

# Safer Burwood Plan

2023–2027



**Burwood**  
Inc.1874



# Acknowledgment of Country

Burwood Council acknowledges the Wangal Clan of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Burwood Local Government Area is located.

We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and ongoing relationship with the land.





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# Message from The Mayor, John Faker



**Burwood is a welcoming, inclusive and dynamic Local Government Area with a strong sense of community and vibrant public places. Our Council is committed to working collaboratively with Police, residents, business and other stakeholders to ensure that Burwood continues to be safe place to live, work and visit.**

I am pleased to present the Safer Burwood Plan 2023 - 2027, which outlines our commitment to addressing both recorded crime and community perceptions of safety, ensuring our community can enjoy the security and wellbeing they deserve. It focuses on achieving two key outcomes: Safe Places and Safe People and includes a comprehensive set of priorities and actions to be implemented over the next 4 years.

The Safer Burwood Plan is the result of extensive research, community engagement and collaboration with NSW Police, government agencies, service providers, business and the local community. By taking a whole-of-community approach to improving safety, the Plan will enable Burwood to remain recognised as a safe area with overall lower crime rates compared to the rest of NSW.

We also recognise that feeling safe in one's community is fundamental to overall wellbeing. On this note, the Plan also seeks to cultivate a greater sense of safety experienced by our community by both day and night. The result is a Plan that combines proven crime prevention methods with innovative, community-driven approaches.

I want to express my gratitude to all the dedicated community members and stakeholders who have contributed to the development of this Plan, as well as those who make Burwood the vibrant and caring community it is today. We have listened to your concerns, analysed data, and incorporated evidence based and good practice approaches to preventing crime, improving safety and perceptions of safety from across NSW and beyond.

Community safety and crime prevention is important to everybody, and I encourage everyone to embrace the Safer Burwood Plan and work with us to help people feel connected, supported and safe when in Burwood.

By working together, we can build a Safer Burwood for everyone.

**Cr John Faker,**  
Mayor of Burwood





## Our priorities

### Priority crime issues:

- Fraud
- Retail theft
- Domestic violence

### Priority community safety issues:

- Public spaces
- Perceptions of safety
- Online safety
- Safe and stable housing
- Personal safety
- Safe and respectful relationships
- Social inclusion

# About this Plan

**Community safety plays an important role in helping us achieve our vision for Burwood as a welcoming and inclusive community, with safe, vibrant and liveable places.**

Burwood is recognised as a generally safe area, with overall lower crime rates compared to the rest of NSW. However, community safety is not just about recorded crime. It is also about how safe people feel.

This Plan aims to create a safer Burwood. It outlines the actions that Council will take, working with NSW Police, our community and other partners, to address priority crime issues and improve the safety, security and well-being of those who live, visit and work in the Burwood Local Government Area (LGA).

The Plan will be implemented over a four-year period, from 2023 to 2027. It focuses on achieving two key outcomes: Safe Places and Safe People. The actions in our Plan set out how we will work to prevent crime, and improve safety and perceptions of safety in our public spaces, online, in our homes, and in our relationships.

## Crime prevention

Crime prevention focuses on reducing crime and the risk of crime before it occurs by eliminating factors that lead to crime occurring. Examples include changing the physical environment to make it difficult or to discourage people from committing crimes, encouraging behaviour change and personal safety practices and improving community cohesion and connections so that neighbours are looking out for, and supporting one another.

## Community safety

Community safety includes the perception and experience of safety, as well as feeling welcome and comfortable in a place.

Feeling unsafe can lead to people avoiding certain places or people and in some cases, may discourage people from being actively part of their communities. People who perceive their neighbourhood has high levels of crime or disorder are inclined to be more anxious about crime, fearful and mistrustful of their neighbours.

Community safety is about building a community where everyone can belong and live without fear that their lives will be impacted by crime, violence, discrimination or exclusion.







# Council's role in community safety

## Safety is everyone's business

Community safety is a complex issue that requires a whole-of-community approach. Improving safety in the Burwood LGA involves the combined efforts of government, NSW Police, service providers, business and the community.



Australian Government

### Australian Government

Develops national policies, legislation and research.

Leads prevention, monitoring and awareness of scams and e-safety. Involved in national policy areas such as social inclusion, multiculturalism, family violence and alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Sometimes provides funding to address crime and safety issues



### NSW Government

Responsible for law and order, public housing, health, public transport, emergency management and child protection as well as policy and legislation



### NSW Police

Responds to local crime and safety issues and works with Council to deliver community awareness activities



### Council

Works with the community and other government agencies to reduce the risk of crime and build safe, confident and well-connected communities. Responsible for public health and safety



### Service providers

Provide social, housing and health services to the community including victims/survivors of crime, perpetrators of crime, as well as vulnerable and marginalised members of our community



### Community and business

Inform, support, deliver and promote community safety prevention and awareness activities



Burwood Police Area Command (PAC) meets monthly with Council's Community Safety Liaison Officer to monitor and analyse crime data from the Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS) utilised by the NSW Police Service. This helps to identify emerging trends in localised crime and develop highly responsive, targeted initiatives to minimise the impact of specific crimes on the local community.



Council contributes to the safety of our community in a number of ways:

## Safer places



### Improving the public domain

Creating public spaces that are well-designed, provide opportunities for communities to connect and reduce opportunities for crime or behaviour that makes people feel unsafe

Examples include:

- Public infrastructure and amenity improvements such as lighting and design.
- Growing the night-time economy and activations



### Place management

Maintaining clean, safe and vibrant public spaces and places across Burwood, including town centres, parks and reserves, sporting grounds, community centres and halls

Examples include:

- Cleaning and waste management
- Graffiti management
- Activations and public art
- Creating alcohol and smoke-free zones



### Safeguarding public health and safety (regulatory functions)

Providing community education, regulation control and law enforcement around public health and safety issues

Examples include:

- Food business safety inspections
- Road safety campaigns
- Monitoring parking around town centres and schools
- Pet ownership
- Building inspections



### Addressing specific local issues through a place-based approach

Monitoring and responding to crime trends through targeted community education and crime prevention activities

Examples include:

- Safety audits and 'Preventing Theft Workshops' with retail businesses
- 'Lock IT or Lose IT' campaign involving CCTV, increased Police patrols and community education to reduce stealing from motor vehicles





## Safer people



### **Improving social inclusion, participation and perceptions of safety**

Supporting and delivering local community safety programs and services, particularly for those most vulnerable or marginalised

Examples include:

- Community events and cultural celebrations
- Youth programs
- Homelessness protocols and support
- Ensure community programs and services are culturally appropriate
- Positive local media stories



### **Addressing and preventing community safety issues through education and awareness**

Partner with Police and community to inform and educate the community on crime prevention and safety and improve reporting of crime

Examples include:

- Scam awareness campaigns
- Domestic violence prevention
- Personal safety workshops



### **Building the capacity of the local community services sector**

Supporting, connecting and advocating for local services and community groups

Examples include:

- Community Grants
- Community service directories
- Training workshops
- Community sector forums and inter-agencies



### **Research, advocacy and partnerships**

Issue identification and local needs analysis. Work closely with key stakeholders to build understanding, collaboration and advocacy on safety issues affecting the Burwood Local Government Area

Examples include:

- Social research
- Share crime and safety information with police
- Burwood Local Emergency Management Committee

# Strategic context

This Plan aligns with various Council plans and government legislation.

## Burwood Council plans

Community safety is addressed in various ways through a number of Council plans:

### **Burwood2036 (Community Strategic Plan)**

Sets out a vision for Burwood as a welcoming and inclusive community, with safe, clean and vibrant streets, town centres and public spaces and places that are safe and activated by day and night.

### **Delivery Program 2022–2026**

Outlines activities that promote social inclusion and connection, respond to community needs, as well as plan and deliver infrastructure and services that keep our community safe.

### **Burwood Development Control Plan (DCP)**

Provides guidelines and controls for the design and management of buildings and places which aim to reduce opportunities for crime to occur as well as improve perceptions of safety.

### **Burwood After Dark (2023)**

Outlines a series of actions to grow Burwood's night time economy with a key focus on safety, activation and placemaking.

## Key legislation

### **NSW Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997, Part 4**

Identifies local councils as taking a lead in identifying and implementing local community safety and crime prevention strategies, including developing a Community Safety Plan.

### **NSW Local Government Act (1993)**

Outlines Council's responsibility for maintaining a sense of safety and security for users of public land. It also gives councils the power to issue and enforce orders that aim to prevent activities that place members of the public at risk.

### **NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)**

Requires Council, as the local consent authority for the assessment of development proposals, to consider and assess whether an application addresses community safety and crime prevention matters.

### **The Safer Burwood Plan also interacts with a range of other policies and plans including:**

- Traffic and Transport Study
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Public Art Policy
- Community Facilities and Open Space Strategy
- Local Employment and Investment Strategy
- Capital Works Plan
- Place Management Framework
- Multicultural Strategy
- Youth Action Plan
- Cultural Plan
- Customer Experience Strategy
- Affordable Housing Contributions Plan and Policy
- Pedestrian Mobility Plan
- Traffic and Transport Study
- Plans of Management for Parks
- Burwood CD Parking Strategy.



# How we developed this Plan

This Plan has been informed by research and evidence, including an analysis of local crime data and extensive consultation with our community.



