

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

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Kempsey Shire Council acknowledges the land of the Thunggutti/Dunghutti Nation.
We pay respect to Elders past and present.
We acknowledge the role of emerging leaders to continue to guide us in the future.
We acknowledge the Stolen Generations and the need to change practices to be inclusive.
This land always was and always will be Thunggutti/Dunghutti land.



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INTRODUCTION FROM THE MAYOR

It is an honour to present to you the Kempsey Shire Council Annual Report for 2021-2022.

This report summarises the many highlights and challenges Council experienced during the financial year.

I am proud of the breadth and quality of the services delivered by Council as outlined in this report. I am especially proud of the staff who have continued to provide their best work under many trying circumstances.

I am also proud of the community and Councillors who faced the unprecedented legal challenge to our December

Local Government election. The resulting NSW Supreme Courts legal actions and July by-election caused angst for many people.

While floods and prolonged periods of wet weather, supply chain issues and rising inflation delivered challenges to

Council's infrastructure operations, we nevertheless delivered on an impressive range of projects.

This included the Rankine Street upgrade in Crescent Head, the South Kempsey Pressure Sewer Scheme, the Back Creek Foreshore upgrade at South West Rocks, the Stuarts Point Reservoir Refurbishment and the remediation of the large

landslip at Devils Nook on Armidale Road.

COVID-19 was again a challenge in 2021-22, presenting our community with frequently changing restrictions and disruptions to services, revenue streams and social connections. Yet resilience and innovation were ever on display, and Council continued to embrace new ways of working, to evolve its service delivery, and to work with and for our community.

Council also collaborated with the community to finalise and adopt a new Community Strategic Plan this year. *2042: Your Future* is a 20-year vision for the entire community, based on the views and feedback of residents, businesses and community organisations across Kempsey Shire. It clearly captures our community's shared vision



and goals and will be a valuable resource in guiding Council's operations and project delivery for the foreseeable future.

We are fortunate to have a vibrant, supportive and caring community in Kempsey Shire, and I sincerely thank our residents, businesses, community groups and many volunteers for their contribution towards making this community a great place to live, work and grow.

I also thank our General Manager, Craig Milburn, and all staff at Kempsey Shire Council for their ongoing commitment to our wonderful Kempsey Shire community.

Leo Hauville
Mayor



MESSAGE FROM THE GM

The 12 months of the 2021-2022 financial year is best described as a success in the face of many challenges.

The February and March 2022 floods and extended wet weather required intense immediate action, caused extensive damage, and meant there were significant delays across all areas of Council's works program as resources were diverted to flood emergency and recovery activities. These disasters, coming on top of those of the last few years, increased the need for the work carried out by Council's Recovery and Readiness team who work with many other agencies to help and support our community in need.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact Council

operations, creating significant delays in project delivery due to resourcing limitations and supply chain issues, and reduced revenue from commercial operations such as Macleay Valley Coast Holiday Parks and the Slim Dusty Centre.

Despite these hurdles Council staff delivered 149 of the 184 Operational Plan actions by 30 June 2022. In other words, we successfully accomplished 81% of the projects we had given ourselves. Of those actions that are behind schedule, most will be complete in the first half of 2022-23. In the circumstances that is a record of which the staff



and community should be very proud.

It was a strong year financially as well. Council delivered a consolidated operating surplus of \$0.5 million, excluding

accounting losses from the sale

of assets. We

also delivered

a record \$50 million in capital works.

Although lower than the budgeted \$60 million, this

was an excellent

achievement given

the delays resulting from wet weather, resourcing limitations, and supply chain issues.

Financial sustainability continues to be a focus for Council. We are working year-on-year to

manage our income and expenditure planning to move our general fund, which is used to finance many of Council's services and functions, from a deficit to a surplus forecast. This is being achieved through the delivery of Council's Financial Sustainability Roadmap.

Another success came through the continuous business improvement initiatives driven by our Governance, Internal Audit and Corporate Performance teams. These improvements in systems and processes are laying the foundation for greater efficiencies, productivity, and value for money for our community.

Council and the community also worked together to develop a number of key plans and

strategies that will provide clarity and the foundation for success in the future. These include our award-winning *Sustainability and Resilience Strategy*, our *Agribusiness Industry Plan*, and the *Community Strategic Plan 2042: Your Future*. More than 400 community members provided input into our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Council also brought together over 90 community members and groups for Yarns in the development of our first Reconciliation Action Plan.

A highlight of the year was being able to re-engage with the community after two years of COVID-19 restrictions. More than 700 community members attended the Big Day Out held at Riverside Park in Kempsey. The West Kempsey Pump

Track project brought our community together as volunteers donated their time and materials to help complete the project and then to celebrate Youth Week. And thousands of residents visited our libraries either in person or through the new website.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Council leadership team and staff for a strong performance despite challenging conditions. I've always said we are better together, and as we look to the future, we will continue to partner with the community to create a safe, sustainable, and welcoming community.

Craig Milburn

General Manager



YOUR COUNCIL

MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

After COVID-19 twice delayed Local Government elections across the State, a new Council was formed in December 2021 under the leadership of Mayor Leo Hauville. The nine Councillors included:

Arthur Bain

Liz Campbell

V Craigie

Simon Fergusson

Josh Freeman

Leo Hauville

Anthony Patterson

Kerri Riddington

Alexandra Wyatt

The Kempsey Council election result was overturned by the NSW Supreme Court due to a failure of the iVote system with a by-election for eight Councillor positions held on 30 July. The elected Councillors will now serve, along with Mayor Leo Hauville, until the next Local Government elections in September 2024.

