



Summerama 2017

Sydney Coastal Councils Group
Summer Activities Program

OUTCOMES REPORT





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Introduction

This report provides an overview of outcomes from Summerama 2017, the annual summer activities program coordinated by the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) in partnership with its Member Councils.

Summerama is now in its 14th year. The program provides a platform for the community to enjoy, learn about and interact with Sydney's coastline and harbour through family-oriented, educational activities.

Summerama aims to enhance community awareness of sustainable coastal and estuarine management through the coordination of family-oriented, engaging and informative activities.

Established as part of Coastcare week, the program started off as a week of activities amongst a small group of councils. Today, activities span the month of January and range from educational walk 'n' talks to snorkelling, rock pool and wetlands tours, as well as many creative activities for children. For many years, the Landcare and Coastcare programs have provided support to Summerama through financial sponsorship and cross-promotions, however, no financial support was sought from these organisations for 2017. In-kind support was supplied by Member Councils for Summerama activities.

Activities are organised and delivered by participating councils, while the SCCG coordinates the promotional campaign and sponsorship. This collaborative approach facilitates information sharing and extends the reach of promotions regionally, while still allowing activities to be tailored to individual local council areas and community.

Participating councils in 2017



2017 Highlights

Summerama 2017 was again a successful program with eight of the eleven member Councils participating in the program by offering activities to the community that raised awareness and appreciation of the coastal environment. The majority of these activities were fully booked with some requiring waiting lists.

Summerama 2017 saw **84** activities planned across **8** participating councils, with over **2202** participants.

Activities on offer included favourites such as snorkelling, rock pool rambles, wetland tours, kayaking, walks and talks, and various creative activities for children. The diversity of activities attracted a range of participants, from school aged children through to adults.

Appendix 1 provides a list of all activities offered in 2017.

Table 1: Activities and Attendance

Council	# Activities	Attendees
Northern Beaches	17	1000+
Mosman	4	54
North Sydney	20	222
Willoughby	4	60
Inner West	4	79
Waverley	8	234
Woollahra	6	108
Randwick City	18	440
SCCG	3	5
Total	84	2202

Willoughby Council also provided Family Flix nights, showing popular movies with an environmental awareness advert before each show. There were 433 attendees in total over 3 shows in January; 13th (Minions 137 people), 20th (Inside Out 114 People) and 27th (The Lion King 162 people).

SCCG Activities

In addition to the activities hosted by the Member Councils, SCCG partnered with different volunteers, organisations and community groups to facilitate three additional activities for Summerama.

SCCG approached the Walking Volunteers who were involved in the creation of the walking network map of Sydney's foreshore area. More information is available here:

<http://www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au/>. SCCG reached out to The Walking Volunteers to create two walks, one along the open coast and one in the harbour, each about 2 hours long. The Narrabeen Lagoon Walk and the Balls Head Reserve Walk were the resulting activities. Unfortunately, the Narrabeen Lagoon Walk had to be cancelled due to low booking numbers, however the Balls Head Reserve Walk went ahead and had 5 people booked onto it.

SCCG also developed a guided coastal walk of Long Reef with Greater Sydney Local Land Services and Reef Care <http://reefcarelongreef.org.au>. This event was specifically aimed at engaging the Chinese speaking community to address the issue of non-English speaking communities often missing out on key messages around safe and sustainable enjoyment of the Sydney coasts. A total of 16 tickets had been booked for the event, over 50% of the allocated amount. Unfortunately, this event had to be cancelled due to a forecasted storm on the day.

Limitations

Unfortunately, some activities did have to be cancelled due to severe weather and other unforeseen circumstances.

The majority of events were fully booked, with waitlists, however not all booked attendees turned up on the day. In one instance, a member council had to cancel an event due to the last-minute cancellation of the speaker.

The Member Councils that did not participate cited a lack of resources, either staff or funds, or the Summerama program not being as relevant for their Council.