## Other sources of evidence

- Burwood Perceptions of Safety Survey (2022) – 72 responses
- Community Safety Workshops (2023) – 24 participants
- Council Staff Workshop (2023) – 15 participants
- Advisory Committees and Groups Workshop (2023) – 10 participants
- Community Priorities and Satisfaction Survey (2023) – 301 residents
- Burwood After Dark Survey (2022) – 400+ participants and 40 businesses
- Diverse Communities of Burwood 1:1 Interviews (2022) – 48 stakeholders
- High Street Engagement Survey (2021) – 42 businesses, 44 customers
- Burwood Youth Survey (2021) – 248 responses
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan consultations (2022) – 156 people
- Towards Burwood 2036 Engagement Program (2021) – 367 people
- NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR)
- NSW Computerised Operational Policing System (COPS) Data
- NSW Housing and Homelessness Dashboard
- ABS Census data 2021
- Council internal data.

# Burwood at a glance

## Our people



Population  
in 2022

**40,747**

Population  
by 2036

**73,500**



Born overseas

**58%**

< 5 years  
in Australia

**1 in 3**



Speak language other than English

**63%**

(56+ languages)

Do not speak English well or at all

**14%**



Identify  
as Aboriginal  
or Torres Strait  
Islander

**<1%**



People with  
disability

**5%**



Live with  
mental illness<sup>1</sup>

**1 in 20**



SEIFA Index  
of Disadvantage

**977**

(30th percentile)<sup>2</sup>



Seniors (70+)

**11%**



Young people  
(12–24)

**20%**



Low income  
households

**22%**

(<\$800 per week)



Mortgage stress

**26%**

Rental stress

**39%**



People who are homeless\*

**646<sup>3</sup>**

(\*overcrowded, boarding house,  
rough sleeping, couch surfing, etc)

<sup>1</sup> <https://profile.id.com.au/burwood/long-term-health>

<sup>2</sup> The SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage – measures disadvantage indicators (e.g. unemployment, low incomes or education levels, single parent families, low skilled occupations, poor English proficiency)

<sup>3</sup> Homelessness NSW Housing and Homelessness Dashboard, accessed August 2023



# Our places



Suburbs

**6**

(7km<sup>2</sup>)



Households

in 2021

**14,817**



Apartments

**45%**



Train stations  
servicing LGA

**3**

Burwood  
Croydon  
Strathfield



Group (shared)  
households

**10%**

(3 x NSW average)



Residents living  
in Burwood  
Town Centre

**45%**



Local businesses  
in 2022

**5,381**



Monthly  
commuters through  
Burwood station

**972,840**



Retail industry

**3rd  
largest**

(11%)



Major shopping  
centres

**3**

Westfield Burwood  
Burwood Plaza  
Emerald Square

## Our public spaces



Civic Square

1



High streets

5

Burwood Road,  
Burwood  
The Strand, Croydon  
Georges River Road,  
Croydon Park  
Liverpool Road,  
Enfield  
The Boulevard,  
Strathfield



COMMUNITY  
FACILITIES

6

Community  
venues

1

Library &  
community hub

1

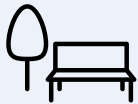
Aquatic centre



STREETS  
& PATHS

179 km  
of footpath

90 km  
of roads



Parks

29



16+

CCTV street  
cameras



STREET LIGHTS

2,165

Ausgrid lights





## Safety at night in Burwood Town Centre

**Respondents feel safe in Burwood CBD at night because of the active streets and busy restaurants and that they enjoyed the 'busyness' of the streets and shopping districts.**

(Night-time Economy Discussion Paper, 2023)

- Burwood feels much safer than other centres at night
- Two-thirds of visitors either walk or take public transport to Burwood at night
- Personal safety was one of the top 3 priorities identified to improve Burwood's nightlife.

**While the high streets (such as Burwood Road) are well-lit, the back streets to residential apartments are dark and feel unsafe.**

(Burwood After Dark, 2023 – Night-time Economy Survey)





Community safety is not just about recorded crime. It is also about how safe people feel living in, working and visiting the Burwood LGA.

# Crime and safety snapshot

Crime statistics show that the Burwood Local Government Area is a relatively safe place to live, with lower incident rates compared to the rest of NSW. However, there remain a number of crime and safety issues of concern for our community.

## Where are crimes occurring?

Reported crimes tend to be concentrated in the Burwood CBD, along the train line and in high-traffic areas such as around Burwood Train Station, Burwood Park, Burwood Road and Westfield.

## Underreporting of crime

A significant proportion of crime is underreported. Reasons for not reporting crime can include:

- Fear of the process of reporting a crime
- Fear of retribution from the perpetrator
- Embarrassment
- Inconvenience
- Language barriers
- Not knowing how or barriers to reporting.

For many new arrivals to Australia, a person's experience with the Police in their country of birth or pre-arrival journey may also reflect their willingness to report a crime.

Crimes and offences that tend to be underreported include retail theft, sexual assault, domestic violence, scams and fraud, and abuse of the elderly or vulnerable.



## Crime trends

Crime data and Police feedback indicates that crime in the Burwood Local Government Area is decreasing overall, however, reports of offences such as **fraud and retail theft** remain relatively high, with a 24% increase in overall theft over the last two years.

Incidents of **domestic violence** assault increased over the last 5 years. Police feedback indicates that domestic violence is likely to be underreported due to the complexity of the problem and barriers to reporting.

Other reported theft-related crimes such as 'steal from vehicle', 'break and enter' and 'steal from dwelling' are opportunistic and have the potential to be reduced through awareness and preventative design and measures to avoid the occurrence of the crime.

While crime rates are stable in recorded incidents for a number of offence categories, Burwood LGA ranks highly proportionate to our population size for a number of offence categories when compared to other councils in Greater Sydney and in NSW.

|         | Offence                           | #incidents (last 12 months) <sup>4</sup> | Rate per 100,000 | LGA rank (by rate) <sup>5</sup> |                              | Crime trends   |                | Hotspot locations  |
|---------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
|         |                                   |  |                  | In NSW (130 councils)           | Greater Sydney (33 councils) | 2 year trend   | 5 year trend   |  |
| Theft   | Theft (ALL)                       | 1,304                                    | 3,228            | 27                              | 2                            | Increase (24%) | Stable         | Retail   |
|         | Fraud                             | 419                                      | 1,037            | 4                               | 2                            | Increase (18%) | Stable         | Online   |
|         | Steal from retail store           | 311                                      | 770              | 4                               | 3                            | Increase (61%) | Stable         | Burwood CBD  |
|         | Steal from dwelling               | 108                                      | 267              | 35                              | 2                            | Stable         | Increase (9%)  | Medium-high density apartments                                     |
|         | Steal from motor vehicle          | 116                                      | 287              | 65                              | 11                           | Stable         | Stable         | Burwood CBD and along the train line, car parks and street parking |
| Assault | Domestic violence related assault | 101                                      | 272              | 93                              | 18                           | Stable         | Increase (16%) | Residential  |

<sup>4</sup> BOCSAR NSW Crime Tool, incidents from July 2021 to June 2023

<sup>5</sup> Note: Although crime in Burwood LGA is decreasing overall, crime rates in proportion to our small population size often ranks Burwood higher compared to other Councils in Greater Sydney.

## Other safety concerns



**460**  
Incidents



**90 tonnes**  
dumped waste  
removed (2022/2023)



**50-60m<sup>2</sup>**  
graffiti removed  
(in 2022)



**10**  
abandoned vehicles  
removed (in 2022)

## Homelessness & overcrowding



### Homelessness and overcrowding in Burwood:

There are  
**646**  
people who  
are homeless  
(Rate of 161 people  
per 10,000)<sup>6</sup>

**6**  
rough sleepers<sup>7</sup>

### Homelessness

Homelessness is a multifaceted problem, often resulting from the interaction between a number of complex and often persistent issues.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines homelessness as 'When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement:

- Is in a dwelling that is inadequate or
- Has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable or
- Does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.<sup>8</sup>

This definition of homelessness is informed by an understanding of homelessness as 'home'lessness, not 'roof'lessness and extends beyond the commonly recognised form of people 'sleeping rough'. Homelessness is a lack of one or more of the elements that represent 'home' which may include: a sense of security, stability, privacy, safety, and the ability to control living space.

In line with the trend across NSW, the majority of homeless people living in the Burwood Local Government Area are classified as living in 'crowded' or 'severely crowded' dwellings or boarding houses. Overcrowding can have significant impacts on a person's personal safety, health and wellbeing.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> ABS, *Census of Population and Housing 2023 – Estimating Homelessness*

<sup>7</sup> Department of Communities and Justice *Annual Street Count Data, 2023*, accessed via Homelessness NSW Housing and Homelessness Dashboard

<sup>8</sup> Australian Health and Welfare Institute, 2023, *Homelessness and homelessness services*

<sup>9</sup> Homelessness Australia (2023), *About Homelessness*, access via <https://homelessnessaustralia.org.au/about-homelessness/> September 2023









# What we heard

## Feelings of safety

**97%**

of residents feel safe during the day

**74%**

of residents feel safe after dark  
(lower for females and long-term residents – 20+years)<sup>10</sup>

**26%**

of residents have felt worried about being a victim of crime in the last 12 months

**1 in 3**

people were concerned about being a victim of an online fraud, scam or online abuse

**1 in 5**

people had been scammed, experienced fraud or online abuse in the last 12 months<sup>11</sup>

## Inclusion and connection

**71%**

feel part of the local community

**76%**

of residents feel Burwood is a harmonious, respectful, and inclusive community

**60%**

feel local events offer opportunities for communities to connect<sup>10</sup>

## Public domain and road safety

**80%**

feel satisfied with traffic management and road safety

**90%**

feel satisfied that graffiti is adequately removed

**91%**

feel satisfied with cleanliness of town centres

**92%**

feel satisfied that illegally dumped rubbish is adequately removed<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Micromex Community Priorities and Satisfaction Survey, 2023

<sup>11</sup> Burwood Perceptions of Community Safety Survey, 2022





Although Burwood enjoys a reputation as a safe, welcoming place, there is always more we can be doing to improve how safe people feel and reduce opportunities for crime to occur.