Arthur Bain

Scott Butterfield

Simon Fergusson

Anthony Patterson

Leo Hauville

Kerri Riddington

Kinne Ring

Dean Saul

Alexandra Wyatt





YOUR COUNCIL

OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



GENERAL MANAGER
Craig Milburn



CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR

Stephen Mitchell

- Commercial Business
- Community Partnerships
- Financial Services
- Governance and Information Services
- Organisational Development
- Corporate Performance
- Internal Audit



OPERATIONS & PLANNING DIRECTOR

Michael Jackson
commenced October 2022
(Robert Fish was director during 2021-22)

- Strategic and Asset Planning
- Infrastructure Delivery
- Development and Compliance
- Water and Sewer



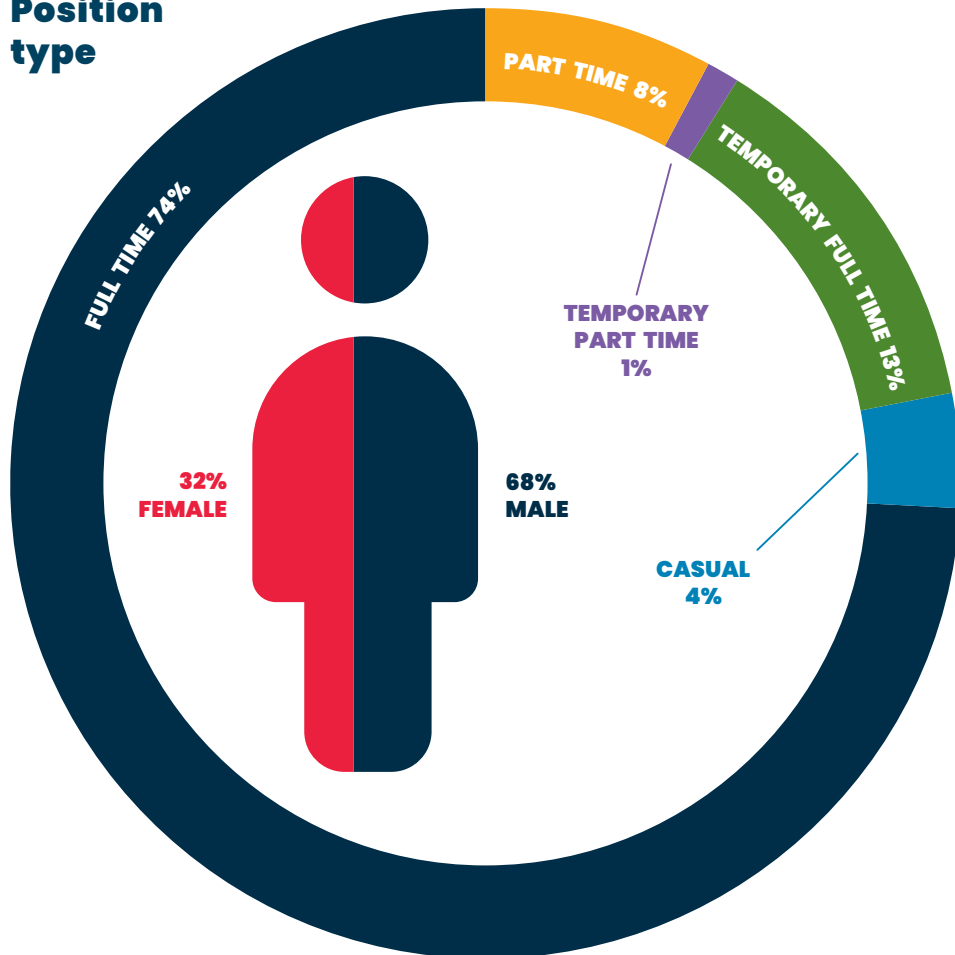


OUR WORKFORCE

Kempsey Shire Council employs 361 people,

consisting of 32% female and 68% male staff. The average length of service is 8 years and 7 months.

Position type



Age profile

35 to 44 yrs
26%

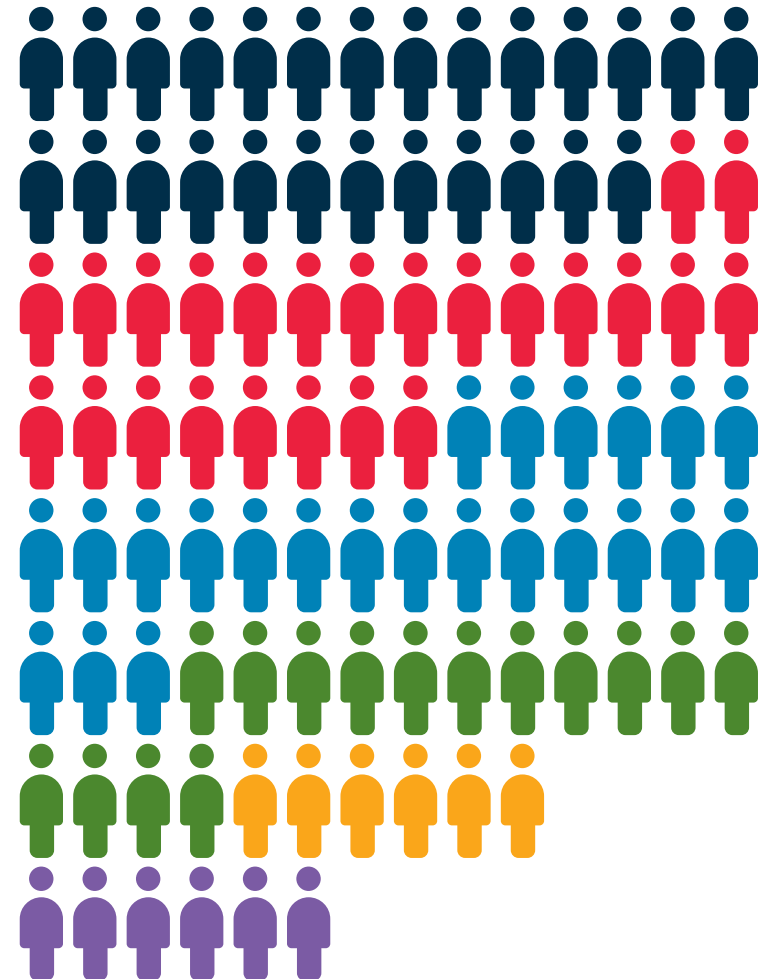
45 to 54 yrs
24%

55 to 64 yrs
23%

25 to 34 yrs
15%

Under 25 yrs
6%

65 yrs or over
6%



HIGHLIGHTS

Training statistics

- 7,625 hours of training attended by employees
- 105 training activities, including face to face, virtual and online
- 82.7% of staff attended training

Work health and safety

- Lost time to injury reduced to 10 days, compared with 21 days in 2020-21

Recruitment

- 1,724 applications received
- 78 placements of which 12 were internal, showing staff development
- 16 apprentices and trainees employed
- 3 school-based Aboriginal trainees



