

Kingswood

Places to Love Case Study:
Penrith City Council

Activating the community's vision for
Kingswood in a transport hub precinct





Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Government acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to Elders past and present.

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to place and their rich contribution to society.

Aboriginal peoples take a holistic view of land, water and culture and see them as one, not in isolation to each other. This Places to Love Case Study is based on the premise upheld by Aboriginal peoples that if we care for Country, it will care for us.

Contents

Project at a glance	4
Project description	6
Community and stakeholder engagement	10
Evaluation	11
Timeline	12
Cost breakdown	12
Outcomes and lessons learnt	13
Photo diary	14



Planter boxes on Bringelly Road painted by a local artist. Image courtesy: NSW Government



Planter boxes on Bringelly Road painted by a local artist.
Image courtesy: NSW Government

Project at a glance

The 'Live, Work, Play Grid' project contributed to a better connected and active neighbourhood in Kingswood adjacent to Kingswood Train Station.

Penrith City Council worked together with the local community and businesses to co-design public space improvements along a 1.2 km grid-like walking trail. This included playful wayfinding, creative lighting, new seating, tree planters, a handball court, badminton net, and garden planters painted by the community.

The project was delivered in early 2021, alongside a free activation program that offered art workshops, community gardening sessions, urban nature tours, picnics, movie nights and night walks with women. The temporary trial informed permanent changes to the public space.

Project vision

To provide a series of places within Kingswood that facilitate social interactions in the community, provide safer spaces for people to walk and stay, and encourage healthier communities and environments.

Places to Love

Places to Love is a collaborative program between NSW Government and councils to trial demonstration projects that improve walkable access to, and the quality of, local public spaces, particularly in streets and transport hub precincts.

In 2020-21, six councils partnered with the program, including Penrith City Council for the Live, Work, Play Grid in the suburb of Kingswood.

The demonstration projects are a way to quickly trial how to make public spaces more vibrant and active using pop-ups and semi-permanent changes to test ideas and build the case for longer-term change.

Places to Love is a rolling program with opportunities for other councils to be involved in the future.



What was implemented?

1.2 km of street transformed with engaging and directional wayfinding

18 new seats and benches **3** new street trees

10 local women participated in a women's night safety walk workshop

22 m² planting across 32 new planter boxes painted by a local artist

1 new handball court and new badminton net

20 events and workshops held across three weeks attended by over 540 community members

Key outcomes

There was a significant increase in the number of women using the public space after the activations.

Wayfinding has helped enhance connections to public spaces and encourages the community to gather.

Anecdotal feedback from the community indicates a greater sense of pride, with the public spaces looking more inviting and welcoming and local groups enjoying the spaces where they can meet.

This project's success supported permanent changes to improve the streetscape experience in Kingswood. Council was successful in both the NSW Government's grant programs Streets as Shared Spaces and Your High Street.

The project engaged the local community to participate in decorating the park along the walking route for a movie night as part of a launch event. Image courtesy: Penrith City Council



Project description

Kingswood has an expanding health and education precinct and a growing culturally diverse population.

In 2020, Council developed the Think Bold Kingswood Place Plan in consultation with the local community. Feedback from residents and key stakeholders indicated that Kingswood was missing a core, central and vibrant meeting place for people to stay, play, enjoy and connect.

The centre had also experienced long-standing negative perceptions regarding community safety and public amenity. This has impacted on community connection and people's willingness to simply enjoy public spaces and participate fully in day-to-day life.

Council's Live, Work, Play Grid project in Kingswood built on the strengths and character of local streets to improve their amenity, desirability and connection to local green spaces and main streets. A 1.2 km grid-like trail enhanced

with wayfinding and placemaking elements activated the heart of Kingswood's transport hub precinct and connected a series of public green spaces along a key route between the train station, Nepean Hospital, a community centre and local shops.