## Key themes we heard through engagement with our community:

### What the community values

- Safe and welcoming public spaces for all
- Clean and safe streets and neighbourhoods
- Vibrant, active town centres during the day and at night
- Events and programs that are inclusive and connect our community
- Local services that are accessible, responsive and culturally safe.

### Crime and safety priorities

- Domestic and family violence, including elder abuse
- Fraud, scams and cyberbullying
- Safety in public spaces, day and night
- Safety while travelling by foot, bike or car
- Safe, stable and affordable housing
- Retail and mail theft as well as theft from motor vehicles
- Support and inclusion for people who are vulnerable, isolated or unsafe
- Increased awareness and reporting of crime, especially by diverse communities
- Support and collaboration with local services, police and community groups.



# Our action plan

This Plan outlines how we will work with NSW Police, the community and other stakeholders to improve community safety across the Burwood LGA over the next four years.

These actions focus on two key outcomes that will benefit our community – Safer Places and Safer People.

Priority areas and actions reflect the key issues identified by crime data as well as safety concerns identified by our community and the agencies that we work with.

## 1. Safe places



Public spaces



Businesses



Online



Travel



Homes

## 2. Safe people



Relationships



Communities



Support services





## Key priorities

- Improvements to lighting on main pedestrian routes between transport links and car parks, and through parks
- An active and busy night-time economy
- Events and community activities in public and open spaces such as parks.

# 1. Safe places

## 1.1 SAFE & ACTIVE PUBLIC SPACES

How a place looks and how well it is used, can impact feelings of safety. There are a number of things that Council can do to improve the look, feel and vibrancy of public spaces, as well as reduce opportunities for crime to occur.

Crime statistics indicate that the Burwood LGA is generally a safe area with lower incident rates compared to the rest of NSW. However, reported crimes tend to be concentrated in public spaces with high-traffic areas, such as around Burwood Train Station, Burwood Park and Burwood Road.<sup>12</sup>

It is important to note that perceived fears can also impact people's quality of life and the social and economic wellbeing of communities. Perceptions of safety often come from how people feel about an area or place.

Community engagement tells us that residents and visitors generally feel safe in Burwood. However, some people report feeling less safe after dark, and avoid areas that are isolated or inactive like laneways and pocket parks.

The community values the **sense of personal safety experienced** in Burwood (for all ages, genders, day or night).  
(Australian Liveability Census, 2023)

**97%** of residents stated they feel safe in their local area during the day, while **74%** feel safe alone after dark<sup>13</sup>  
(Community Priorities and Satisfaction Survey, 2023)

<sup>12</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 2022 (NTE Discussion Paper)

<sup>13</sup> 2023 Burwood Community Priorities and Satisfaction Survey



### The community told us they want public spaces and places that are:



- Accessible, high quality and welcoming
- Safe, vibrant and well-utilised
- Activated by day and night
- Well-maintained, clean and orderly
- Activated and offer a diversity of experiences.

### What we can do to help:



Lighting  
& wayfinding



CCTV  
cameras



Cleaning  
& waste  
management



Graffiti  
removal



Designing  
public places  
that are safe  
and welcoming



Infrastructure  
maintenance  
and upgrades



Public art and  
placemaking  
projects



Activations,  
events and  
night-time  
trading

### Major public domain improvements

A number of transformative public domain projects are planned to be delivered across the Burwood LGA which will improve the safety, amenity and use of public spaces.

These projects will revitalise high streets, parks and urban spaces including Burwood Road, Deane Street Precinct, Bells Lane (Strathfield), Burwood Urban Park and Arts and Cultural Centre, Paisley Road connecting Burwood and Croydon Stations, Burwood Park, Henley Park, Russell Reserve and Woodstock Park.

Placemaking and safety improvements will be incorporated into the design of these public spaces increasing the level of observation or surveillance that people have of one another when moving about, improving vibrancy and increasing activity, and contributing to a safer Burwood.



## Strategies and actions to improve safety in public spaces

| Focus Area                                      |        | Action   | Council's role  | Timeframe      |
|---|--------|--|-----------------|----------------|
| Safety by Design (CPTED)                        | 1.1.1  | Update the Burwood Development Control Plan (DCP) to include objectives and provisions that promote best practice "safer by design" principles   | Lead            | Y3             |
| Community safety audits                         | 1.1.2  | Conduct a program of community safety audits with NSW Police in response to identified crime and safety concerns in known hotspots and public spaces and identify opportunities to address safety and crime issues | Partner         | Ongoing        |
|   | 1.1.3  | Conduct place experience audits to identify opportunities to improve community safety  | Lead            | Ongoing        |
| Place management and public domain improvements | 1.1.4  | Develop a principles-based Place Management Framework and an Open Space Vision and Action Plan to lead the management and delivery of public and open spaces that are inviting, safe and adaptable                 | Lead            | Y2             |
|   | 1.1.5  | Promote the connection between key precincts in the Burwood Town Centre  | Lead            | Ongoing        |
| Activating public spaces                        | 1.1.6  | Activate key public and open spaces through events, installations and programs that enhance safety, vibrancy and belonging   | Lead            | Ongoing        |
|   | 1.1.7  | Collaborate with business, community and other stakeholders to support projects to revitalise and encourage safe activation of the LGA's centres including promotion of night-time activities                      | Partner         | Ongoing        |
|   | 1.1.8  | Explore the feasibility of improving the infrastructure to support activations and events in Burwood Park and laneways   | Lead            | Y3             |
| Night time economy activation                   | 1.1.9  | Advocate for the Burwood Town Centre to be accredited under the Purple Flag Program  | Lead            | Y3             |
|   | 1.1.10 | Review Council's planning framework to encourage activation of the public domain at night  | Lead            | Y3             |
|   | 1.1.11 | Implement Burwood After Dark Strategy actions that relate to safer places and safer people   | Lead            | Y2<br>Y3<br>Y4 |
| Lighting improvements                           | 1.1.12 | Conduct Lighting in Place Audits and explore lighting improvements in Burwood Town Centre, neighbourhood centres, streets, around key buildings and public squares   | Lead<br>Partner | Y1             |
|   | 1.1.13 | Explore targeted improvements to building lighting based on the gaps identified in the Burwood After Dark Audit and investigate creative lighting opportunities and installations in dark and inactive spaces      | Lead            | Y4             |
| Sportsgrounds lighting                          | 1.1.14 | Investigate opportunities to extend after-hours lighting in key parks and sportsgrounds to improve night-time usage and experience   | Lead            | Y2             |
| Perceptions of safety                           | 1.1.15 | Conduct community engagement to determine how people feel across the LGA and encourage community-led activation of public spaces   | Lead            | Ongoing        |



## Safer by design (CPTED)

Many crimes are opportunistic and happen because the surroundings are conducive to crime. Feeling safe is often about the 'look' and the 'feel' of the environments we find ourselves in. Dark and deserted public spaces may be avoided while we may be attracted to places that are animated by the presence of other people.

CPTED<sup>14</sup> is about designing and managing buildings and places to reduce opportunities for criminal activity, because it is harder for offenders to go undetected. It involves creating clear lines of sight, improving lighting and encouraging pedestrian activity, among many other elements. This helps prevent crime, reduce costs and improve perceptions of safety.

Council uses CPTED principles to assess development applications and design spaces that are accessible, vibrant, welcoming and safe.



## Safe and Clean Campaign

Council's Safe and Clean Campaign is a community education campaign aimed at increasing awareness amongst children and the wider community on how to stay safe in public places and how littering impacts the community.

The campaign uses two superhero characters, 'Super Safe Sally' and 'Captain Clean Up', who visited primary schools throughout the area. 'Super Safe Sally' reinforces personal safety tips and 'Captain Clean Up' highlights the importance of how littering affects the environment. A comic book about the two superheroes is also distributed to students with Council badges.



<sup>14</sup> Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles



## Purple Flag accreditation

Purple Flag is an international accreditation scheme that recognises an area that has a safe and vibrant night-time economy. Purple Flag towns and cities benefit from more visitors, lower crime and anti-social behaviour and improved perceptions of safety. Town centres that achieve a Purple Flag are considered safe, vibrant, appealing, well-managed and offer a positive experience to visitors and users of the space.

The accreditation process is based on five core standards that town centres must meet.

Safety is a key consideration including well designed, safe and welcoming spaces, vibrant and active places that are alive during the day and night as well as the ability to move around the centre on foot with ease and get home safely.