7,625
hours
of training
attended by
employees



105
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82.7%
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1,724
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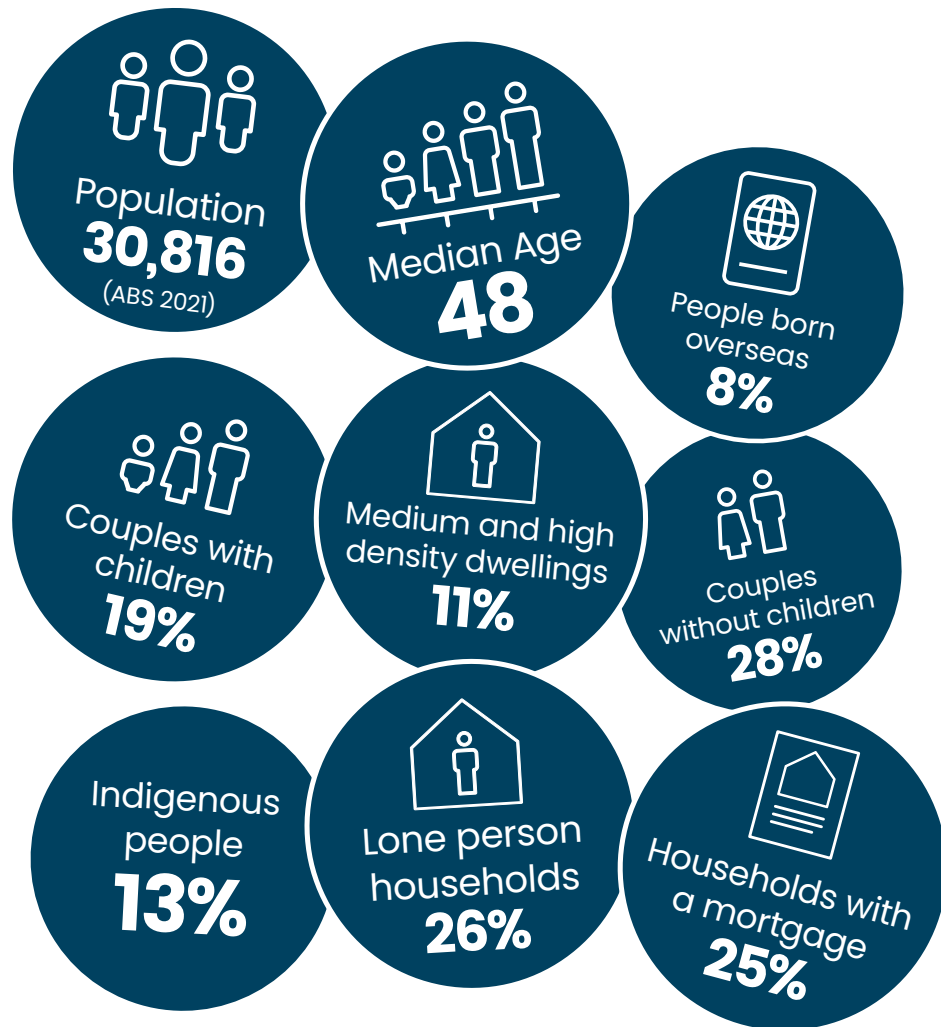
78
placements
of which 12
were internal,
showing staff
development



16
apprentices
and trainees
employed

OUR COMMUNITY

DEMOGRAPHICS



Source: ABS Census 2021

HOW OUR COMMUNITY HAS CHANGED: CENSUS 2021 COMPARED TO 2016

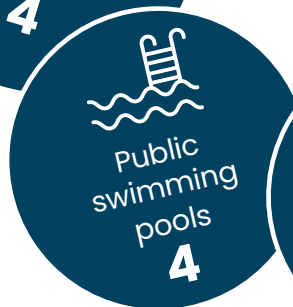
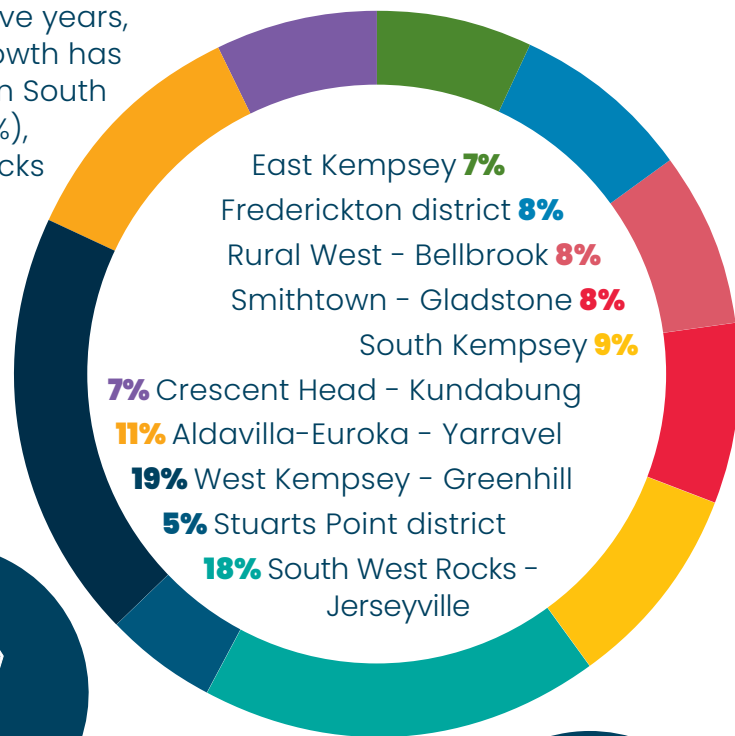
- There was a population increase of 1,802 people (usual resident population), made up of 979 males and 823 females.
- A 29% increase (+1,058) in the number of people aged 70 to 84 years
- There was a 25% increase (+1,592 people) in the number of residents who have completed Year 12 or equivalent, representing nearly one-third of the population.
- COVID-19 has impacted volunteering, with an almost 19% drop in the number of people who volunteered since 2016 census.

- The number of households increased by 675, with the largest increases among couples without children (+324 households), lone person households (+173 households) and couples with children (+108 households).
- There was an increase in the number of people who own their home outright (+601 households); 43% of households owned their home in 2021 compared to 40% in 2016.