Aims and objectives

The Live, Work, Play Grid project aimed to enhance the street experience for local workers, students and residents, with improved walkability, new creative breakout spaces and opportunities to linger. In particular, Council worked with local women on the following objectives:

- Strengthen neighbourhood interaction in public spaces, fostering social and ecological health
- Trial activating street and public spaces for new uses and play
- Encourage safe streets and active transport.



Council ran urban nature tours that encouraged children and adults to explore the open spaces and discover flora and fauna within the streets and open spaces of the project area. Image courtesy: Penrith City Council

“ The Live, Work, Play Grid project provided an exciting opportunity to bring women’s voices into the design of local public spaces in Kingswood. Local women were invited to share their experiences and ideas for what would improve the streets and public spaces along a 1.2 km grid in the heart of the neighbourhood.

We are thrilled with the results of this project and how these interventions have helped make Kingswood feel more inviting for everyone. Residents took part in gardening workshops, twilight picnics and urban safari tours and we saw

an increase in the usage of the public spaces around the Grid thanks to the community’s willingness to participate.

Ultimately, this project has enabled Council to test new ideas that have provided enormous benefits to our local community and help to pave the way for future projects.”



Mayor Tricia Hitchen
Mayor of Penrith, 2021-2023



The local community gathered in Wainwright Park at a launch event that activated the transport hub precinct, which included the park, with live music, food trucks and an outdoor movie. Image courtesy: Penrith City Council

Project location and strategic alignment

Kingswood is strategically located between St Marys and Penrith town centres along the East West Economic corridor, and has been identified in the Western City District Plan as a key local centre and transport hub.

The suburb is also recognised as a strategic centre through Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement and through the Place Plan.

The Live, Work, Play Grid project area is significant due to the proximity to Kingswood Train Station and the Nepean Hospital. Nearby local shops

along the Great Western Highway and Bringelly Road were not well connected and required a local place identity. Several under-utilised open spaces, including Red Cross Park, Orth Street Drainage Reserve and Wainwright Park presented opportunities for activation.

The project also complements existing works focused on improving night-time safety, wayfinding and amenity through the delivery of an Australian Government-funded pedestrian lighting network.