Resources and Sponsorship

Participating Member Councils dedicated one staff member to be the 'Summerama Champion', who was responsible for developing their council's activities and liaising with the SCCG. As Summerama has grown and councils have developed their own resources, some participating councils now have a dedicated budget to deliver the program, whilst others rely on in-kind contributions and internal resources.

SCCG reached out to *Ben and Jerrys Ice Cream* because of their impressive record on environmental issues. SCCG scoped the possibility of a coastal themed film being shown at the *Ben and Jerrys Open Air Cinema*, to reach linguistically and culturally diverse audiences. Unfortunately, *Ben and Jerrys Ice Cream* were unable to assist with the proposed Summerama event.

Additionally, SCCG approached *Captain Cook Cruises* who have previously supported Summerama activities by donating prizes for the Photo Competition. SCCG suggested that *Captain Cook Cruises* host a 'Summerama Eco-Cruise', including guest speakers providing talks on a variety of coastal issues whilst travelling throughout the harbour. Unfortunately, this too did not come into fruition.

The Promotional Campaign

In addition to Member Councils' individual promotions, the SCCG promotes Summerama through multiple channels including web, social media, and mainstream media (print & online). An overview of the 2017 promotional activities is provided below.

Website

In previous years, the Summerama website has listed all the events, with booking capabilities enabled through the site. In 2017, the Summerama website centralised Member Councils activities taking place throughout January, in a calendar format, providing an overview of events to the public. Discussions in 2015 and 2016 resulted in the SCCG website being revised to streamline the visitor journey and reduce duplicate bookings. The calendar of events provided brief information on the activity whilst further information and the booking pages were hosted on the relevant Member Councils webpage. This ensured that visitors were transported to the relevant Council page, understood its location and the nature of the event before booking.

The updated Summerama website gained positive feedback from Member Councils and proved to be a handy resource as a broad overview of events. One council reported that they had participants who used the website to search for different activities across the region.

In 2017, the website had 1553 page views between 1 December 2016 and 31 January 2017 (compared to 2,408 in 2016 and 2,684 in 2015). This is likely due to the increased promotion of Summerama by Member Councils and decreased reliance on SCCG to promote activities. Member Council events and activities are increasingly standalone, fully booked and promoted independently to SCCG. This could also be linked to the decrease in the Summerama Facebook page posts compared to previous years.