### Policy envelope

#### Wellbeing

Welcoming,  
clean, and safe

#### Movement

A secure pattern  
of arrival  
circulation and  
departure

#### A broad appeal

A vibrant choice  
and a rich mix  
of entertainment  
and activity

#### Place

A stimulating  
destination and  
a vital place

### A clear aim and a common purpose

#### We will also continue to:

- Apply the international standard of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into all Council development, urban design and infrastructure projects, including the planning and design of open spaces, public places and business precincts and encourage our community to input into the design process
- Deliver public domain improvement projects in town centres, parks and other places across the Burwood LGA which improve the safety, amenity and use of public spaces and create new cultural or entertainment precincts
- Provide a high standard of waste management, recycling and cleansing services in streets, town centres and parks
- Remove graffiti in a timely manner especially offensive material, with a focus on hot spot areas such as town centres, car parks and shopping districts.
- Provide and maintain a high-quality CCTV network in key locations across the LGA
- Enforce Alcohol Free Zones in public places and Alcohol Prohibited Areas in parks to minimise alcohol-related offences and antisocial behaviour
- Provide advice on major projects with regard to safety by applying CPTED principles where applicable
- Engage with Council's Disability Inclusion Advisory Panel, Multicultural Advisory Committee and Burwood Youth Advisory Committee on design and experience of key places and infrastructure
- Refer relevant development applications, such as public car parks, licensed premises, public buildings, and apartments to the Burwood Police Area Command for comment.

#### CCTV city safe network

There are over 16 CCTV street cameras and 88 CCTV cameras in and around Council community facilities across the Burwood LGA. These cameras help NSW Police detect and prosecute crime. The presence of these cameras can also deter crime and increase community perceptions of safety.

#### Safety audits

Safety Audits are specific to sites and usually arise due to an identified issue with recommendations relevant to the site.

Council's Community Safety Officer meets regularly with Police to review crime statistics and identify crime issues and patterns relating to the Burwood LGA. This helps determine if an audit and/or crime prevention strategy is required.

#### Rapid graffiti removal

Council has an adopted Graffiti Management Policy that outlines our commitment to maintaining amenities, facilities and public places by providing a rapid graffiti removal service.



NSW Police and business engagement tells us that many retail theft offences go unreported, often due to delays or the time involved in reporting a crime. This can allow offenders who commit crimes to continue their activities and potentially target multiple retailers without being detected or stopped.

## 1.2 SAFE BUSINESSES

**Burwood remains ranked in the fourth highest area for retail theft compared to other councils in NSW and third in Greater Sydney.<sup>15</sup>**

Despite local incidents remaining stable over the past two years, retail theft rose by 38% across NSW.<sup>16</sup> This includes the theft of food and grocery items from supermarkets as well as high-end goods from retail outlets. Community engagement indicates that financial hardship as a result of the cost of living crisis may be contributing to increased rates of shoplifting.

NSW Police feedback and hotspot maps show these offences mainly occur in the Burwood Town Centre, particularly in major shopping centres. These centres benefit from their prime location and easy access to public transport, which likely contributes to foot traffic as well as potential opportunities for shoplifting.

### Retail business snapshot:

**381**

retail businesses operate across the LGA (7% of all businesses) (ABS, 2022)<sup>17</sup>

Retail is the

**3rd largest industry sector**

in the Burwood area (11%)<sup>18</sup>

**26%**

of Employed Residents in the Burwood LGA work in the Retail Trade<sup>19</sup>

The Burwood Town Centre has a large and vibrant retail centre. The retail centre is projected to **increase by 61%**

by 2036<sup>20</sup>, with supermarkets comprising the largest increase

Burwood has three major shopping precincts – Westfield Burwood Shopping Centre, Burwood Town Centre shopping strip and a smaller centre at Burwood Plaza.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>15</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Crime Tool, Incidents of Theft (Steal from retail store) from July 2018 to June 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> ABS data presented by economic profile

<sup>18</sup> 2021/22 data -National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) ©2023. Compiled and presented in economy.id

<sup>19</sup> Burwood Economic Development & Night Time Discussion Paper July 2023

<sup>20</sup> The Burwood Town Centre is one of the largest retail centres in the surrounding area, with over 85,900m<sup>2</sup> of floor space, and a 61% increase forecast by 2036.

<sup>21</sup> Burwood Local Employment and Investment Strategy, SGS Economics, 2020 based on floor space



## Strategies and actions to improve local business safety

| Strategy                   |       | Action  | Council's role | Timeframe |
|----------------------------|-------|---|----------------|-----------|
| Reducing retail theft      | 1.2.1 | In collaboration with NSW Police, undertake Safer by Design site audits for local businesses in key locations to improve the safety and security of their premises                      | Partner        | Y1<br>Y2  |
|                            | 1.2.2 | Develop and deliver multilingual crime prevention public awareness and education programs and resources for local businesses on retail theft and other crime                            | Lead           | Y4        |
|                            | 1.2.3 | Collaborate with shopping centre management, individual retailers, Chambers of Commerce and NSW Police in the promotion of strategies to reduce stealing and other safety issues        | Partner        | Ongoing   |
| Improve reporting of crime | 1.2.4 | In partnership with NSW Police, Chambers of Commerce and shopping centre management, explore ways to improve the reporting and response processes for crimes affecting local businesses | Partner        | Y1        |
|                            | 1.2.5 | Develop and deliver a multilingual public awareness and education program for retailers and the general public about the importance of staying safe and the reporting crimes promptly   | Lead           | Y3        |
| Business support programs  | 1.2.6 | Disseminate Local and State Government business support information   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|                            | 1.2.7 | Undertake research and consult with stakeholders to identify and deliver business support programs in partnership with Chambers of Commerce   | Lead           | Ongoing   |

### We will also continue to:

- Monitor local crime trends in retail precincts and licenced premises, identify hotspots and determine appropriate strategies to address risk areas in collaboration with NSW Police
- Manage registration of local businesses and implement proactive strategies to raise business awareness of regulatory requirements
- Monitor and enforce compliance with safety requirements by local business including fire safety, food safety, brothels, skin penetration services and beauty treatment salons
- Involve businesses in the design and maintenance of public spaces and delivery of projects, activations or events occurring in business and retail precincts
- Fund local business community safety and amenity improvements through our Shopfront Improvement Program initiative.

### Business safety compliance

A range of business regulatory requirements are in place to ensure the safety of business owners, their staff and customers, for example, safe food practices, hairdressers, skin penetration businesses, beauty treatment salons, and fire safety.

Council promotes those standards through regular inspections of business premises, continuing education and enforcement when required. Council provides information on business support available to local businesses and is able to assist businesses to navigate licences and permits.

### Shopfront improvement program

Council provides grant opportunities to local businesses for projects which improve the appearance of their shopfront. Eligible projects which improve community safety include improvements to awnings and structures that increase pedestrian safety, shopfront safety and security, and provide a deterrent for anti-social behaviour.



“ People hear the words ‘police’ or ‘immigration’ over the phone and often become victims of fraud.”

Service provider (Culturally Diverse Communities of Burwood research 2022)

### 1.3 SAFE ONLINE

Burwood has the second highest rate of fraud offences compared to other council areas in Greater Sydney and 4th highest rate across NSW.<sup>22</sup>

Police report that the majority of these offences occur online through cybercrime and the theft of mail to commit credit card fraud or to assume another person’s identity.

Steal from dwelling offences have also increased over the last 5 years (by 9%).<sup>23</sup> Hotspot maps show these offences occur in areas with medium-high density apartments.<sup>24</sup>

Community engagement tells us that this is an issue affecting local residents, with seniors, young people and linguistically diverse community members often at greater risk.

Fraud is an ongoing problem and is constantly changing with new and increased levels of technologies and online services, data breaches as scams become more sophisticated.

#### The community told us they want to feel:

”

- Safe online
- Protected against identity theft and scams
- Protected against social media abuses

<sup>22</sup> NSW BOCSAR Crime Tool, Incidents of Theft (Fraud) from July 2018 to June 2023

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> NSW BOCSAR Crime Tool, Incidents of Theft (Fraud) from July 2018 to June 2023, Hotspot maps compared to High density housing, ABS 2021 (Social Atlas)





**Online scams, fraud and cybercrime are growing safety issues affecting our community. Mail theft has also escalated as a means of identity theft to aid credit card fraud and other types of fraud.**

**Fraud** is a crime that involves someone using deceptive or dishonest behaviour, to obtain money, goods or services or to evade a liability. It can include personal fraud, including card fraud, identity theft, and scams (phishing, romance, computer support, financial advice and more).

**A scam** is a way of tricking people into handing over money or personal details. Due to the deceptive nature of scams, people may not always be aware that they have been exposed to or responded to a scam.

**Cybercrime** is a crime in which a computer is the object of the crime (for example, hacking, phishing and spamming) or is used as a tool to commit an offence electronically (for example, theft, fraud, distribution of child pornography, online abuse and hate crimes).

## 24%

of people who had reported crime over the last 12 months were victims of a scam, fraud or online abuse (Burwood Perceptions of Safety Survey 2023)

### In Australia:

- Card fraud is the most common type of personal fraud, followed by scam, online impersonation and identity theft<sup>25</sup>
- Older Australians continue to lose more money than other age groups<sup>26</sup>
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse communities experience higher financial losses to scams – more than one-quarter (28%) of losses from identity theft and a third (33%) of all losses to pyramid schemes<sup>27</sup>
- Two thirds of Australians were exposed to a scam in 2022<sup>28</sup>
- 30% of victims do not report scams to anyone
- Phishing is the most common scam (ie. tricking victims into giving out personal information such as bank accounts, passwords, credit cards or super). Most phishing scams are sent as text messages.<sup>29</sup>

### Mailbox theft and identity fraud

Mailbox theft leading to identity fraud is increasing. The theft of items such as driver's licences and utility bills is more common in areas of medium-high density apartments, where mailboxes are easily accessible. Most standard locks fitted on commercially made letterboxes are easy to breach or open. Replacing them with a lock and key or high-security letterbox locks that have no master key function is harder to force open.

