



CAMDEN COUNCIL
EVENTS
STRATEGY





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CONTENTS

Acknowledgment of Country	4
Mayor’s Message	6
Our Vision for Events	7
Overview	9
Purpose	9
The Four Pillars	10
Why Events Are Important	11
Strategic Context	14
The Current Events Landscape in Camden	17
Highlights	17
Looking Forward	19
What We’ve Heard	20
Pillars	20
Strategies	23
Pillar 1: We Are Connected in Community	23
Pillar 2: Uniquely Camden	24
Pillar 3: Diversity and Inclusion	26
Pillar 4: Our Events Have Local Impact	27
Implementation and Review	28
Keeping Our Community Informed	28
Sources	31

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Council acknowledges that the Camden area is situated on the sacred Traditional Lands and Waterways of the Dharawal peoples. We also recognise surrounding Dharug and Gundungurra people that may have connections to these lands.

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Elders past, present and emerging.





MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I'm pleased to present Council's Events Strategy, a comprehensive review of the events we run for our community and a framework for improvement as we continue to cater for our growing and changing area.

At Camden Council, we believe our events are for everyone. We want the people who live, work and play in this beautiful corner of the world to feel welcome, included, safe and, above all, connected to those around them.

This document will serve as a guide to design and deliver an events program that ensures we're meeting the needs and interests of our community and showcasing the Camden area as a prime destination for visitors. It's about looking for new opportunities to seize and gives Council license to deliver events in a new and refreshed way. I look forward to seeing the new age of events here across the Camden area and watching our residents, both current and future, enjoy our celebrations in many different ways.

Ashleigh Cagney

MAYOR OF CAMDEN

OUR VISION FOR EVENTS

Our events are for everyone, whether you live in the Camden community, run a business, have a family or are visiting the area.

We share a vision with our community to create fun, affordable, inclusive events that promote Camden as an attractive place to live, visit and invest.

Our events are a place where everyone feels welcome, included and safe.

We bring our diverse community together and form meaningful connections through shared experiences.





OVERVIEW

The Camden Council Events Strategy builds on the vision identified in our Community Strategic Plan, where we envision a connected, diverse and thriving community with an abundance of opportunities and access to open spaces.

The strategy informs how we design our program and ensures our events are relevant to the needs and interests of our community. The development of this strategy has been guided by community sentiments and stakeholder input, and we will use it to preserve what is special about our events landscape while exploring future growth opportunities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this events strategy is to provide:



THE FOUR PILLARS

Our events are guided by the four pillars, setting our focus and priorities to achieve our collective vision. They have been developed with our stakeholders and are explained further on Page 20; What We've Heard.



Each pillar is supported by three strategies that outline the objectives of the pillar, these strategies are presented on Page 23; Strategies. All strategies have a corresponding internal action plan to describe how we will achieve our objectives, including the initiatives and activities we will undertake.

WHY EVENTS ARE IMPORTANT

A thriving economy

The NSW visitor economy supports over 107,115 businesses and more than 296,000 jobs. Events play a critical role in stimulating a local economy that has a knock-on effect into other sectors, such as event attendees spending at other businesses, on transport, accommodation and in the community.¹

Destination NSW's Events Calendar generates more than \$600m annual revenue for NSW, which is only expected to grow in the future as Destination NSW has set the vision for NSW to be the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific by 2030.²

Social cohesion

Events deliver social benefits to the local community and visitors through shared experiences. Interpersonal interactions allow the community to build relationships and connections, which fosters wellbeing and brings joy to community members.

We can build community connections through activating public spaces. Place activation is a mechanism to attract a diverse array of people to a place, enticing them to stay and enjoy the space. It ranges from permanent fixtures such as playgrounds, seating and cycling paths to temporary activations including markets, classes and music. Activated public spaces are important when creating a more inclusive community identity, as it brings people together to develop a sense of ownership of place.³

Cultural and environmental benefits

Events help us develop a deeper understanding of cultural diversity. Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is a path to true reconciliation, and events play a role in promoting awareness about our cultural history.⁴

Events are also an avenue to engage with different cultures. 62% of Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Australians express their cultural identity through arts and creativity.⁵ Hosting cultural and art events enables different cultures to interact and connect. This promotes social cohesion and 'intercultural empathy', providing opportunities to share who we are with our neighbours and deepen our relationships.