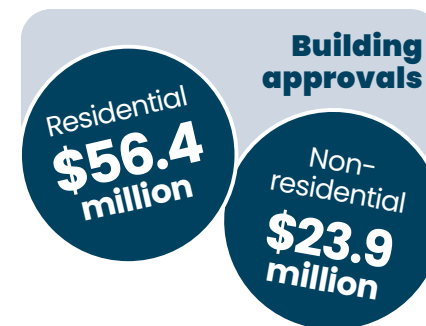
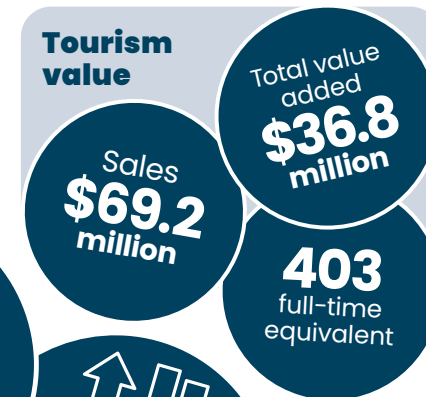


WHERE WE LIVE

Over the last five years, population growth has been highest in South Kempsey (+12%), South West Rocks – Jerseyville (+10%), and Aldavilla – Euroka – Yarravel (+9%).



OUR ECONOMY

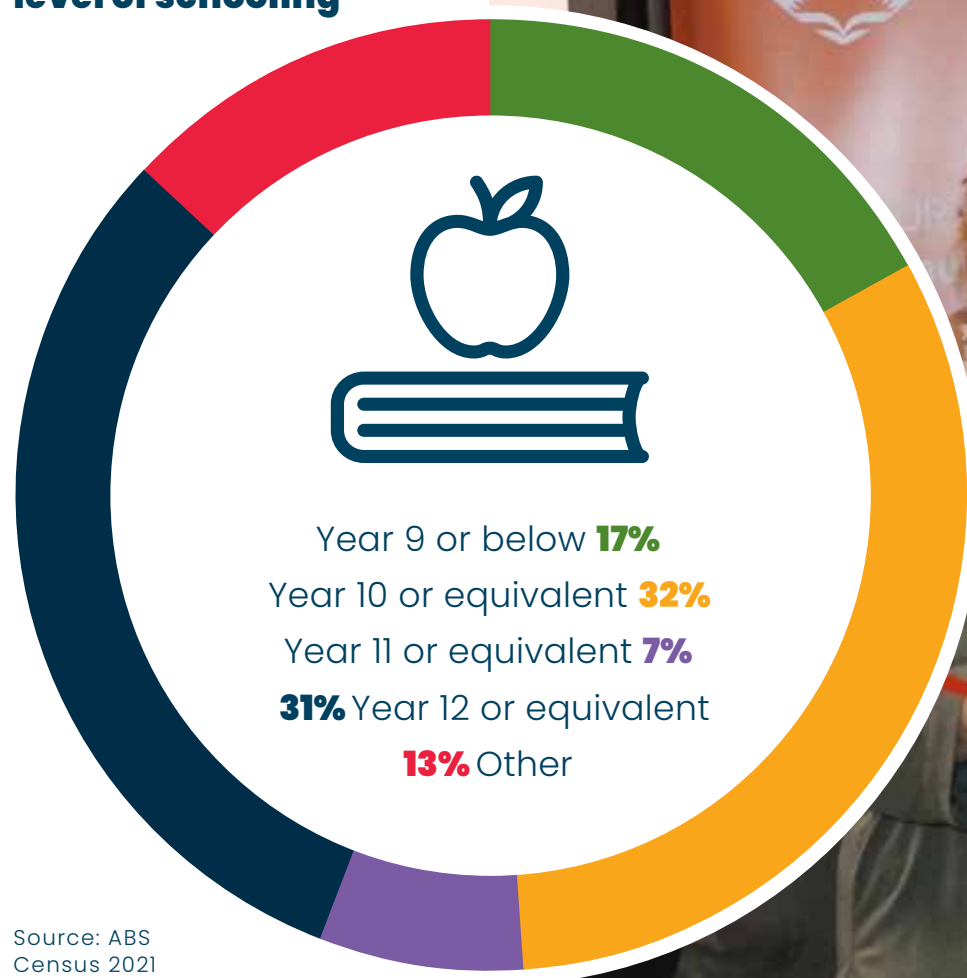


Source: ABS Census 2021; ABS Building Approvals 2021–22; NIEIR 2021

OUR COMMUNITY CONT.