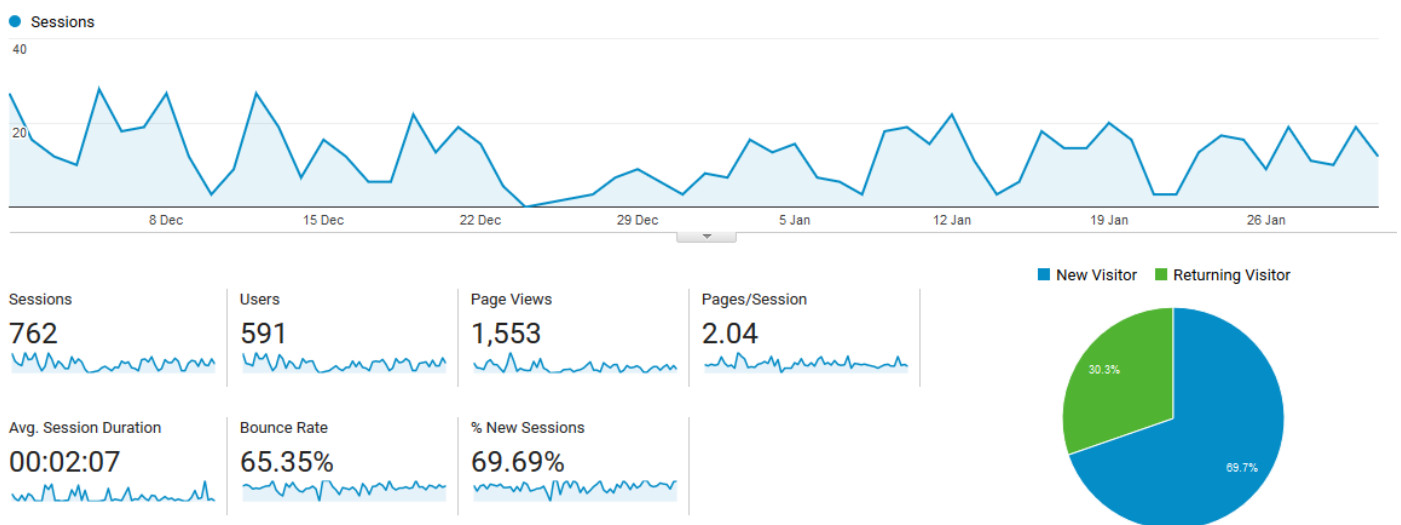


Figure 1: Key website statistics from 1 December 2016 to 31 January 2017

Media

SCCG staff capacity was limited during the 2017 Summerama Program, and media promotion efforts were subsequently reduced compared to previous years. SCCG distributed a media release throughout its network, including the monthly newsletter and the website. Additionally, a template media release was made available to Member Councils for promotion of their own activities and events.

Despite no mainstream media outlet attention for Summerama 2017 events, attendee levels were high and activities were successful. As places are limited there could be less need for coverage by mainstream media outlets to promote events. However, the attention of mainstream media such as Sydney Morning Herald, Good Living and Destination NSW would be beneficial for promoting the overall message of Summerama; enjoying and protecting coastlines.

Summerama Champions reported that their activities featured in the following media outlets (table 3).

Council	Media Outlet
Inner West Council	eNews, Facebook and Twitter
Mosman Council	eNews, Facebook, Council Website
Randwick City Council	Southern Courier local newspaper (paid advertisement), Mayors Column in Southern Courier, Mail drop program to 15,000 households, Council website, Social Media.
Waverley Council, Woollahra Municipal Council	Wentworth Courier (mayor's column), The Beast magazine and The Beast online, eNews and emails to local schools, posters on buses and library.

Table 3: Media outlets featuring Summerama activities

Social Media

The Facebook page provided a platform to promote the Summerama program, especially sharing event information of Member Councils' activities. The Facebook page now has 468 "Likes", up fractionally from 451 in 2016 and 447 in 2015.

Throughout the January period 17 posts were made to the Facebook page which reached 1,086 people. The post that generated the most interest was about the Summer Skate Night at North Curl Curl, that incorporated the Reverse Vending Machine. This is significantly less people than in 2016 where an external contractor was engaged to manage the Summerama Facebook page, creating 91 posts that reached 5,943 people. It should also be noted that in previous years Summerama has included a photo competition which was largely promoted on the Facebook page, with people posting their images for the photo competition. This competition was not held in 2017.



Most Member Councils do not make much use of the Summerama Facebook page, preferring to rely on their own communication channels, most notably council Facebook pages or webpages. In the council feedback and analysis, it was reported that the Summerama Facebook page was only actively used by 1 Member Council. In contrast to the Summerama Facebook Page, the Summerama social media posts by the Northern Beaches Council reached 21,785 people.

Council Resource Kit

As per previous years, participating councils were provided with a resource kit that contained web tiles, blurbs and logos to promote Summerama directly through Council and local media channels. The kit also included examples of Facebook and twitter posts for Councils to use. New to 2017 there was also a colouring-in stencil for children included in the kit.

Of the eight member Councils involved in Summerama, five provided in-depth analysis of activities and feedback. In total, two of those five Councils reported that they had used the promotional materials provided and three Councils co-branded their materials using the Summerama logo. The colouring template wasn't highly utilised with only one Council acknowledging its use. Most councils preferred to rely largely on existing council promotional channels.

Feedback from Summerama Champions in previous years is that most participants find out about the activities through local media channels such as council newsletters and websites, as well as the local newspapers.