<sup>25</sup> ABS Personal Fraud Survey 2021-22

<sup>26</sup> ACCC 2023, *Targeting Scams report 2022* quoted in *The Guardian* article (Apr 2023)

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> ABS Personal Fraud Survey 2021-22, quoted in ABS Media Release (22 Feb 2023)

<sup>29</sup> ACCC, *Media release (Scamwatch 2023 Report)* <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/rowland/media-release/albanese-government-acts-disrupt-illegal-text-message-scams>

## 'Spot a Scam, Stop a Scam'

Tackling fraud is complex and involves a multifaceted approach. Education which encourages people to make safe choices can be effective in reducing crime.

Council works with NSW Police, community partners and agencies working in cybercrime to identify methods of minimising risk and increasing awareness of the community, especially our community members most at risk.

In 2021, Council distributed the 'Spot a Scam, Stop a Scam' booklet and fridge magnet to all households in the Burwood LGA. It provided information in English and Chinese on how scams work, examples of scams and how to protect yourself, as well as help to report crime or find help and support.

Council continues to work with NSW Police and community organisations to deliver workshops and initiatives targeted at vulnerable community groups, including seniors and new migrants, to increase awareness of common scams and how to 'Spot a Scam to Stop a Scam'.

For further information visit:

**[www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au) or [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au)**



## Reduce parcel theft campaign

The surge in online shopping over recent years has transformed the way we shop, making convenience a top priority for consumers. Alongside this trend, the adoption of contact-free delivery options gained momentum.

In 2021, an analysis of local crime statistics showed certain areas within the LGA, particularly apartment blocks, were hotspots for mail theft.

Council and Police visit the strata management of affected apartments to bring the parcel theft issues to their attention and to collectively develop solutions.

Information and education are provided for residents with advice on enhancing building security, reinforcing the importance of community vigilance, and encouraging residents to promptly retrieve their delivered packages.

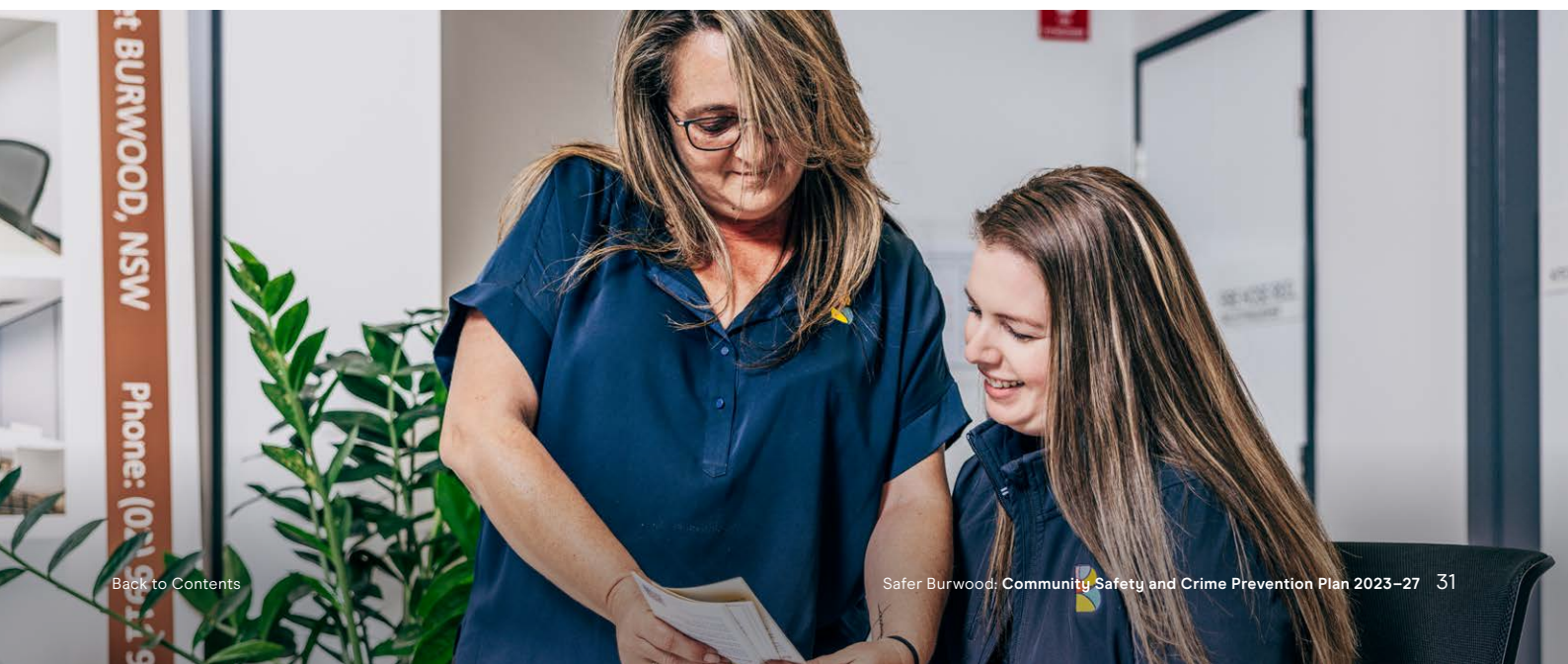


## Strategies and actions to prevent fraud and improve online safety

| Strategy                         |       | Action  | Council's role | Timeframe |
|----------------------------------|-------|---|----------------|-----------|
| Mail theft prevention            | 1.3.1 | Work with NSW Police to identify and audit hotspots for mail and parcel theft   | Lead           | Y2        |
|                                  | 1.3.2 | Update Council's Development Control Plan (DCP) to ensure that mailboxes are located inside secure entries and are fitted with individualised non-master key locks in medium-high density apartment settings and apply relevant conditions of consent   | Lead           | Y2        |
|                                  | 1.3.3 | Investigate and promote best practice letterbox design to residents and strata managers to reduce opportunities for mail theft to occur, including the upgrade of mailbox locks located on the outside of apartments to a safer mailbox lock targeting multi-dwelling developments in hotspot areas | Lead           | Y4        |
| Fraud prevention education       | 1.3.4 | Work with NSW Police and the community to deliver and evaluate campaigns/programs that raise awareness and assist in the prevention of fraud in community languages and through online and in person methods (protecting against mail theft, credit card and identity theft and scams)              | Partner        | Y2        |
| Protecting against fraud         | 1.3.5 | Work with local organisations, community services and groups to reduce the risk of vulnerable and isolated members of the community from being victims of fraud   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| Cyber safety and online bullying | 1.3.6 | Support, promote and deliver cyber-safety and online bullying prevention initiatives and campaigns targeting at risk groups   | Partner        | Y3        |

### We will also continue to:

- Work with the Child and Families Interagency to identify opportunities to inform and educate young people and families about e safety
- Collaborate with the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner on opportunities to provide information and 1-1 discussions on e-safety through Council's Mobile Play Van service.





‘There are some safety concerns at night as lots of people work as shift workers and rely on public transport’

(Service provider interview, Culturally Diverse Communities of Burwood research 2022)

‘Nine out of ten women in NSW have said they’ve changed the way they’ve travelled because they’ve felt unsafe in the past’.

(Transport NSW study 2023)

## 1.4 SAFE TRAVEL

Creating a safe travel environment for community members and visitors is a key priority for Burwood. Community consultation identified opportunities to improve road and pedestrian safety, especially on high streets and through town centres, to and from public transport, and when travelling at night.

Excellent transport infrastructure and easy access to shops, services and the Sydney CBD has made the Burwood LGA an attractive destination for people to live, work and visit.

Council plays a key role in providing safe roadways, walkways and cycleways, managing traffic and parking, and ensuring a safe travel environment for community members and visitors.

**The community told us their key road and travel safety concerns were:**

”

- Travel at night including travelling to and from public transport and walking through poorly lit or isolated areas
- Road congestion and lack of accessible parking drop-off areas in the town centres
- Pedestrian safety and congestion on footpaths, particularly in the Burwood Town Centre
- Impact of e-bikes on footpaths.





### Travel to work:

**18%**

of residents travel to work on public transport

**27%**

of residents travel to work in a private car

**4%**

ride a bike or walk<sup>30</sup>

**16%**

of residents live and work in the Burwood LGA



### Top four parking infringement offences in Burwood:

**67%**

Fail to pay parking fee

**12%**

Disobey 'No Stopping' sign

**10%**

Park for longer than indicated (10%)

**4%**

Disobey 'No Parking' sign<sup>31</sup>



### Theft from motor vehicles

#### Crime rates

stable over the last 5 years

#### Burwood rates 11th highest

out of 33 LGAs in Greater Sydney (or 65 out of 130 councils across in NSW)

**116**

incidents reported in 2022/23

#### Hotspots

include Burwood Town Centre and along the train line.