EDUCATION

Education: Highest level of schooling

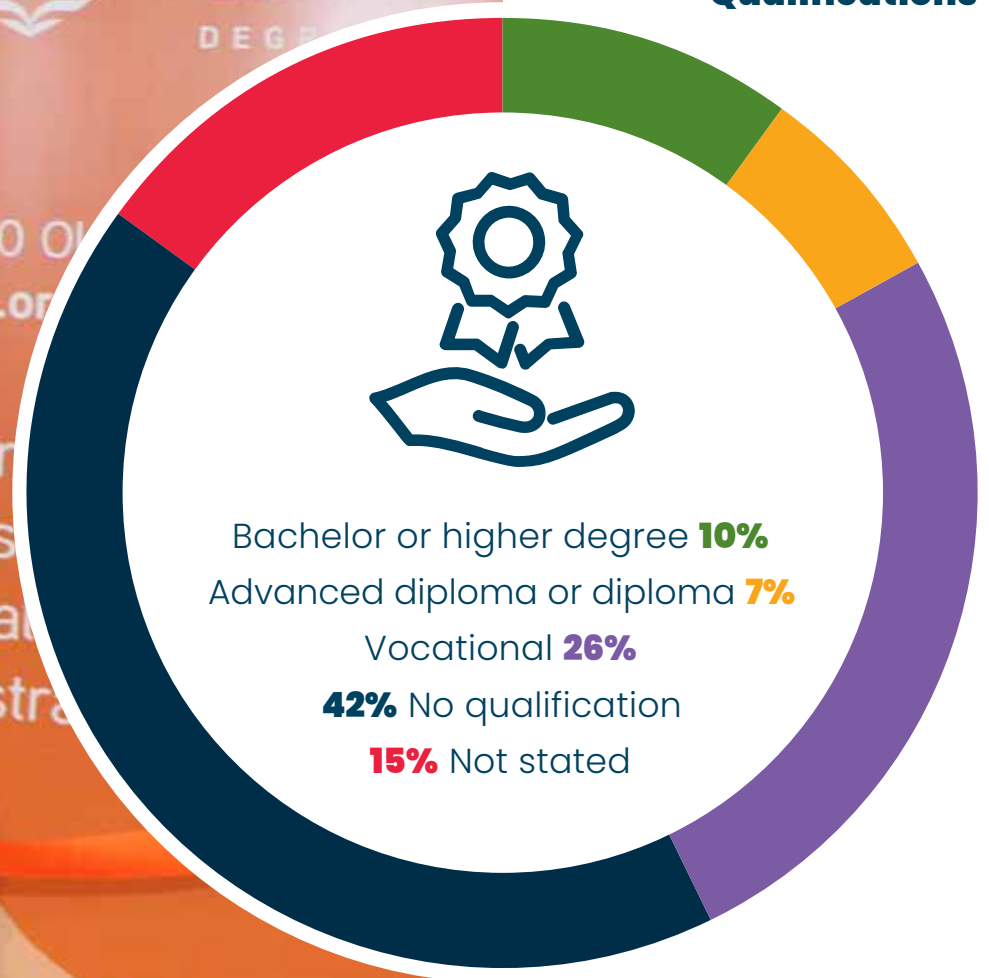


Source: ABS
Census 2021





Education: Qualifications



OUR HEALTH



DELIVERY PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Educate and encourage people around healthy and active lifestyles
- Facilitate active lifestyles by providing relevant infrastructure (planning and building)
- Restore damaged environments and removal of environmental threats
- Use planning controls to ensure environmental impacts do not negatively affect community lifestyle
- Minimise risks to community health

HIGHLIGHTS



Council provided surf lifesaving **patrols at five beaches** during the peak holiday periods between September to April



99.78% of water quality tests met the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines across the eight water supply systems that Council manages



95% of all mobile and fixed food businesses were inspected – 64% received 5 stars, 2% failed

631km of water mains distributed water around the shire



Wastewater effluent discharge across 7 sewage treatment plants was within Environment Protection Authority licence parameters 97.27% of the time

1,320 onsite sewer management sites were inspected



The Civic Centre energy upgrade included installation of a **99.9kW** solar PV system, LED lighting and air-conditioning timers

Council maintained **16 sports fields** across the shire



A successful litter campaign and competition were run through the Macleay Sustainable Schools Network, attracting **99 entries from 7 schools**.



Council completed an assessment for energy tariff optimisation, **saving over \$60,000 per year**



Council committed to a 7-year Power Purchase Agreement, which replaces the use of 'black power' with renewables. This will significantly contribute to our targets of achieving net-zero and **switching to 100% renewables by 2030**



Three hybrid vehicles were introduced into Council's fleet as a starting point in our electric vehicle readiness plan



Significant growth across the shire resulted in high demand for our Development Assessment team.



Council delivered **\$10,000 in community grant funding** to local schools, pre-schools and out-of-school-hours care services for sustainability projects and initiatives

Development Assessment Applications

Total number 2021-22

Duty planner enquiries	1,030
Development applications received	649
Construction certificates	214
Complying developments	52
Subdivision works	22
Section 68 applications	328
Section 138 (under Roads Act)	180
Number of development applications determined within 40 days (%)	78





MAJOR PROJECTS

Central Kempsey Sporting Complex (Verge and Eden Streets)

There was considerable progress on the Central Kempsey Sporting Complex project in 2021-22, including installation of turf wicket tables, cricket nets, new drainage, an irrigation system, field lighting, fitness equipment, and construction of the Vincent and Verge Streets carpark. Development consent is progressing for construction of new multipurpose and netball pavilions.

Mid North Coast High Performance Centre

Located at South West Rocks, the High Performance Centre was a multi-year project that was nearing completion as at 30 June 2022. Pre-cast components, structural steel and seating having been installed and the internal fit-out completed. The project has since been completed in November 2022.

South Kempsey Pressure Sewer Scheme

The South Kempsey Pressure Sewer Scheme provided a sewerage collection system to unserved areas of South Kempsey, paving the way for future development and boosting employment opportunities.

Stuarts Point Reservoir Refurbishment

Council refurbished the Stuarts Point Reservoir, including providing improved power to the site, tank preparation, coating, and corrosion mitigation measures.

Steuart McIntyre Dam

Council extended the concrete section of the Steuart McIntyre Dam cone-valve spillway. This will mitigate erosion when there is a need to release water from the dam due to heavy rainfall.



MAJOR PROJECTS



DELIVERY PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Build community resilience for, during and after emergencies
- Implement systems to minimise and mitigate the impact of disasters
- Increase education levels within the community in crime prevention through environmental design
- Promote a sense of community and no tolerance of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Provide education on accident minimisation
- Provide vibrant public spaces owned by the community
- Work with various agencies to reduce the incidence of crime

HIGHLIGHTS



Council's Continuity Management Team has held **47 meetings since the start of the pandemic** to manage the impact of COVID-19 on Council's service delivery, community, and staff.



The Black Summer and Beyond Photography exhibition **won the 2021 Local Government Award** for Innovation in Special Events.



Council **helped affected residents** and communities through the March 2022 floods, including providing ongoing support and **helicopter supply drops** to residents affected by the Toose Road landslip.



Council established the **Chatterbox van** as a mobile recovery and resilience vehicle to support our community.



The Economic Development team successfully secured a **\$500,000 grant under the Streets as Shared Spaces** program to upgrade Savages Lane and Elringtons Lane in Kempsey.





MAJOR PROJECTS

West Kempsey Pump Track

The Pump Track at Mountainview Reserve provides a safe off-road track for recreational riding, from beginners to more advanced riders, and a location to hold education programs focused on rider safety, skills, and bike maintenance. Opened in September 2021, the track was a collaboration between the community and Council. More than \$80,000 in sponsorship, materials and labour was donated by community members, including 45 refurbished bikes for community programs.

Toose Road slip alternative route and long-term investigation

The Toose Road landslip occurred during the March 2022 floods, isolating some hinterland residents. Due to the material underneath and around the road surface, temporary repair was not an option. Council constructed a temporary access route called the Fifes Creek to Toose Road Trail and is collaborating with the community on a long-term solution.



Devils Nook landslide remediation

The Devils Nook landslide occurred in January 2021, isolating the community of Bellbrook for one week. Remediation works have been carried out throughout 2021-22, including the installation of soil nails with a passive mesh drapery over the face of the slip. Armidale Road will be reinstated to two lanes and resurfaced as the final step in the project.

Back Creek art installation

Council collaborated with South West Rocks Figtree Descendants Aboriginal Corporation and mosaic artist to install timber and mosaic art seat and bollard wraps at Back Creek.

Crescent Head (Baker Drive) playground replacement

A new playground was delivered by Council Parks and Gardens team to improve inclusivity and accessibility. Garden beds and additional seating was installed to improve amenity.

Hat Head playground replacement

Funded through the NSW Government "Everyone Can Play" grant program, the new playground at Hat Head includes improved play equipment, shelters, barbeque, connecting footpaths and a half basketball court.