Evaluation

Questions seeking feedback on the program's promotions and other materials were included in the 2017 Summerama Reporting Template provided to all Summerama Champions to complete. The information gained has been reviewed and aligned with the results of SCCG *Community Outreach Workshop 13 October 2015* which surveyed Member Council's views on community outreach activities (including Summerama) and the support offered by SCCG, with recommendations for improvement.

Attendance

All events were well attended. A small number of events had to be cancelled due to weather or other complications, and some events had reduced attendance (even if 100% booked) due to inclement weather. A planned walk along Long Reef for Chinese speakers was unfortunately cancelled for safety reasons as severe weather was forecasted, the event had 16 people signed up. Another walking event to be hosted by the Walking Coastal Sydney Volunteers had to be cancelled due to bookings not reaching the minimum number required. This was the only event throughout the entirety of January that had to be cancelled due to bookings.

The attendance figures for each event were gathered throughout Summerama activities from participating Member Councils. The total recorded was over 2202 attendees across 84 events. This figure shows a slightly higher than average attendance rate, which is normally between 1800-2000 since 2012. At times attendance figures had to be estimated due to the large number of people attending.

Participant Satisfaction

Champions reported that participants were generally highly satisfied with the events. No negative feedback from participants was reported to SCCG. One attendee that took part in the Inner West Council's *Under the Sea* activity said:

"I am pleased with the activities and like the hands-on aspect, making fish with 'waste' materials"

Encouragingly, a parent attending a *Wonderful Wetlands* tour stated that they were so impressed that they asked their daughters school to book a wetland tour with the council for her class. Whilst another attendee, a local resident of many years, was excited to learn the history of the wetland.

In a similar positive response, 100% of those surveyed at Randwick Council's events stated that they had learnt something new about protecting Randwick's unique marine life and/or how to care for the coast because of completing the activity. Furthermore, 100% of those surveyed indicated that they would recommend the activity to a friend.

Waverley Council reported that people were very happy with the Summerama activities that they attended. Of note were the interactive events that provided opportunities to engage with coastal creatures and products in the coastal environment, matching the feedback gained by the Inner West Council.

Promotions

As reported in 2016, utility of the SCCG's promotional materials and event coordination activities was generally rated low, councils are now capable of providing these services independently. For many councils, the program forms part of ongoing community engagement activities, for which they have existing promotional channels and administrative systems. The majority of participants find out about Summerama activities through councils' own networks, or via local print media, rather than the Summerama website or Facebook page.

This year the Summerama program was advertised on 'Ella's List', a popular website dedicated to daily ideas for Sydney mothers (www.ellaslist.com.au). Additionally, Manly based artist and previous Photo Competition winner, Angela Van Boxtel, talked to Northside Radio about Summerama 2017. Angela Van Boxtel shared this on her Blog and Facebook page, which has 711 'likes'. Waverley Council and Treading Lightly shared the Summerama Facebook page and link on their respective pages also.

Despite little effort to engage the traditional media, some Member Councils did receive positive coverage of events in wider media channels. Prior to the next edition of Summerama in 2018, it is worth evaluating the relevance of SCCG media coverage and promotions as events are often at capacity.

The SCCG *Community Outreach Workshop 13 October 2015*, identified common audience 'gaps' in Member Councils' community outreach programs, including people in their 20s-30s, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. These gaps could be potentially better addressed through the Summerama Facebook page, as 31% of the page's followers are between 18-30 and there are followers from 29 different countries.

The Theme

Unlike in previous years, there was no specific theme for Summerama 2017, except for the criteria that activities needed to promote 'caring for our coast'. By not featuring a Photo Competition and following 2016 feedback, it was deemed unnecessary to have a specific theme. In 2016 a Summerama Champion commented "I don't know if a theme is useful. If there is no theme it enables individual councils to link the events into their other messages / programs more easily". Taking this approach forward allows Member Councils to be more creative with their events.