Endorsing traditions and culture through events can act also as a catalyst for tourism and create a sense of identity and community.⁶

Events and place activation benefit the environment through promoting local green spaces and biodiversity, encouraging community members to take responsibility for protecting our environment.

Events are a tool to educate the community on Councils sustainability goals.⁷ Camden Council has launched initiatives increase knowledge and awareness of local environmental issues, such as the annual Threatened Species Art and Writing Competition and the Macarthur Nature Photography Competition. By incorporating sustainability considerations into events we can lead by example in demonstrating our value to our community, event partners and attendees.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This four-year event strategy sets our vision for events from 2024-27. It provides direction and guides our actions within Council in how we deliver our events.

The need for an events strategy was identified in our Delivery Program 2022-26, as a broader activity to support initiatives that build and foster community cohesion.

This Strategy has been created to complement and align with the priorities identified in our Community Strategic Plan and other supporting strategic documents.

In developing this strategy, we also considered how our direction relates to state and regional priorities. This ensures we are well placed to leverage existing policies and harness the future development opportunities in our region, such as housing development and the Western Sydney Aerotropolis.

On the right shows the relationship between the events strategy and other Council strategies. This events strategy provides a framework for all Council events and supports the delivery of other strategies in the format of community events.

Camden Council's Lead Strategy

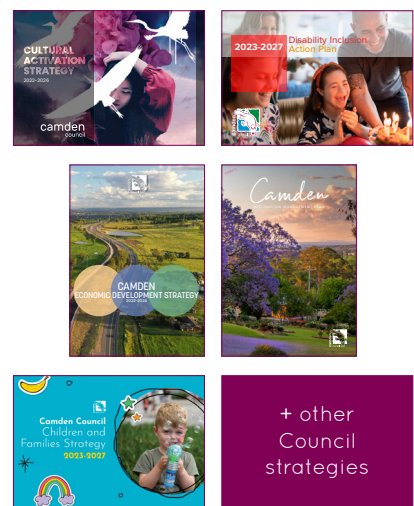


Connecting Camden:
Community Strategic Plan 2036

Our Pillars



This strategy aligns with the key principles identified in:



State and Regional Plans include:



- Destination NSW: Visitor Economy Strategy 2030
- Destination NSW: Statewide Destination Management Plan
- Dept. Planning and Environment: NSW Guide to Public Spaces
- Western Parkland City Authority: Blueprint and Economic Development Roadmap
- NSW Treasury: Sydney 24 Hour Economy Strategy

- Cultural Activation Strategy 2022-26
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-27
- Economic Development Strategy 2022-26
- Destination Management Plan 2024
- Children and Families Strategy 2023-27



THE CURRENT EVENTS LANDSCAPE IN CAMDEN

Many Council events in Camden LGA have become a tradition that our community look forward to every year.

Our major events provide excellent entertainment for our region and attract a large number of participants from near and far.

We also engage our residents through community events targeting different demographics and locations within our LGA.

HIGHLIGHTS

We offer a diverse program of events

Our events program is abundant and caters to many interest groups and ages. We offer major events and festivals that ignite tourism and unite the whole community, like Camden Festival. We also provide smaller local events, such as the Spotlight Youth Program that offers more intimate opportunities to connect amongst more specific members of the community.

We strive to make an impact

We do our best to fund our events so they can remain affordable and inclusive of the whole community. Meaningful events such as Grandparents Day facilitates intergenerational learning and connection between school children and seniors. Our multi-day, multi-venue International Day of People with Disability program aims to enhance the public program participation of people who live with a disability. In 2023, we offered workshops to support the wellbeing of people with diverse needs, leisure and sensory activities and a community BBQ to celebrate all abilities.

We're known for our Christmas events

Our Christmas Festival is one of our signature events, bringing together people of various ages and interests to celebrate and have fun. We look forward to hosting our popular Christmas events every year, and we feel proud of the sustained support from community members who want to get involved. Council has been involved in these events since 2017, and we are delighted to host them for many more years to come and expand them to more corners of our LGA.

We use our events to showcase our unique assets

We have numerous cultural, environmental and heritage assets that are of significant value to our community. Camden Town Farm, Alan Baker Art Gallery, heritage buildings in Camden Town Centre, the Bicentennial Equestrian Park and multiple sportsgrounds provide an excellent atmosphere and enrich the experience of many events. Utilising these facilities ensures that our neighbourhoods continue to be vibrant and welcoming spaces, showcasing our history, culture and place significance to the next generation, new residents, and visitors.