Rural house number program

Following the 2019 Black Summer bushfires Council commenced a program for eligible rural residents to apply for a free, clearly visible house number to help emergency services locate a property easily. Council provided standardised reflective metal numbers, post and brackets which were installed on metal posts. The program was funded by The Australian Government Drought Communities Program.



OUR
SAFETY

OUR CONNECTIONS



DELIVERY PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Create meeting places and infrastructure for community use
- Create a shared social view
- Include social behaviour as part of education
- Provide opportunities for people to be involved in the community

HIGHLIGHTS


 Around **\$100,000** in grants was awarded to **54 community groups** through the Community Grant program, Community Connection Grants and NAIDOC Week Celebration Grants

New Kempsey Council website launched



New Library website launched



 **47,140 visitors to the library**, more than 120,000 items borrowed and over 140,000 electronic items downloaded

 **76 functions held in the library**, including Youth Week programs, school holiday programs, Seniors Festival events, book club meetings, Tech Savvy Seniors programs and children's programs



Resumed face-to-face community engagement, with the top 3 events being:

- 1. Big Day Out** – Disability Inclusion Action Plan – The Council stall saw over 400 community members provide feedback about living with a disability in the Macleay Valley (December 2021, Riverside Park)
- 2. South West Rocks Community Catch-Up** – Over 100 community members attended the workshop to discuss their concerns and visions for South West Rocks with Councillors and Council staff (South West Rocks Country Club, March 2022)

- 3. Reconciliation Action Plan Community Yarns** – Council held multiple community yarns, talking to over 90 community members and groups (various dates and times).

Council engaged with the community via Your Say Macleay



OUR CONNECTIONS

MAJOR PROJECTS

New Council website

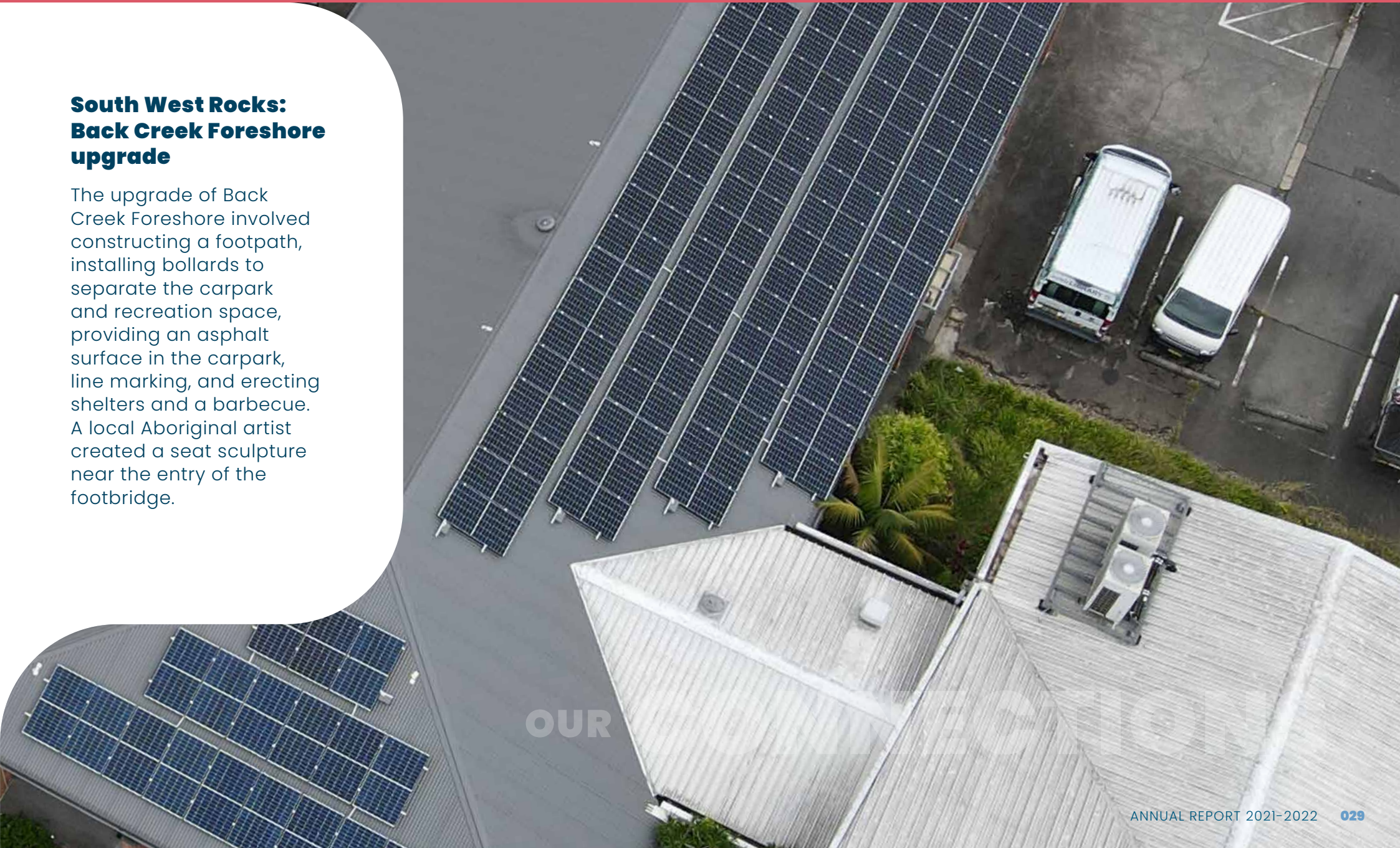
Council restructured and redesigned its website to improve the user experience for our community. The new website highlights information the community uses frequently and helps residents engage with Council on key projects.

Civic Centre solar system

Council installed a 99.9-kilowatt photovoltaic system consisting of 270 solar panels and two Sungrow inverters. This system will generate 144 megawatt hours of solar power each year, reducing Council's carbon footprint by 40% and saving about \$26,000 a year.

South West Rocks: Back Creek Foreshore upgrade

The upgrade of Back Creek Foreshore involved constructing a footpath, installing bollards to separate the carpark and recreation space, providing an asphalt surface in the carpark, line marking, and erecting shelters and a barbecue. A local Aboriginal artist created a seat sculpture near the entry of the footbridge.