Concept map of project area showing locations of interventions

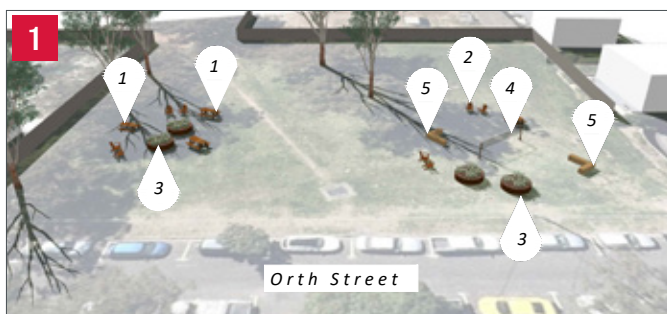
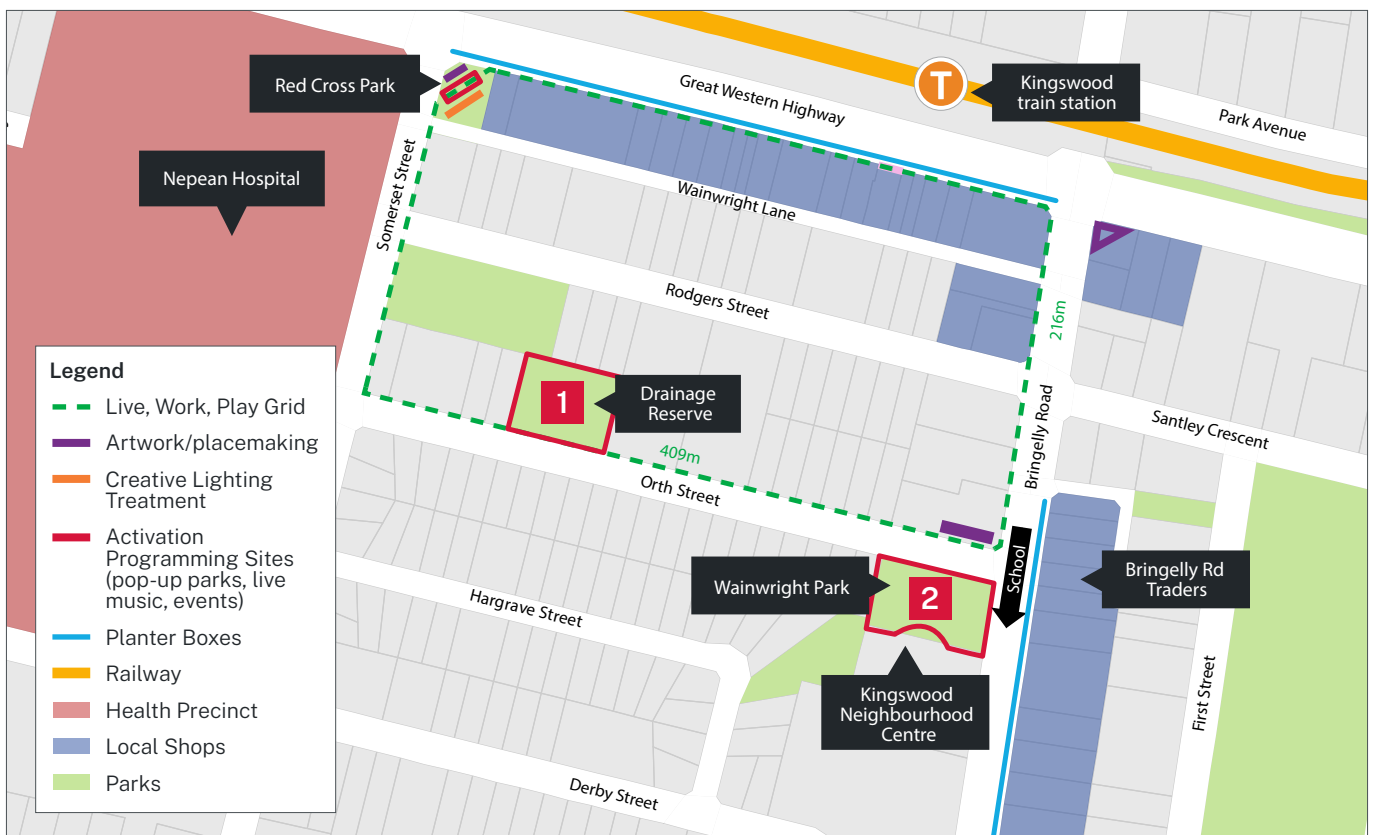


Figure 1: Orth Street Drainage Reserve -proposed works

1. Timber picnic table
2. Heavy-duty deck chairs (Adirondack style)
3. Ornamental garden beds
4. Badminton net and post
5. Sandstone block corner markers

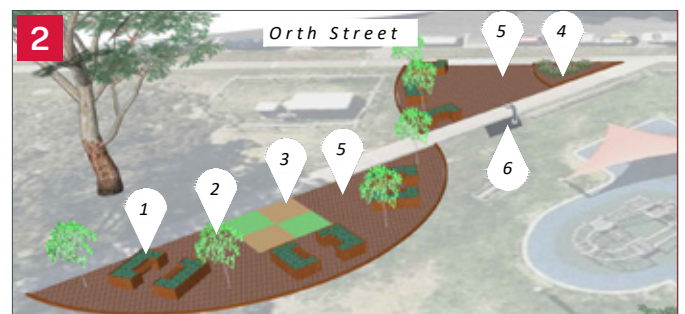


Figure 2: Wainwright Park -proposed works

1. Garden beds with integrated seating
2. Tree planting -Crepe Myrtle and Pin Oak
3. Handball court
4. Flower bed
5. Mulch surfacing with timber edge
6. Drinking fountain

Design and delivery

Council engaged with the local community and businesses to co-design the public space improvements in the transport hub precinct, along the 1.2 km pedestrian walking route. Recommendations from community and stakeholder engagement informed the concept design, including:

- Improve lighting
- Create a seamless walking experience
- Make parks a place to stay for the whole family
- Build a sense of community
- Make spaces visually attractive
- Make Kingswood green and breathable
- Address perceptions of safety.