We consult with our community

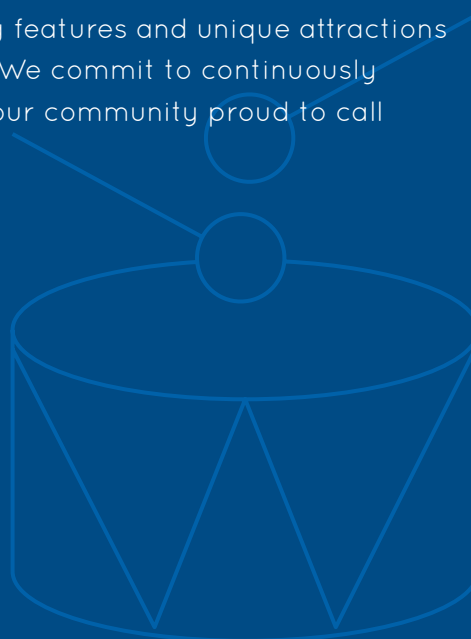
We have established an Events Reference Group as representatives for our community. It consists of community representatives and Councillors who advise us on the needs of the community and provide informed recommendations on event requirements.

We review our post-event surveys to monitor our performance and ensure we provide good experiences for attendees and stakeholders. Feedback has improved many aspects of our events, notably it has enhanced our accessibility and environmental considerations.

LOOKING FORWARD

With many successful years of events behind us, we strive to improve and diversify our events program continuously. We recognise that what the community needs and desires for events are changing as we welcome new members into our community, and we are excited to plan for events rich in cultural diversity as our community evolves.

Camden LGA is a special place with charming features and unique attractions that set us apart from other Sydney regions. We commit to continuously showcasing our land and assets and making our community proud to call Camden LGA their home.



WHAT WE'VE HEARD

Feedback from our stakeholders played a meaningful role in formulating this strategy. We have reviewed community feedback on past events to gather community sentiments. We also used targeted co-design workshops and stakeholder questionnaires to better understand our community needs, specifically what has been working well and what you would like to see in the future.

We used the outcome from engagement to develop our four strategic pillars. These pillars reflect the sentiments and priorities of our community and will be the focus areas for our events program over the period from 2024 to 2027.



1

We are connected in community

Our community is growing, and events are an excellent way to welcome new members into our community. You have told us that you value the interactions, joy and sense of belonging our events have created. We have also heard that our community have a strong desire to participate in the shaping of our events program, actively engaging and co-creating our event landscape.

2

Uniquely Camden

Our community wants us to leverage the unique attractions, quality and characters of Camden LGA. This includes continuing to utilise our established event spaces, like the heritage town centre and town farm, ensuring our new communities have access to events, such as Leppington and other high growth areas, and creating awareness for visitors outside of Camden through our performance and arts so visitors better understand who we are and what we offer.

3

Celebrate diversity and inclusion

We know sharing moments with one another is how we find common ground and deepen our bond. You have told us our events should be for everyone. This means making events more accessible and inclusive, so everyone can participate and experience enjoyment. You have also told us our events program should embrace the diverse cultural identities within our community and be representative of our community profile.

4

Our events have local impact

Events play a role in adding value to the local economy and lifestyle and addressing community needs. You have told us that an active events scene can make Camden LGA a better place to live. We also know that through effective partnerships, our events can help local businesses grow, create employment opportunities, grow our visitor economy, and attract investment to the LGA.



STRATEGIES

We have developed three strategies for each pillar to guide how the pillars will be implemented. These strategies will ensure we realise our vision for events and continue producing events suited to our community.

PILLAR 1: WE ARE CONNECTED IN COMMUNITY

Strategies		Why this is important
1.1	Our community has a say in our events program	We are guided by our community. We will ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate in community consultation when planning and designing events. We actively seek community input and participation in preparing the events program.
1.2	Our community has fun at our events	We know events bring joy to the community, and people look forward to them. We want our events to create positive memories for our community to cherish.
1.3	Our events make the community feel more connected	Community connectedness promote well-being and happiness. We bring everyone together and provide opportunities for the community to interact and engage. Our events are where everyone in the community feels safe and welcome.