OUR

2021-2022

OUR WEALTH



DELIVERY PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Build a strong, positive community culture
- Encourage cultural development within the community
- Improve employment opportunities
- Increase formal education levels within the community
- Increase the value of production

HIGHLIGHTS



Kempsey Regional Saleyards leased to Kempsey Stock and Land for management, operation, and maintenance

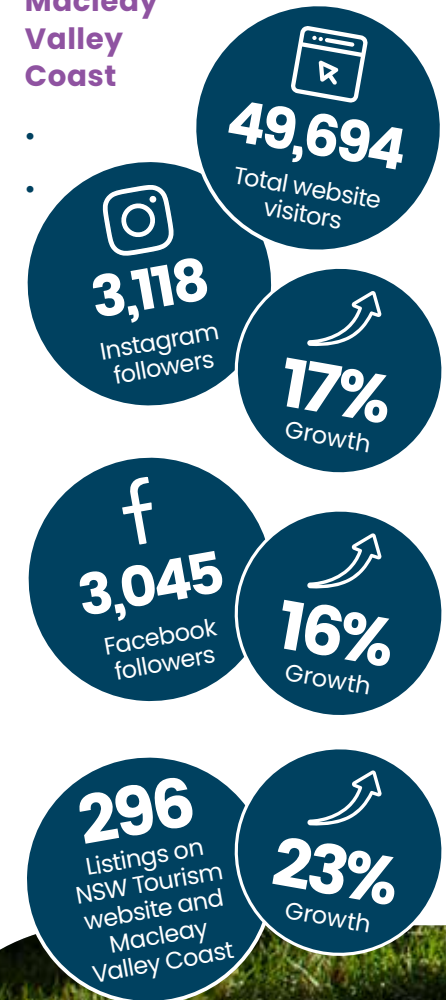


Council was awarded a \$6 million grant under the Bushfire Local Recovery Fund for infrastructure upgrades at Kempsey Regional Saleyards.



Launch of the Nature Trails of the Macleay project has delivered cultural signage across Kempsey, Bellbrook, Willawarrin, South West Rocks, Hat Head, Stuarts Point and Grassy Head.

Growth in interest in tourism across the Macleay Valley Coast



Slim Dusty Centre begins transition to Council ownership

- Closed for 4 months in 2021 due to COVID-19 Public Health Orders
- **32 venue hire events**
- **4 exhibitions** in gallery with free entry to over 1,000 visitors throughout the year
- **3,602 visitors to the Slim Dusty Museum**, with high visitor satisfaction
- Community events **engaging over 2,000 attendees**, including the Twilight Markets, Australia Day and the Macleay Valley Business Awards





MAJOR PROJECTS

Slim Dusty Centre

Negotiations to transfer the ownership of The Slim Dusty Centre continued this year after the centre transitioned to Council management in December 2020. The centre provides Council with a multi-purpose venue to support arts and cultural events; provides meeting spaces, a café and retail shop; and houses the iconic Slim Dusty Museum. Successful grant applications during the year will allow Council to install solar panels and an electric vehicle charging station, upgrade the Nulla Nulla Gallery and reconfigure the building layout to make it more functional for events and meetings.

Library refurbishment program

The refurbishment of Kempsey Library created engaging new spaces for the community, including a new children's space, youth space and meeting areas.

Crescent Head: Rankine Street CBD upgrade

A key part of the Crescent Head Public Domain Masterplan, the Rankine Street upgrade involved replacing footpaths, retaining walls and road pavement, improving drainage, and installing new decking for outdoor dining.

Bridge replacement program

Council was awarded over \$20 million in funding to support a \$23.4 million program to replace 56 timber bridges.

Eight bridges across the shire were replaced as part of Council's program, including:

- Roses Bridge on Nulla Nulla Creek Road
- Brentons Dam Bridge at Collombatti
- Barking Dog Bridge on Mooneba Road
- Duck Creek Bridge on Smiths Creek Road
- Scotts Bridge at Mungay Creek
- Toms Gully Bridge on Toms Gully Road

- Thackens Bridge on Wharf Road
- Tait's Grid on Warbro Brook Road.

A further four bridges were replaced following damage to the timber bridges during the 2019 bushfires and floods in 2021-22:

- Havachat Bridge on Mungay Creek Road
- Moparrabah Road Bridge
- Harrys Gully Bridge on Carrai Road
- Mainey's Bridge on Dowling Falls Road.

South West Rocks Road

Funding of \$4 million from the Fixing Local Roads and Roads to Recovery Programs has supported 8km of road improvements along South West Rocks Road, from Plummers Lane towards Kinchela.

Point Plomer Road

The sealing of 6.2km of Point Plomer Road was completed to give users a safer journey, especially during peak holiday periods.



OUR GOVERNANCE



DELIVERY PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Ensure Council has the resources to deliver services to the community in a financially sustainable way
- Support the delivery of Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan

HIGHLIGHTS

Successful grant funding including:

- **\$6 million from the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund** for Kempsey Regional Saleyards infrastructure upgrades
- **\$6 million in Restoration of Essential Public Asset grants** for Devils Nook Landslip on Armidale Road (\$3.8 million) and Moparrabah Causeway (\$2.2 million)
- **\$1.8 million from the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure** – Phase 3 grants for the Horseshoe Bay Master Plan Implementation for carparks and paths
- **\$1.2 million from the Fixing Local Roads** Round 3 grants for Belmore River Road (Right) rehabilitation

Enquiries from the community:





Council's Rural and Regional Management Challenge team achieved **first place** in the Northern Region and **second overall**



Council **wins Excellence in Sustainability Award** for the 2022 Macleay Valley Business Awards



Council wins Highly Commended Award in the 2022 Macleay Valley Business Awards for Professional Services Award for businesses with more than 20 employees



OUR GOVERNANCE

MAJOR PROJECTS

Community Strategic Plan 2042: Your Future

Council collaborated with the community to revise the Community Strategic Plan with a new vision.

'From the mountains to the sea, our people are given the opportunities and infrastructure to build a safe, welcoming, and sustainable community.

Marrungbu.'

The Community Strategic Plan was used to guide the development of Council's four-year Delivery Program. This will support the development of annual Operational Plans over the next term of Council. The full suite of planning documents also includes:

- Strategic asset management plan
- Digital strategy
- Workforce management plan
- Long term financial plan
- Fees and charges
- Revenue policy
- Rates maps.