The project concept used temporary interventions to activate the open spaces of Wainwright Park and Orth

Street Drainage Reserve, and the streets of the new walking loop. Approvals for the temporary interventions were all internal via the relevant asset owners.

The planter boxes installed along the Great Western Highway and on Bringelly Road were donated to Council by NSW Government and recycled from a Transport for NSW project. Installing the planter boxes on pedestrian footpaths required a Traffic Management Plan and a Road Occupancy License. The planter boxes were delivered and installed during the night to avoid traffic and parking impacts.

The project was led by Council's City Activation, Community and Place team, with support from Council's Design and Projects team that managed the landscape design and work.

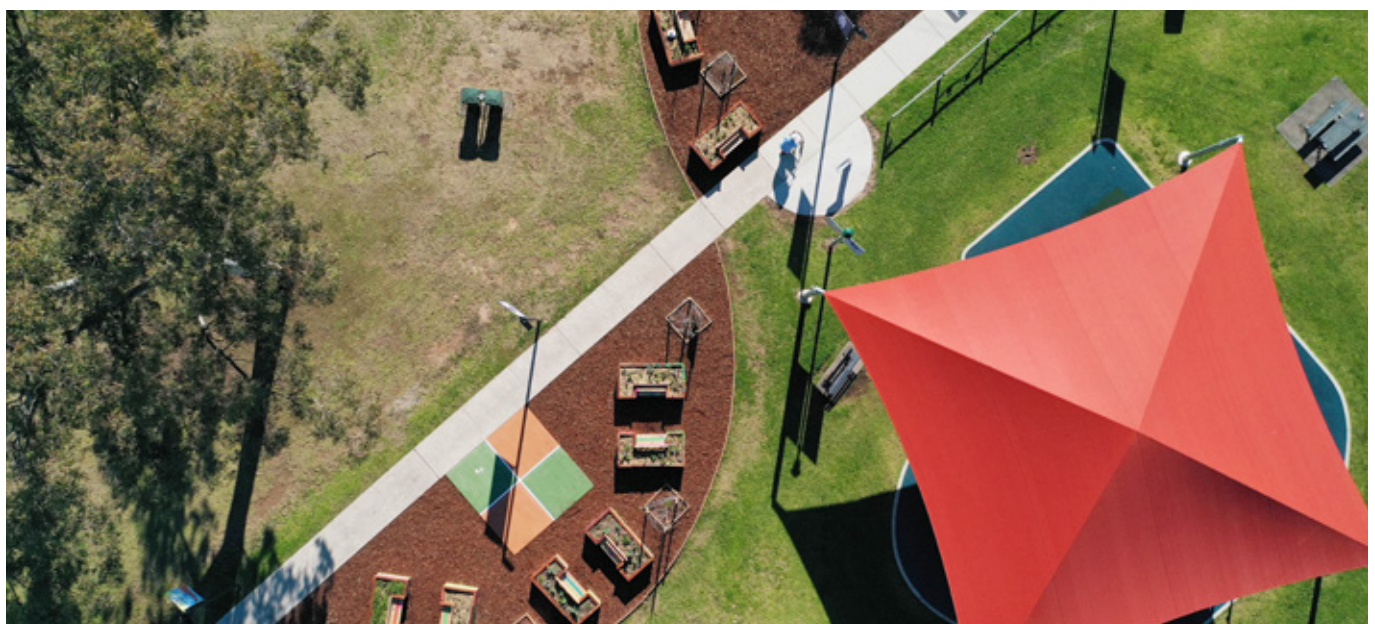
Project opportunities

- Wainwright Park and Drainage Reserve on Orth Street were underutilised and presented opportunities to provide enhanced quality open space for the community.
- Previous engagements indicated that the community used the footpaths and local main streets that formed the route along the grid. Council saw an opportunity to support wayfinding and activity in the public realm to create this project.