#### Occurs mostly

in car parks, followed by street parking<sup>32 33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by .id

<sup>31</sup> Burwood Council issued Fines by Offence Fine Category 2022/2023

<sup>32</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) Crime Tool – Incidents of Theft (Steal from motor vehicle) from April 2021 to March 2023

<sup>33</sup> ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by .id



## Strategies and actions to improve travel safety

| Strategy                              |       | Action  | Council's role | Timeframe |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---|----------------|-----------|
| <b>Pedestrian safety improvements</b> | 1.4.1 | Implement pedestrian safety improvements in town centres and transport corridors through the design and delivery of public domain revitalisation and upgrade projects   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| <b>Education campaign</b>             | 1.4.2 | Design and deliver an education campaign to improve the safety of pedestrians and food delivery riders  | Partner        | Y3        |
| <b>Theft awareness</b>                | 1.4.3 | Monitor hotspot areas and deliver targeted campaigns in partnership with NSW Police   | Partner        | Y3        |
| <b>Car park and commuter safety</b>   | 1.4.4 | Investigate strategies to promote vehicle safety messages in Town Centre car parks, such as the installation of lighting, signage and pavement markings   | Lead           | Y3        |
| <b>Number plate theft prevention</b>  | 1.4.5 | Develop an awareness campaign to highlight the benefits of Anti-Theft Screws for vehicle number plates and potential use for serious crime and partner with local vehicle repairers to install anti-theft number plate screws | Lead           | Y1        |
| <b>Travelling safely after dark</b>   | 1.4.6 | Investigate the expansion of defined set-down and pick-up points for Rideshare within Town Centres  | Lead           | Y3        |
| <b>E-Bike safety</b>                  | 1.4.7 | In partnerships with NSW Police, deliver E-Bike Safety Workshops to improve awareness of the road rules and laws for e-bike riders including mandatory safety equipment and age restrictions to improve safety and awareness  | Partner        | Y1<br>Y2  |

### We will also continue to:

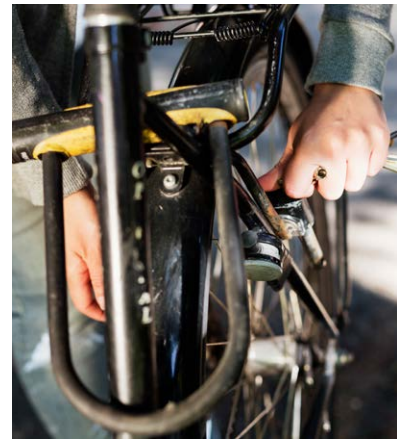
- Undertake public awareness and education programs to encourage safe driving practices and pedestrian safety
- Implement the Traffic and Transport Study's recommendations
- Undertake Council parking patrols in reported problem areas for unsafe parking practices and parking offences at regular intervals
- Work with local schools experiencing traffic issues to identify and implement proactive strategies to better address and manage pick-up and drop-off arrangements
- Undertake focused parking patrols at key schools experiencing ongoing road safety issues and liaise with NSW Police to increase Police patrolling at regular intervals
- Identify and assess problem areas for speeding and install traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossing upgrades where appropriate
- Deliver and upgrade Council-managed aspects of transport hubs, roads, pathways and cycleways that are accessible, activated, well maintained and planned with CPETD principles
- Undertake traffic and transport planning and works which deliver integrated pedestrian, traffic, roads and parking management and support alternative modes of transport.



### "Lock it or Lose it" bicycle safety campaign

As part of a community awareness campaign to reduce bicycle thefts, Council partners with Burwood Police Area Command to implement a series of education and prevention strategies which involved:

- Undertaking a risk assessment of all bike racks within the LGA
- Surveying the community to better understand views on bike usage
- Installing signage at bike rack sites, reminding bike users to "Lock it or Lose it" and offering \$50 vouchers to be used towards the purchase of bike locks
- Encouraging bike owners to register with BikeVAULT (an initiative of Crime Stoppers and NSW Police to expose and defeat the illicit trade in stolen bikes).



### Safer streets through road safety education

Council's Road Safety Officer develops road safety programs and awareness campaigns to educate pedestrians and road users, reduce traffic and parking problems, and address community safety outside school areas.

Key areas of focus include:

- Child Restraint Fittings
- Workshops for Learner Drivers
- Pedestrian Safety and Walking Safely Campaigns
- Radar Speed Displays
- Speed Cameras
- Food Delivery Rider Safety
- 40km/h speed zones in high traffic and local areas
- Driver Fatigue
- Seniors Road Safety
- Motorcycle Riders
- School Zone Road Safety.

### Safety around schools

Council's Community Safety Team proactively patrol all school zones within the Burwood LGA. These patrols focus on child safety and act as a deterrent as well as community education and awareness. Council acknowledges that school areas can be heavily congested and vehicular movement can be difficult. Enforcement is used in areas that pose a threat to the safety of children, road users or pedestrians, or significantly impact local neighbourhoods.





Burwood LGA has a rate of homelessness of 161 people per 10,000.<sup>34</sup>

## 1.5 SAFE HOMES

Access to safe and secure housing is a basic human right and critical to health and wellbeing. Lack of housing availability, affordability and rental security is placing people at increased risk of homelessness, overcrowding or living in unsafe or insecure housing.

While Burwood does not have a highly visible homeless population, homelessness is a growing issue in the Burwood LGA.

Homelessness takes many forms including sleeping rough, couch surfing, staying in boarding houses or mostly in unstable or overcrowded accommodation. Lack of safe or affordable alternatives often places people in vulnerable situations.

**‘Burwood is a safe area for rough sleepers – there are places to sleep comfortably under shelter, food and other supports. It also has a generous community.’**

(Service provider 2022)

**‘There is lots of couch surfing. And people are living in exploitative situations – being charged a lot of money for inadequate conditions e.g. renting by the bed. There is a need for more regulation and monitoring of boarding houses.’**

(Service provider, 2022)

### The community told us they want:

”

- Housing security and housing options that are safe and affordable
- Boarding houses to be monitored to ensure they are maintained and safe
- People who are homeless to be able to access food, shelter, and amenities
- Council to advocate on housing availability, affordability and rental security and cost of living pressures which are affecting our residents
- Community awareness about the dangers of combustible energy for heating and cooking.

34 ABS 2021 Census – Number of Homeless people by LGA, counting persons, estimating homelessness compiled and presented in Homelessness and Housing Dashboard (accessed August 2023)





### Residential theft (steal from dwelling)

**9%**

increase in offences over the past  
5 years (or stable over last 2 years)

**108**

incidents reported in 2022/23

Burwood ranks the

**2nd highest**

of 33 LGAs in Greater Sydney

**Medium-high density**

housing areas are the main hotspots<sup>35</sup>



### Homelessness & overcrowding in Burwood:

There are

**646**

people who are homeless

**6**

rough sleepers at the  
2023 annual street count<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Crime Tool  
– Incidents of Theft (Steal from Dwelling) from April 2021  
to March 2023

<sup>36</sup> Homelessness NSW Homelessness Census Data dashboard  
(accessed August 2023)



## Strategies and actions to address homelessness and improve safety at home

| Strategy                             |       | Action  | Council's role | Timeframe |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---|----------------|-----------|
| Homelessness in public spaces        | 1.5.1 | Implement and monitor Council's Homelessness Protocol and Procedure to ensure the safety of people who are homeless in the Burwood area and continue to provide training to frontline staff   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| Homelessness awareness               | 1.5.2 | Advocate for the safety of people who are homeless or sleeping rough in open spaces and work with key stakeholders to facilitate safe housing and access to support services  | Partner        | Ongoing   |
|                                      | 1.5.3 | Support local initiatives and strategies to assist in addressing and preventing homelessness  | Partner        | Ongoing   |
| Addressing drivers of homelessness   | 1.5.4 | Support advocacy related to the key drivers of homelessness including housing availability, affordability, rental security and cost of living pressures which are affecting Burwood residents                                       | Partner        | Ongoing   |
| Safe and secure housing              | 1.5.5 | Develop an Affordable Housing Contributions Plan and Policy   | Deliver        | Y1        |
|                                      | 1.5.6 | Advocate to the NSW Government for increased funding for community housing options to improve choice and affordability  | Deliver        | Y1        |
| Home safety awareness and prevention | 1.5.7 | Implement and support targeted community awareness campaigns to promote home safety and crime prevention, including promotion of existing initiatives such as NSW CCTV Police Register and BikeVAULT                                | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|                                      | 1.5.8 | Implement and support programs and activities that educate the community about home safety (e.g. fire safety, property identification, building better security habits and securing their property) and measure their effectiveness | Lead           | Ongoing   |

### We will also continue to:

- Work with service providers and faith based organisations to monitor cost of living impacts on local residents and identify ways to increase service provision and resources to the community
- Address safety issues in the home through broad and targeted community education, regulation enforcement and collaboration
- Work with Council's Advisory Committees and Groups to ensure any emerging safety issues for our community are captured and our community education campaigns are effective
- Deliver programs, services and infrastructure that help facilitate 'active' lifestyles to help reduce the risk of falls or injuries
- Undertake annual street count to monitor the level of rough sleepers in Burwood Town Centre
- Inspect registered Boarding Houses annually to ensure compliance with safety standards.



### Low cost rental accommodation

Boarding houses and co living housing provide compact rental accommodation for a range of occupants. Both housing types are typically built in well-connected areas, where residents have convenient access to work, study and recreation opportunities.

### Boarding Houses

Boarding houses must be used for affordable housing in perpetuity and must be managed by the community housing provider (CHP) in perpetuity. Each room is generally designed to be self contained, with its own bathroom and kitchenette.