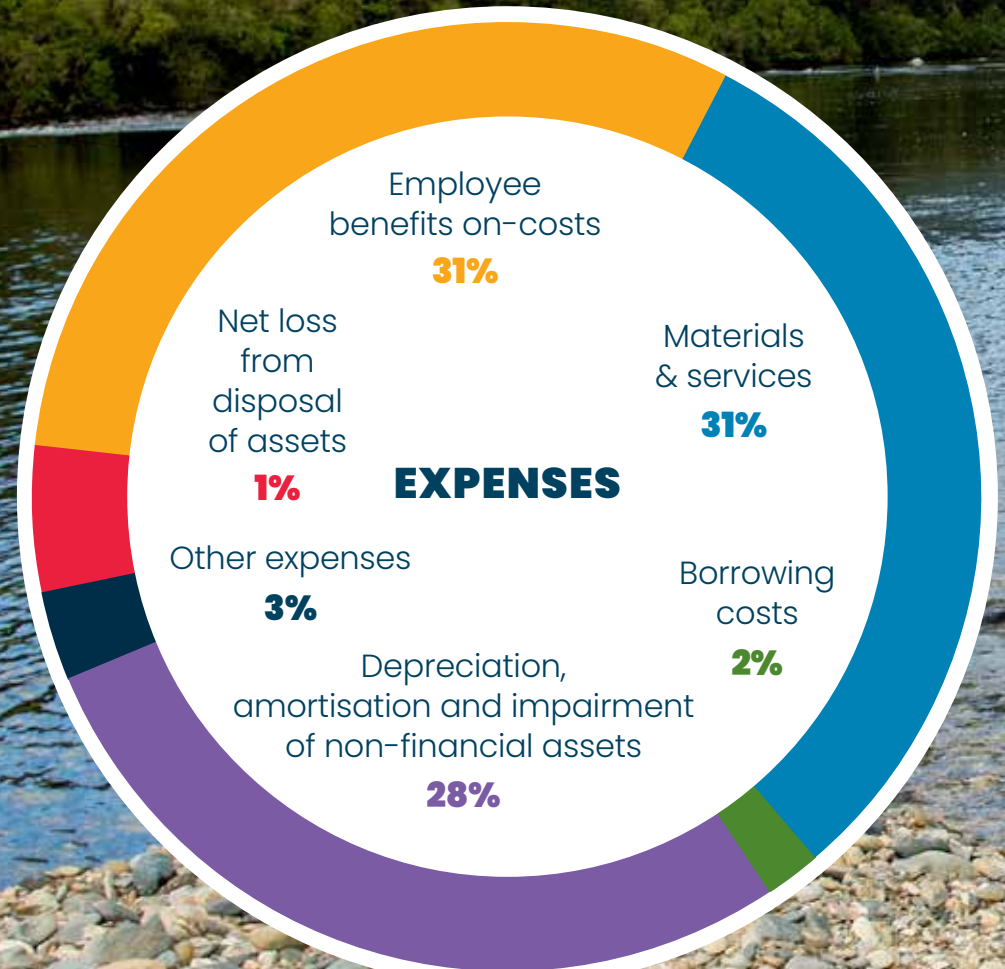
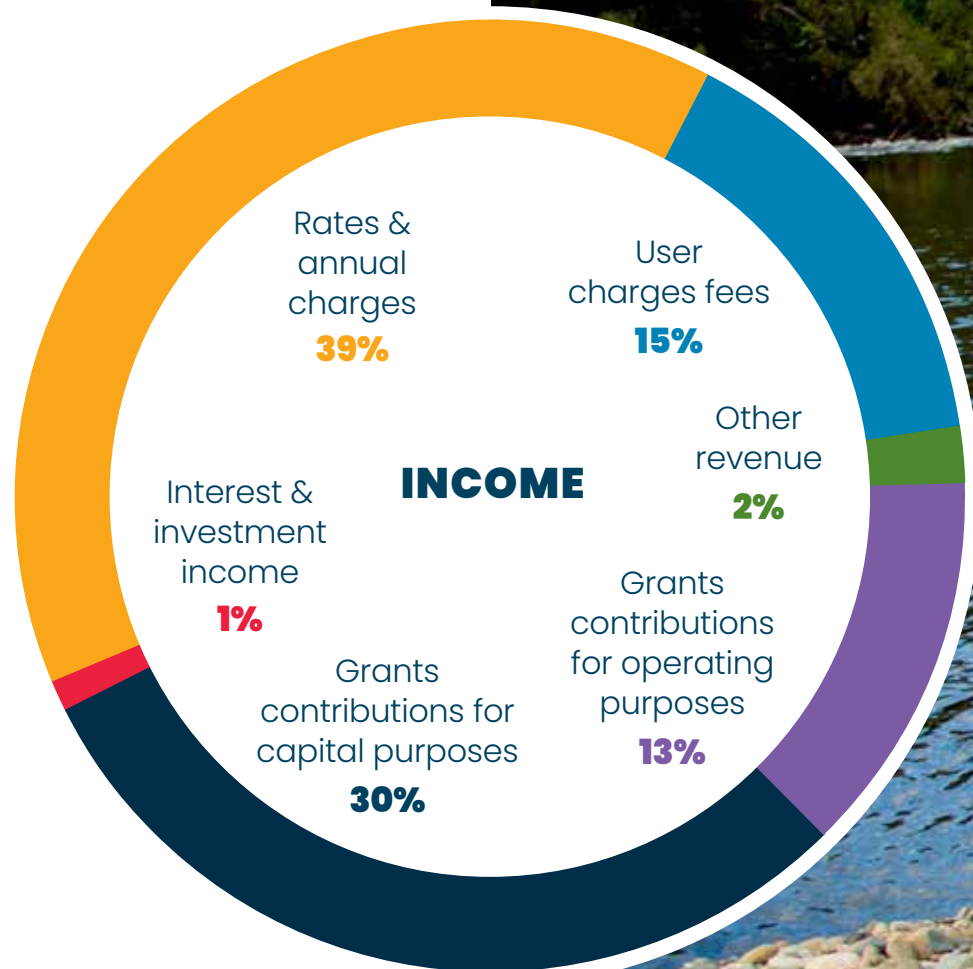
Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is a high priority for Council, consisting of a multi-faceted four-year delivery program. The program was developed in collaboration with the NSW Government under the Australian Cyber Security Guidelines. It involves implementing technology solutions such as the threat intelligence gateway, Qualys vulnerability management service and an extensive staff training program to improve staff awareness and identification of cyber threats.



OUR GOVERNANCE

2021-22 FINANCIAL SUMMARY







Civic Centre

22 Tozer Street (PO Box 3078)
West Kempsey NSW 2440

Customer Services

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