Project constraints

- Both open spaces are part of Kingswood's water drainage network. This environmental factor impacted the placement and types of interventions possible in both open spaces.
- Design considerations included how to safely secure temporary street furniture in public spaces.
- The condition of the footpath in sections was also a constraint for the project. Remediation works occurred in 2021, which fixed a significant stretch of uneven footpaths along the grid.

Aerial view of Wainwright Park showing the community garden, pop-up handball court and footpath decals delivered through the project. Image courtesy: Penrith City Council



Community and stakeholder engagement

A series of actions from the Place Plan were piloted through this project, specifically ‘supporting the core’ and ‘making Kingswood safer’.

The Kingswood Women’s Night Walk was a participatory walkshop focused on capturing the voices of local women and their experience of navigating public space in Kingswood at night. Key themes identified during the walk informed the concept design.

A co-design workshop was held with a group of local women in Wainwright Park. Feedback was sought from these women on the proposed elements to be trialled as part of the Live, Work, Play Grid. Participants were supportive of the designs and provided meaningful feedback which was incorporated into the final design.

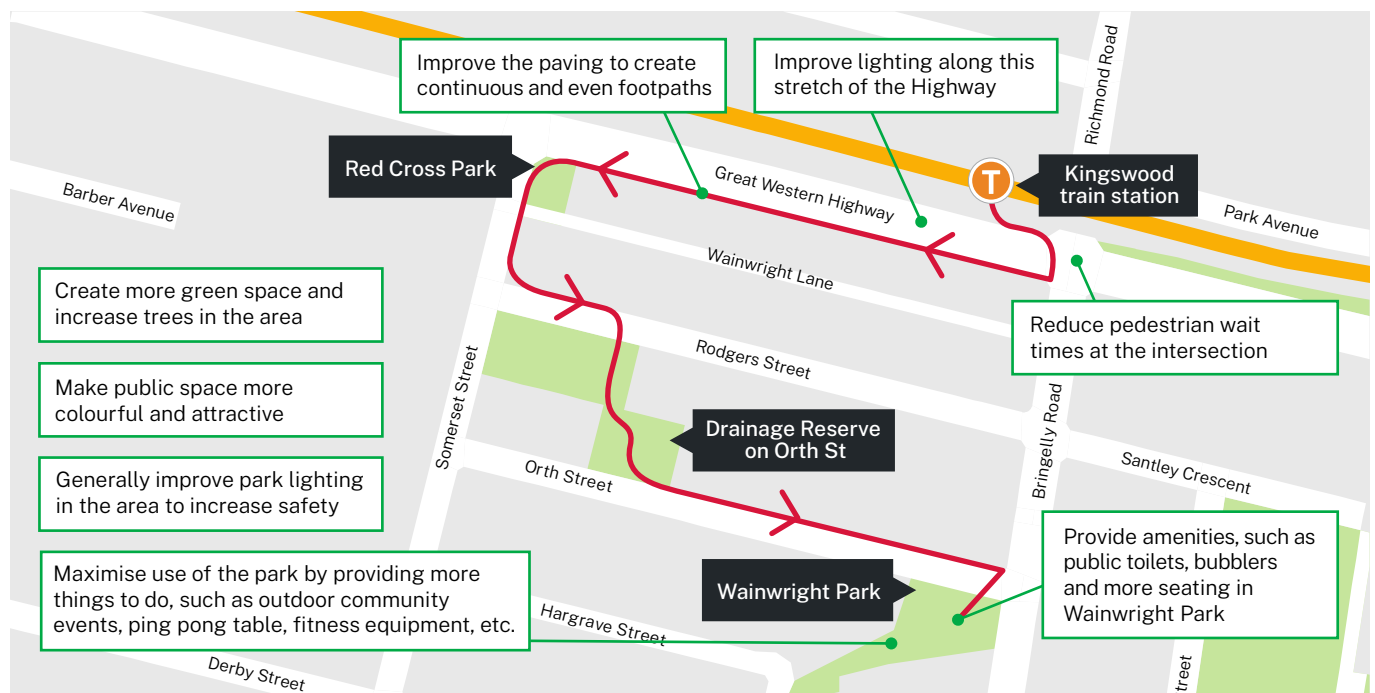
10 local women participated in the Kingswood Women’s Night Walk, which helped inform the future Safer Cities Program