Boarding houses are to be managed in accordance with the requirements of the Boarding Houses Act 2012. The Act provides a regulatory framework that aims to ensure that boarding houses are maintained to high standards however, research shows that due to a lack of legal protections offered to boarding house residents, they can experience high degrees of instability and vulnerability in their housing.<sup>37</sup>

### Co-living accommodation

Co-living housing was introduced as a housing type by the NSW Government in November 2021. Co-living housing is not required to be managed by a CHP, however must provide a primary place of residence for all occupants.

Co-living housing must contain at least 6 private rooms and include key features such as fully furnished, ready-to-occupy private and shared spaces. A manager, who is responsible for the shared spaces, should actively encourage a sense of community.

Co-living housing often appeals to students, young professionals, or key workers.



### Homelessness Protocol

Council has developed a Homelessness Protocol and Procedure to support a consistent response across the organisation on identifying and responding to homelessness, and connecting people with appropriate support.

Council-wide training is delivered on the Homelessness Protocol and Procedure to increase awareness and to upskill frontline staff.



### Regulating community safety

Council is responsible for building the community's awareness of safety regulations applying to homes and neighbourhoods including swimming pool fencing, overgrown residential properties, hoarding and companion animals.

Our Community Safety Team conducts inspections and enforces compliance where it becomes necessary to maintain property in a safe and healthy condition.

<sup>37</sup> Registrar of Community Housing (2019), Regulation of Boarding Houses in NSW Final discussion paper



“ Language barriers or fear of Police prevents people from reporting.”

“ It is hard to access services. They don't know where to go”

“ Cultural expectations, shame and stigma can mean the issue is often hidden.”

“ For some newly arrived communities, domestic violence is often not recognised and reporting it as a crime to NSW Police is a new concept.”

“ Women on temporary visas have a precarious status when they escape DV... some have been living in refuges with no income for more than two years and are totally reliant on charities to support them.”

(Service provider interviews, Culturally Diverse Communities of Burwood 2022)

## 2. Safe people

### 2.1 SAFE RELATIONSHIPS

**Domestic violence and elder abuse are growing safety issues affecting our community.**

#### Domestic and family violence

Crime statistics show that domestic violence assaults in the Burwood LGA have increased 16% over the past 5 years.<sup>38</sup> However, NSW Police and community feedback indicates that incidents of domestic and family violence are likely to be significantly underreported and recorded crime statistics provide only part of the picture.

Council plays an important role in working with our community to raise awareness of the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence in our community, in the promotion of respectful relationships and promoting gender equity. Council also plays a vital role in supporting local services providing support to victims, and in advocating for funding to, and availability of, services and housing to ensure families and individuals are safe.

Domestic and family violence includes any behaviour, in an intimate or family relationship, which is violent, threatening, coercive or controlling, causing a person to live in fear.

There are several socio-cultural conditions or behaviours that drive violence against women, including:

- Condoning violence against women
- Controlling and/or coercive behaviour that limits women's independence
- Cultural stereotypes that promote an 'ideal' masculinity and femininity, and
- Male peer relations and cultures of masculinity that emphasise aggression, dominance and control, disrespect, objectification and/or hostility towards women.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics Research – Number of recorded domestic violence related assault incidents by Local Government Area from July 2018 to June 2023

<sup>39</sup> Our Watch website: <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/the-issue/>



## The community told us they want to:



- Stop domestic and family violence
- Protect our elderly from abuse occurring across all cultures
- Build an understanding of respectful relationships in families and communities
- Provide support and resources to victim-survivors and service providers
- Have access to more culturally responsive services, programs and support.



## Elder abuse

Abuse of older people is also a complex and sometimes hidden problem. Psychological (emotional) abuse is the most common type of abuse. Other forms include financial abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

Elder abuse amongst culturally diverse communities includes:

- Lack of respect due to culture, race or ethnicity
- Feeling like 'free labour'
- Restricting contact with friends or relatives or to access cultural activities
- Use of language barriers and mistranslation or denial of important information
- Physical and financial abuse.



## Domestic and family violence in Burwood<sup>40</sup>

**101**

incidents

**272**

incidents per 100,000 people in Burwood LGA

**Ranked 18 out of 33**

LGAs in Greater Sydney

**16%**

Increase over the last five years

**68%**

of victim survivors were female

**68%**

of perpetrators were male



## Elder abuse

**15%**

of people aged 65 and older experience elder abuse

**Emotional abuse**

is the most common form of elder abuse

**Higher rates of abuse**

for women than for men<sup>41</sup>



<sup>40</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics Research - Incidents of Assault (Domestic assault) incidents by Local Government Area from July 2018 to June 2023

<sup>41</sup> AIFS, National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study: Final Report (2021)

## Strategies and actions to address family violence and elder abuse

| Strategy   |       | Action  | Council's role | Timeframe |
|--|-------|---|----------------|-----------|
| Increase local understanding and responses to domestic and family violence and elder abuse | 2.1.1 | Work with local services and community groups to promote awareness of domestic and family violence and elder abuse within the community, identify gaps and opportunities to respond   | Partner        | Y1<br>Y2  |
| Evidenced and co-designed approaches to prevention   | 2.1.2 | Undertake research to identify effective, culturally-tailored awareness and prevention strategies to inform local responses to addressing domestic violence and elder abuse and partner with community agencies to co-design and evaluate a pilot program | Partner        | Y2<br>Y3  |
| Promote respectful relationships   | 2.1.3 | Work with the community to plan and deliver targeted programs to raise awareness about safe, healthy and respectful behaviour and relationships   | Partner        | Y2        |
| Support women and children escaping violence   | 2.1.4 | Promote information about support services in key locations and through appropriate channels and partner with services to address key barriers to access  | Partner        | Ongoing   |
|  | 2.1.5 | Work with local organisations to investigate models to provide occasional, short-term child-minding for victim-survivors to attend appointments   | Partner        | Y2        |
|  | 2.1.6 | Investigate the feasibility of providing support worker parking permits for services such as DV, homelessness and housing   | Lead           | Y2        |
|  | 2.1.7 | Investigate opportunities to provide free activities or community programs for women and children escaping violence   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|  | 2.1.8 | Support and promote targeted programs for women and girls escaping violence which provide skills development and connections to support services  | Partner        | Y1<br>Y2  |
| Safe spaces for women, girls and gender diverse people                                     | 2.1.9 | Join the NSW Greater Cities Commission Women's Safety Charter and identify opportunities to support, advocate and trial local interventions to create more welcoming and inclusive public places for women, girls and gender diverse people               | Partner        | Y1        |

### We will also continue to:

- Monitor the implementation of Council's Child Safety Framework
- Update Council's Child Safe webpage with links to child safe resources and services
- Deliver training for frontline staff to provide information and referral to support services to community members seeking assistance
- Support and promote child safety initiatives and campaigns such as Child Protection Week.

### Women's and Girl's Self Defence Program

The Women's and Girl's Self Defence Program is a nine-week program, run in collaboration with a local Kung Fu academy. The program brings women together in a safe environment to challenge themselves, learn self-defence techniques and promote self-development. Through the program participants gain confidence in themselves and are empowered knowing they can keep themselves safe.





## The Women In Touch (WIT) program

Council partners with a local DV specialist service to design and deliver a women's empowerment program. The program provides a safe space for local women/victim-survivors to come together for social connection and empowerment through education, holistic health and personal development. The program includes sessions on job seeking, renting, banking and e-safety, government services such as legal aid, police, health and wellbeing, cooking, as well art and craft therapy. Child minding is also provided.

## Women's Safety Charter

Research shows that women, girls and gender diverse people are more likely to experience unsafe situations and feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in public places.

The Women's Safety Charter brings together government, business and community partners to take collective action to create more welcoming and inclusive public places for women, girls and gender diverse people.<sup>42</sup>

This includes involving diverse women in the design of safety solutions and addressing the perceptions and experiences of safety, from early intervention and prevention through to targeted actions against unsafe behaviour.

Activities may include trialling interventions to address issues such as poor lighting, surveillance, wayfinding, activation, safety perceptions, infrastructure, lack of welcoming spaces, and bystander inaction.

The Charter aims to shift attitudes and behaviours around women's safety, with particular focus on the following areas:



**Safer places  
(placemaking  
and urban  
design)**



**Events  
& activations**



**Transport,  
active  
transport  
& mobility**



**Communication  
and education  
campaigns**



**Data and  
knowledge  
sharing**

### Charter principles and outcomes

1



**A culture of  
gender equality**  
Design for equality,  
leadership,  
champion and participate

2



**Listen, share  
and reflect**  
Communication,  
data, reporting

3



**Collective action and  
continuous improvement**  
Collaboration,  
process, evaluation

### Impact areas



**Events and  
activations**



**Data and  
knowledge-sharing**



**Transport,  
active transport,  
and mobility**



**Communication  
and education  
campaigns**



**Placemaking  
and urban design  
(safer places)**

<sup>42</sup> An initiative of the NSW Greater Cities Commission



“ Social isolation is a big thing especially for children with complex disabilities... create events and forums where people with disability of all ages can come together in a safe space and get to know one another. ”

Survey respondent (Disability Inclusion Action Plan engagement 2021)

## 2.2 CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Communities that are welcoming, inclusive and celebrate diversity are shown to be safer places. People who are connected with their neighbours and to their community have a stronger sense of identity, belonging and wellbeing.