The SCCG's Future Role

The future of SCCG's role in Summerama has been debated for the past few years by some Member Councils, and the feedback from the 2017 event highlights both the benefits of SCCG involvement but also the concerns for the future. Each Champion that provided comment on the role of SCCG in Summerama identifies their Council's comprehensive program that would stand alone regardless of SCCG involvement. However, each Champion generally also acknowledges the benefit of involving their activities under the broader campaign and banner of Summerama.

"Although we could probably fill our events without being part of the Summerama program, I still think it's useful for councils to have a banner program under which to offer activities. It makes sense to use the branding when we're all going to be running events during the same timeframe. It's also a way for residents to hear about other neighbouring events that they might otherwise miss"

"Our program and activities were tailored to fit in with some of our other summer campaigns such as Bondi Unwrapped. It was a great opportunity to work with community partners and to further expose our Second Nature program. We just need to make sure activities are in line with our Environmental Action Plan and our engagement framework as well as SCCG's needs."

"I am unsure of the place of Summerama at the moment. We seem to have no problems filling our workshops through our usual advertising methods"

Despite Member Councils now having excellent capacity and resources to run community outreach programs, the pertinent issue of council amalgamations is acknowledged to pose a potential threat to the well-established programs. Randwick Council acknowledge that despite strong, current programs, amalgamations could destabilise the resources and funding currently applied to deliver Marine and Coastal activities. As potential amalgamations take place, Summerama could provide the structured framework needed to ensure engagement of the public in the coastal environment through organised events and activities.

"Randwick Council's summer Marine and Coastal program is quite comprehensive and seems fine to stand alone. I'm finding increasing numbers of participants from other Council areas travelling to Randwick for the program, so on that level, Summerama serves the Sydney Coastal community really well. Into the future, with the potential amalgamation of Randwick Council, Summerama may be prove to be the best vehicle for marine and coastal education, if there is a re-structure of the program"

Conclusion

The Summerama Activities Program should be recognised for its achievements over the last fourteen years, in enhancing community awareness of coastal processes, habitats and life, and connecting the community to the coast.

Summerama continues to provide an opportunity for the SCCG and its Member Councils to engage with the Sydney community on the coast in a fun and informative way. Participation in Summerama activities is persistently strong and feedback from participants is overwhelmingly positive.

The consistent demand for the activities offered by Summerama, the number of activities offered and the diversity of participants involved continue to be key strengths of the Summerama program. The SCCG have continued to tailor the program each year based on Member Councils' feedback to ensure that it achieves its key objectives.

In the early years of the Summerama Program, the SCCG played a much larger role in assisting councils with direct promotion, planning and organisation of activities and speakers. Many Member Councils had resource limitations and environmental education programs were not extensively offered, particularly coastal-based educational activities. However environmental education programs have become part of the 'mainstream' of council programs. Many Member Councils that once relied heavily on the SCCG to implement the Summerama Program are now largely self-sufficient when it comes to organising and promoting summer coastal activities.

The Summerama program consistently connects the community to the coast through its activities program. Whilst the program is still viable, after fourteen years it could benefit from a review to reinvigorate the program in the most appropriate format for the future. It is time for the SCCG and Member Councils to consider in what form the program is to continue, and for SCCG to continue to explore ways to enhance our support for Member Councils in this area.



APPENDIX – 2017 List of Activities

(ordered by council)