20 activations and workshops held across three weeks attended by 540+ community members

“ If there were two route options, one short with no or less light and the other long but well-lit, I would always take the longer route because more lighting makes me feel safer. It also means that if something were to happen to me, I could scream and someone would see me. ”

Kingswood Women’s Night Walk participant

Map illustrating the Night Walk route and participants’ suggested improvements.



Community garden in Wainwright Park. Image courtesy: NSW Government

Evaluation

Council used the NSW Government [Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life](#) to document trends in pedestrian activity before and after the interventions.

Following the interventions, there has been significant improvements in site usage and the community's ability to stay, connect, play, and get there.

Pedestrian counts indicated an increase in people using the grid over the lunchtime period from 12pm to 2pm and in the afternoon from 3pm to 5pm. In particular, there was a significant increase in the number of women using the public spaces.

This correlated with the improvement of the Evaluation Tool's 'Am I able to stay?' score with more places to sit, stay and relax available post-intervention in the public realm.

As part of the data collection, Council engaged Neighbourlytics to analyse the impact of the placemaking initiatives in Kingswood. Findings included:

- A correlation between the increase in social media posts about dining out and associated reductions in posts about home cooking.

- Evidence of engagement with placemaking activities (dining out, art and design categories) as distinct from general public space engagement.
- An increase in social media posts about events, public space, private businesses and business activities, 'other places' such as hospitals and workplaces, from August 2020 to March 2021.

Feedback across the activation program indicated that the community was excited to see the new works come to life in Kingswood.

At one of the Friday twilight picnic events, two young women aged 15-16 shared the following feedback:

“ We live close and heard the live music so we thought we'd come and see what's happening. We would never normally come to the park at night but it feels so much more inviting tonight. It's so cool to see the new furniture and the gardens, we really like what's happening and it's nice to see people together. ”

Local community members



Council and NSW Government assessed the project area before, during and after the intervention, using the Evaluation Tool for Public Space and Public Life. Image courtesy: NSW Government

Timeline

Background

2019

Release of the Think Bold Place Plan for Kingswood

Project

2020

July
Places to Love partnership established

March – September
Baseline data collected and used to develop key themes for the Live, Work, Play Grid

July – August
Detailed designs for the Live, Work, Play Grid improvements finalised

September – December
Temporary improvements installed

November
Women's Night Walk and co-design workshop

2021

April – May
Program of free community events delivered to activate the Live, Work, Play Grid

April
Successful grant applications from the NSW Government's Streets as Shared Spaces and Your High Streets programs built on outcomes from the Places to Love project.