What does success look like?

- Having mechanisms for our community to share their feedback with us and community feedback shapes our event program for the following year.
- Our community rates our events positively, and they share their positive experience with others.
- New community members are empowered to integrate into and connect with our community.
- Social cohesion is strengthened within the whole community and wellbeing improved.

PILLAR 2: UNIQUELY CAMDEN

Strategies		Why this is important
2.1	Our events recognise and spotlight the uniqueness of each area within our LGA	We acknowledge that different areas in Camden LGA have unique qualities that should be celebrated. Everyone in the community should have the opportunity to be involved in events in their local public spaces. We will work to deliver events all across Camden LGA, taking into consideration the characteristics and preferences of each neighbourhood.
2.2	Our events provide opportunities to connect with our local history, heritage, cultural and environmental assets	Incorporating our local attractions and assets into events helps people feel connected to a place and educates on history and culture. We will preserve our assets and leverage opportunities to embrace the many unique attractions of Camden, to allow community to connect with place culturally, historically and through nature for now and for many future generations.
2.3	Our events contribute to strengthening our identity	Events build awareness of Camden LGA and showcase who we are. We will preserve our signature events and seek innovative event ideas to strengthen our presence in the events space. Events also offer opportunities for local talents and amplify our collective identity and sense of community.

What does success look like?

- Increased number of activations and events held in different locations across our LGA.
- More history, heritage, environmental and First Nations knowledge has been shared through our events.
- Our major events offer a point of difference from the surrounding areas.
- Our events create opportunities for local vendors, artists and talent.



PILLAR 3: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Strategies		Why this is important
3.1	Our events program has something for everyone	It is important for our community to have an event or occasion to get excited about and feel involved in the community. We consider the demographics and needs within our area and diversify events to ensure that our program offers something for everyone.
3.2	Our events are accessible and inclusive	We want everyone to feel safe and included at events. We consider and design accessibility into all events to ensure that events are inclusive.
3.3	Our events celebrate the cultural diversity within our community	We have many cultural identities within Camden LGA and we want to provide opportunities to share and celebrate cultural diversity within events. The events program will contain culturally specific events to spotlight different cultures and community groups.

What does success look like?

- Our program offers a wide range of events targeting different age groups, interests and needs.
- Improvement to the accessibility of events and enhanced disability awareness among our staff.
- Our events program includes elements that increase the cultural awareness of our community and promote cross-cultural engagement.

PILLAR 4: OUR EVENTS HAVE LOCAL IMPACT

Strategies		Why this is important
4.1	Our events strengthen the local economy	We recognise that events are a gateway to attract visitors, stimulate business activity and lead to a thriving economy. We will utilise major events to provide opportunities to grow local businesses and strengthen our local economy.
4.2	Our events make Camden a more vibrant place	Events add vibrancy to a place and make it memorable, meaning people are more likely to consider Camden LGA as a place to live, work or visit. We plan to achieve this through our curation of events and strategic partnerships, providing outstanding activities, cultural enrichment and entertainment.
4.3	Our events reflect the community's strategic vision and priorities	Events are key to the Council's role in promoting social cohesion, sustainability and economic development. We will ensure our event objectives and outcomes are aligned with the community priorities identified in other Council strategic documents. This enables us to join forces across Council teams and deliver stronger community outcomes.

What does success look like?

- Events boost our visitor economy and increase awareness and patronage for local businesses.
- More event organisers and visitors choose Camden LGA as their destination.
- Our events have clear strategic goals, and the outcomes are evaluated post-event.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

This Strategy has been developed to guide us in delivering engaging events in Camden LGA that align with community priorities. We will continuously evaluate our success and refine our program to respond to the sentiments of our residents, visitors and stakeholders.

To implement the strategy, we have developed an action plan that details how we will achieve each strategic pillar. It provides clear guidance and a shared understanding of the priorities when planning for events.

To maintain the relevancy of these strategies and actions across the life of this document, we also developed an events evaluation framework. This framework assesses our events to ensure the outcome of our events is aligned with our community needs and that the impact of the events can be measured.

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED

We follow the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework for Councils across NSW, meaning our activities and output will be included in the six-monthly progress report and annual report.

Regular reporting helps us maintain accountability and transparency, building trust with our community for ongoing engagement.





SOURCES

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