to create an easily accessible herb patch.</p> <p>4) For a resident with a walking frame: weeding his front garden.</p> <p>We want to move the group from being just a few friends to being under the support of the Helensburgh and Stanwell Park Anglican Church. People in the church can get actively involved and also suggest people in our community who may need a gardening hand. The grant is helping us to do this as we have now approached Helensburgh & Stanwell Park Anglican Church as the support organisation.</p> <p>The Green Care project will help the neighbourhood by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caring for people in a practical way and helping them progress with their gardens where under their normal conditions they may not have a chance or be physically able to themselves. - Caring for people in a social way and the interaction will create new and/or deeper friendships as help is offered in their need. It has the potential to open doors into many people's lives whom they otherwise would never have met. - Caring for people emotionally, by esteeming them unconditionally. <p>The projects lend the care-receiver to be involved - enabling them to be the decision-maker in the process, involved physically (if able), and at the very least enjoy a social experience where everyone is included. The receiver is left with a gift of a beautified garden to lift their spirit and situation.</p> <p>For the gardeners - they are encouraged to contribute their personal gifts for the situation in numerous ways: project development, design, deciding what resources of their own to allocate to them (eg tools, plants etc), their time, knowledge and experience. Provided with a positive experience of reaching out to their local communities, the gardeners leave happy to see their simple efforts having such a positive impact.</p> <p>It is all inclusive - The projects are for any age, ethnicity, faith or lifestyle as the tasks are simple, it's local, and it's an act of kindness to meet a need, not anything imposed on. Children can participate, the care-receivers family members can participate, it is not limited.</p> <p>Working together, prompting richer cross-community ties between diverse sections of the local community (Residents, Businesses (as</p>			

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					<p>they come onboard for donations etc), Police, Health workers, Church leaders) for lasting benefit within the wider community.</p> <p>Local churches are able to demonstrate the message of the Christian faith practically, building on relationships with their surrounding community for further outreach.</p> <p>For all involved these projects provide a positive experience in reaching out in love to a local community and leaves a legacy of physical change. Whilst the projects are small, they are an important step up.</p>			
S8	Bundaleer Movie Nights	N/A	Tere Apolo	Warrawong Residents Forum Incorp	<p>The Womens Group in the Bundaleer Social Housing Estate has been meeting over the last 6 months to work on ways to make our community stronger. We want to increase community connectedness and improved safety in our area and have had ideas for a range of community activities to promote this. One of these is to run a movie night in Howard Fowles Park. The local community will bring their chairs to the park and food will be available. The festival atmosphere will encourage our neighbours to come out of their homes, to socialise, and to connect with each other, which will be even more important post COVID-19. It will help to reduce isolation and promote a sense of local pride. The night will be promoted to the community by word of mouth, a letter box drop of a flier and by the Bundaleer Facebook page. There will be no charge for either attending the event or for food. The movie night will be run once social distancing restrictions have been lifted. Warrawong Community Centre have agreed to mentor the Womens Group to manage and implement the project including obtaining permission from Council and the Land and Housing Corporation. We will promote the events to other residents and organise the actual event. The Women's Group has been established in Bundaleer with the support of the Place Planning Program, a partnership between Dept of Communities and Justice and Mission Australia which aims to strengthen social housing communities and with the further support of Barnardos. Mission Australia will support the movie night with funds but need the support of this sponsorship without which the event may not be able to go ahead.</p>	Warrawong	\$1000	\$1000
S9	Bellambi Community Garden	N/A	Gabrielle Fifield	Owners Corporation of 74 Cawley Street, Bellambi	<p>We live in a lovely townhouse complex of 24 units with a communal courtyard that hardly ever gets used. The community here consists of a mixed demographic - young single mothers, single adults, couples and widowed elderly people. As each unit has only 2 bedrooms, the family households here are only 1-2 people max. Many of whom are living alone, isolated with few visitors per year. Our hope is that a community vegetable garden in our complex can offer an opportunity for people to get to know their neighbours,</p>	Bellambi	\$1000	\$1000

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					<p>share friendship, tips and recipes and create a community that helps one another.</p> <p>After rejuvenating a small unused strip of earth on the common property of our complex to create a herb garden in 2019, we have received lots of compliments and expressions of interest from the neighbours wanting to get involved.</p> <p>We, the strata committee of 74 Cawley Street Bellambi, would love to create a useful space in our common area. A place for our neighbours to get alongside each other and work together in the sun to create food for our little community as well as be social.</p> <p>We will use as many recycled items as possible in our vege patch. Donated tools, soil, compost and seedlings will be a major contributor to the garden. And for it to be fully self-sufficient we would like to incorporate a worm farm, seedling farm and composting area to minimise our load of food waste on the Wollongong Council each year. The design of the vegetable garden will be based on a system wicking beds. These use far less water than traditional patches and require less watering and maintenance. They are also elevated off the ground to assist our less able-bodied neighbours to be involved in tending the garden and harvesting. The particular style of garden we are interested in is created using recycled IBC tanks, cut in half to create freestanding garden beds.</p> <p>Although there is a considerable outlay in funds to get the garden up and running, it will be fairly affordable to keep going with small contributions from the neighbouring community who would like to keep it happening. Your assistance in funding the initial setup will be a great encouragement to everyone who is keen to be involved. Thanks in advance for considering our application.</p> <p>Gabrielle, Bronwyn and Lynette - Strata committee of 74 Cawley Street, Bellambi NSW 2518</p>			

APPROVED BY



 Greg Doyle
 General Manager

Date

8/5/2020