Council	Date	Activity Name
Inner West	10/01	Under the Sea
Inner West	11/01	Rock Pool Explore! Wildlife Show
Inner West	17/01	Wonderful Wetlands
Inner West	19/01	Wonderful Wetlands
Mosman	11/01	Rockpool Ramble
Mosman	12/01	Rockpool Ramble
Mosman	14/01	Rockpool Ramble
Mosman	19/01	Mosman Underwater World- Talk by Underwater Photographer Nick Terry
Northern Beaches	6/01	Summer Skate Nights and reverse Vending Machine
Northern Beaches	6/01	Narrabeen Lagoon Walk
Northern Beaches	6/01	Wetlands Night Stalk
Northern Beaches	8/01	Rockpool Rambles
Northern Beaches	13/01	Summer Skate Nights and Reverse vending machine
Northern Beaches	14/01	Creek Critters
Northern Beaches	14/01	Rock Platform tour
Northern Beaches	14/01	Long Reef Guided walk and Talk (cancelled)
Northern Beaches	15/01	Snork and Talk
Northern Beaches	15/01	Snakes and Spiders info
Northern Beaches	20/01	Summer skate nights and Reverse vending machine
Northern Beaches	20/01	Wetlands Indigenous Walk
Northern Beaches	24/01	Dr.Rip Newport
Northern Beaches	24/01	Dr.Rip Manly
Northern Beaches	27/01	Summer Skate Nights and reverse Vending Machine
Northern Beaches	28/01	A celebration of sanctuaries
Northern Beaches	29/01	Snork and Talk with Eco Divers
North Sydney	8/01	Family kayak
North Sydney	17/01	Family kayak
North Sydney	17/01	Family kayak
North Sydney	18/01	Beach Art
North Sydney	18/01	Kids beach theatre
North Sydney	19/01	Snakes About
North Sydney	19/01	Fairy Trail
North Sydney	19/01	Spotlight Walk and Talk
North Sydney	19/01	Tom the Pom
North Sydney	20/01	Shark and Us
North Sydney	20/01	Under the Sea
North Sydney	23/01	Ocean Craft
North Sydney	24/01	Family Kayak
North Sydney	24/01	Story Time
North Sydney	24/01	Story Time
North Sydney	24/01	Story Time
North Sydney	24/01	Story Time
North Sydney	25/01	Mini Beast Muster

Council	Date	Activity Name
North Sydney	25/01	Drum Beats
Randwick	9/01	Learn to Surf
Randwick	9/01	Learn to Surf
Randwick	10/01	Catchment to Coast, Fred Hollow's Reserve 'Walk & Talk'
Randwick	11/01	Snorkelling at Gordons Bay INTERMEDIATE
Randwick	11/01	Snorkelling at Clovelly BEGINNERS
Randwick	12/01	A discovery of coastal birds walk&talk – Randwick Environment Park
Randwick	12/01	Rockpool Ramble - South Maroubra
Randwick	16/01	Rockpool Ramble – South Maroubra
Randwick	17/01	OceanFit for Families
Randwick	18/01	Snorkelling at Bare Island BEGINNERS
Randwick	18/01	Snorkelling at Bare Island INTERMEDIATE
Randwick	18/01	Walk the Fort Guided Tour
Randwick	19/01	Kamay Botany Bay Guided Tour (three sessions)
Randwick	19/01	Botany Bay Adventure Boat Tour (three sessions)
Randwick	20/01	Bush Tucker Trail Tour
Randwick	20/01	Traditional Basket Weaving
Randwick	23/01	How the coast was formed 'Walk & Talk'
Randwick	23/01	Dr Rip's Science of the Surf Talk
Randwick	23/01	Sharks! 'Talk & Quiz'
Randwick	24/01	Sea Kayaking at Malabar beach (five sessions)
SCCG	15/01	Walking Balls Head Reserve
Waverley	14/01	Trash for Treasure Seaside Scavenge
Waverley	14/01	Backyard Bugs
Waverley	14/01	Sand Castle Litter
Waverley	14/01	Family and Friends Picnic Fun
Waverley	14/01	Under the Sea adventure
Waverley	14/01	Rockpool Discovery Tour
Waverley	14/01	Sammy and Shelly Theatre Play
Willoughby	13/01	Family Flix
Willoughby	19/01	Snakes About
Willoughby	20/01	Family Flix
Willoughby	27/01	Family Flix
Woollahra	13/01	Rockpool Ramble
Woollahra	15/01	Snorkelling Discovery Tour
Woollahra	15/01	Snorkelling Discovery Tour
Woollahra	20/01	Snorkelling Discovery Tour
Woollahra	20/01	Snorkelling Discovery Tour
Woollahra	28/01	Rockpool Ramble



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