Ongoing community use of the new public space

Cost breakdown

Description of activities	Cost
Phase 1: Baseline data collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourlytics data Pedestrian counts and Evaluation Tool surveys Women's Night Walk Data analysis 	\$22,000
Phase 2: Street improvement design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design development Consultation workshop with local women 	
Phase 3: Installation, launch and testing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of streetscape improvements, including: wayfinding elements, placemaking and public art elements (seating, street decals, painted works), solar lighting and pop-up park space on Orth Street Launch event 	\$80,000
Phase 4: Activation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live music in the pop-up park Community night walks (e.g. lantern parade, wildlife spotting) Community events 	\$28,000
Phase 5: Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis and outcomes measurement 	
Approximate total	\$130,000



Decals created engaging wayfinding activities. Image courtesy NSW Government

Outcomes and lessons learnt

The Live, Work, Play Grid project has given the community increased ownership and a new relationship with public spaces and streets in the heart of Kingswood. Anecdotal feedback from the community indicates a greater sense of pride, with the public spaces looking more inviting and welcoming.

The series of nighttime activations showed the hidden beauty in and around the suburb after dark which many individuals would not have experienced on their own or before the interventions. More people outdoors increases a sense of safety and encourages conversations. A group of local women report now regularly using the improved public spaces to meet where they would not have had the opportunity to do so before the interventions.

The community garden beds are thriving, contributing to the greenery of the space, and wayfinding has helped enhance connections to public spaces from the adjacent streets and the train station, and encourage locals to gather.

The success of this project supported more permanent changes to improve the streetscape experience in Kingswood. Council was successful in building the internal case for the Your High Street Program and for the opportunity to test more interventions in the space through the Streets as Shared Spaces Program.

The public space interventions would not have been successful without the robust activation program and ongoing community engagement:

- The activations provided Council with the opportunity to spread awareness about the project with community, build local support, and receive direct feedback on project elements.
- Delivering activations in the cooler months of the year came with challenges. It was harder to encourage people to spend time outdoors and the weather conditions saw the cancellation or postponement of some activities.
- A key challenge was managing expectations of what could be delivered with the limited budget.
- The project's 'lighter, quicker, cheaper' approach will support Council's position to deliver similar types of projects in the future.
- Signage was used to communicate the temporary nature of the elements installed in the space.



Local children participated in activations.
Image courtesy: Penrith City Council



The open spaces and streets were activated with a diverse range of programming and pop-up infrastructure catering for all ages and interests. Image courtesy: Urban Nature Walks
Places to Love Case Study | Penrith City Council | Kingswood

Photo diary

The photographs on this page document the transformation of Kingswood through the Live, Work, Play Grid into a vibrant area with space for people to relax, for pop-up activations and a shared identity in local streets.

Before

After



1. **Before** – Wainwright Park.
2. **After** – Wainwright Park, activated with a community garden.
3. **Before** – Orth Street Drainage Reserve, underutilised open space.
4. **After** – Orth Street Drainage Reserve, activated with pop-up badminton and moveable seats and benches.
5. **Before** – Great Western Highway.

6. **After** – Great Western Highway; planter boxes added trees in a constrained area, public art added colour and supported wayfinding.
7. **Before** – Bringelly Road local shops.
8. **After** – Bringelly Road local shops; planter boxes added landscaping in a constrained area, public art added colour and supported wayfinding and gave the streets in the project area a shared identity.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 Images courtesy of NSW Government. 6 Image courtesy: Penrith City Council.



“ I feel safer in places with more people, and so I go to places I know will have more people in it. ”
Night Walk participant

Night Walks with local women.
Image courtesy: NSW Government

NSW Government

Published by NSW Government

Title: Trial to create a better connected and more walkable neighbourhood

First published: February 2024

© Crown Copyright 2024 NSW Government

You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Government as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (February 2024) and may not be accurate, current or complete.

This publication recognises the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and makes reference to project outcomes during the 2020-21 period. The State of New South Wales, the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.

Image on front cover: Community Launch Event.

Image courtesy: Penrith City Council

Resources



For more information, please visit [Penrith City Council](#)



Visit our website to learn more about the [Great Places Toolkit](#) or email PublicSpace@planning.nsw.gov.au