Research shows that socially inclusive communities have higher levels of trust, community connectedness and more positive perceptions of safety. Strengthening social cohesion and fostering community and economic participation are recognised crime prevention initiatives.

Council can play a key role in bringing our diverse communities together, strengthening community networks and supporting the inclusion of those most vulnerable.

“ Burwood is a welcoming and diverse place, but racism and discrimination still exists. Council can help to promote respect and cross-cultural understanding.”

Service provider (Culturally Diverse Communities of Burwood research 2022)

**76%**

agree/strongly agree that ‘Burwood is a harmonious, respectful, and inclusive community’

**71%**

agree/strongly agree that they ‘feel part of the community’<sup>43</sup>

### The community told us they want:



- All people in Burwood to feel included and to belong
- Opportunities to build stronger and trusted relationships
- Events and programs that celebrate diversity, promote intercultural connection and cohesion
- Welcoming and safe spaces for young people where they feel connected and engaged
- Programs and activities that are inclusive and accessible, particularly for those most vulnerable or isolated.

<sup>43</sup> Burwood Community Priorities and Satisfaction Survey (Micromex, March 2023)







## Strategies and actions to strengthen social inclusion, community connection and resilience

| Strategy                           |       | Action  | Council's role | Timeframe |
|------------------------------------|-------|---|----------------|-----------|
| Community connection and inclusion | 2.2.1 | Develop and implement the Burwood Multicultural Strategy to build partnerships with the culturally diverse communities of Burwood and promote opportunities for cross-cultural and intercultural connection | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|                                    | 2.2.2 | Continue to deliver and support events that celebrate our diverse and multicultural and multi-faith communities   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| Address racism                     | 2.2.3 | Work with Council's Multicultural Advisory Committee to support and promote local #RacismNotWelcome initiatives   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| Safe places for young people       | 2.2.4 | Identify and promote opportunities to provide safe and welcoming places and spaces that are designed for, and by, young people and address diverse interests  | Lead           | Y2        |
|                                    | 2.2.5 | Develop and implement the Burwood Youth Action Plan to promote activities to increase connection, social inclusion and engagement of young people and respond to identified needs                           | Partner        | Y1        |
| Neighbourhood cohesion             | 2.2.6 | Promote 'Neighbour Day' and other community-driven initiatives that connect community members and reduce social isolation   | Lead           | Ongoing   |

### We will also continue to:

- Support and promote community-driven initiatives that strengthen social cohesion
- Deliver community programs that are free, inclusive and accessible for community members who are new arrivals, with low incomes or socially isolated
- Support and promote programs and events which increase connection and inclusion for people with disability
- Collaborate on the delivery of resilience building initiatives including updated flood mapping and controls, building finishes to reduce heat sink and guidelines for increased landscaping on private properties.

### Neighbours Every Day

is an ongoing social connection campaign, which culminates in a national day of action, Neighbour Day, held annually on the last Sunday of March. It aims to build stronger relationships within communities, focusing on inclusion and connection and belonging.<sup>44</sup>

### The #RacismNotWelcome Campaign

is a community-led, grassroots initiative intended to acknowledge the existence of racism and take a public stance against racism. Council signed up to this in July 2021 and works in partnership with our Multicultural Advisory Committee to implement. Local initiatives include: Burwood Chinatown Public Art Project, The Last Lion, and 'No Room for Racism in Burwood' Video.

<sup>44</sup> Relationships Australia, Neighbours Every Day website: <https://neighbourseveryday.org/>









" It is important to tailor and adapt programs for each group, understanding the cultural needs of participants, for example running programs in English and co-facilitated with a bi-lingual co-facilitator."

## 2.3 COMMUNITY AWARENESS & SUPPORT

**Community awareness is an effective strategy in preventing crime and improving safety in our community. Access to information and local support services when needed is also vital to improve the safety and wellbeing of our community.**

Community feedback indicates that many people are not aware of how to access the support available. Language, recency of arrival, lack of trust or cultural safety are some of the barriers which can prevent community members from accessing or engaging with services and programs.

Council plays a key role in supporting and connecting local services, providing information and education to our community and partnering with NSW Police and community to increase awareness and reporting of crime and safety issues.

**" Language barriers or fear of police prevents people from reporting."**

**" It is hard to access services. They don't know where to go or there are barriers to access."**

### The community and service providers told us they want:

"

- Stronger relationships between Council, Police and the community, especially with diverse communities
- To know what services are available and how to access them
- To know where to go for information and support
- Information to be provided in community languages and distributed through trusted community networks
- Targeted community safety programs co-designed and delivered by communities
- Programs to be adapted and tailored for the cultural and language needs of participants
- Culturally safe and accessible services providing an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people without assault, challenge or denial of their identity
- Improved reporting and support processes
- More support and funding for local services.



## Strategies and actions to increase community safety awareness and strengthen local support services

| Strategy           |        | Action   | Council's role | Timeframe |
|--------------------|--------|--|----------------|-----------|
| Stronger networks  | 2.3.1  | Create networking opportunities between NSW Police, local service providers, faith based groups, community networks, leaders, community members and other stakeholders to build trust, information sharing and partnerships to address community safety issues | Lead           | Y2        |
|                    | 2.3.2  | Work with community partners to increase awareness of support services and programs available to the community and pilot the use of a range of innovative and community-led methods  | Lead           | Y1        |
| Child safeguarding | 2.3.3  | Implement Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy  | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| Safety education   | 2.3.4  | Partner with key emergency services to deliver the Burwood Safety Expo to provide safety education and build stronger relationships with services and the community  | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|                    | 2.3.5  | Partner with community organisations and NSW Police to design, translate and distribute relevant community safety resources and deliver awareness campaigns that can be tailored to different audiences in community languages                                 | Partner        | Ongoing   |
|                    | 2.3.6  | Partner with Royal Life, Surf Life Saving Australia and NSW Government to deliver water, surf and rock-fishing education and cultural programs to Burwood residents to facilitate recreational safety  | Partner        | Y1        |
|                    | 2.3.7  | Provide community safety information on Council's website, through social media channels and in visible locations, such as in Council facilities, or at Council events   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
| Capacity building  | 2.3.8  | Deliver annual Community Grants Program and include community safety as a funding priority to support the vision or expansion of community-led programs in the Burwood LGA   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|                    | 2.3.9  | Identify and promote external funding opportunities and facilitate partnerships with local services and community groups to implement local safety initiatives   | Lead           | Ongoing   |
|                    | 2.3.10 | Facilitate the delivery of mental health training for community groups to support their communities  | Partner        | Y2        |
| Data collection    | 2.3.11 | Measure perceptions of safety and social cohesion in engagement and data collection processes  | Lead           | Ongoing   |

### We will also continue to:

- Attend Police Community Safety Precinct Committee Meetings with Burwood Police Area Command to stay informed of local issues impacting on crime
- Attend Liquor Accord meetings and work with members to keep informed about alcohol-related crime and safety
- Attend and represent Burwood Council at the Community Safety Precinct Committee Police Meetings
- Meet and work with the Women and Girls Emergency Centre in the Burwood LGA.

## Burwood Safety Expo

The Expo provides an opportunity for community members to meet with Burwood Police Area Command, Council and emergency services to increase awareness of the services provided. Interactive displays and demonstrations provide education on key home, road and community safety issues. Examples of activities include:

- Meet and greet opportunities with officers and emergency responders including 'coffee with a cop'
- Emergency vehicle and equipment displays
- Car crash vehicle displays
- Home fire safety and smoke alarm home safety visits
- Road and bike safety displays and information.

## Community safety education

Council's Community Safety Team delivers education programs which target topics in response to emerging trends or community requests. Examples of topics include:



**Parking especially School Education**



**Dumped Rubbish**



**Building Site Management**



**Animal Management**



**Health**



**Food Safety**



**Skin penetration**



**Boarding houses**







# Burwood Safety Expo 2023





# Monitoring our progress

**Council will work together with the community, NSW Police and stakeholders to implement, monitor and evaluate this Plan.**

An implementation plan will be developed for each year of the four years of the Plan. Key strategies will be incorporated into Council's Operational Plan. We will regularly review and measure the outcomes of our activities through our corporate reporting.

We will continue to monitor and review:

- Crime data from BOCSAR and local police to analyse trends, and monitor safety outcomes and reporting levels at the population level
- Levels of collaboration with project partners
- Changes in community perceptions of safety and the impact of programs and services delivered as part of the Plan through:
  - Community priority and satisfaction survey results\*
  - Consultation and community engagement activities
  - Feedback from program participants on changes in community awareness, feelings of safety and behaviour for targeted crime and safety issues
  - Outcomes of safety and place experience audits and public domain improvements.

45 Micromex, Burwood Community Priorities and Satisfaction Survey, 2023

## **Measures<sup>45</sup>:**

- Feeling safe in the day (Baseline: 97%)
- Feeling safe at night (Baseline: 74%)
- Feeling part of local community (Baseline: 71%)
- Burwood is a harmonious, respectful, and inclusive community (Baseline: 76%)
- Vibrant and inviting town centres (Baseline: 64%)
- Local events offering opportunities to connect (Baseline: 60%)
- A vibrant nightlife (Baseline: 84%)
- Community safety programs (Baseline: 89%)
- Traffic management and road safety (Baseline: 85%)
- Graffiti removal (Baseline: 87%)
- Removal of illegally dumped rubbish (Baseline: 84%)
- Town centre cleanliness (Baseline: 91%)
- Support for local business (Baseline: 91%)









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