

## EXAMPLE STORY

Education

### **Camperdown Commons**

Canterbury Hurlstone Park RSL

WINNER 2017



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### **Outline your unique story/project/program**

Camperdown Commons is a community revitalisation project developed by Camperdown Project pty ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL Club (CHPRSL). In early 2013, the former Marrickville Council

(now Inner West Council) invited expressions of interest for the Camperdown Bowling Club. With around a third of its members residing in the Marrickville area and a strong relationship with the council formed through the ClubGRANTS program, CHPRSL saw the site as an opportunity to offer their members something outside of the typical club capacity.

With a brief to provide a vision for the facility to expand community use and no pokies due to council requirements. CHPRSL originally envisioned a simple concept of a farm with a restaurant. Plans gained more substance with local demographic research. Camperdown residents showed high regard for organic practices and the environment as well as having high standards in the service and quality of food and beverage outlets.

CHPRSL was confirmed as the successful tenderer in August 2014. Camperdown Project was then established as a standalone, wholly owned subsidiary of CHPRSL to operate the site. CHPRSL used its proven community consultation model to determine the community impact of the site.

CHPRSL committed to keeping the community informed about plans and progress for the site, and arranged meetings for interested residents. Over the course of three days in February 2015, nine discussion sessions were held at CHPRSL. Not only did this provide a forum for Camperdown Project to present its vision for the site, but gave residents the chance to share perspectives and voice concerns. Though some developers may shy away from such an exercise fearing criticism, it proved hugely beneficial for the Camperdown Project, allowing identification of community qualms and the ability to adjust plans accordingly, creating a concept better than initially envisaged.

Camperdown Commons - as now established, includes a variety of recreational lifestyle and wellness activities that appeal to the elderly and culturally diverse and disadvantaged community groups, as well as function rooms, spaces and meeting facilities for community use. The old bowling greens have been repurposed into an urban farm – by not-for-profit operator Pocket City Farms (PCF), available for a range of educational activities for community work-shops and nearby schools and for use by the on-site commercial restaurant operator – acre eatery.

Eighty percent of what's grown on the farm is used in acre, the 350-seat "farmer's table" restaurant and brainchild of John Tully and Luke Heard. Driven by an interest in sustainability and eco-practices, the duo worked with PCF and CHPRSL during the development and construction phase of the project to create not just a good food offering, but a wholesome dining experience.

The commercial operation was critical to the ongoing viability and sustainability of this important community asset well into the future.

### **Why was this story/project/program addressed as a priority?**

CHPRSL Club, through Camperdown Commons addressed the needs of the dynamic and diverse community while also addressing the Club's overarching diversification and community led strategy.

Camperdown Commons was seen as an opportunity to deliver a space relevant and accessible to the needs of the Inner West community. It delivers on promises made to the community and stakeholders mapped out in the following framework:

- Friendly & safe
- Spaces for hire : Community room, Recreation Pavillion.
- Utilised by NFP,s, groups, businesses and locals. We are committed to providing 50% of room hire to NFP's.
- Community spaces : The Lawn, Kids Play Area, Recreational Pavillion. Accessed by the community
- Quality food
- Farm Eatery : Family Friendly, Seasonal menu, Healthy, Local.
- Sourced from the urban farm
- Local produce : Working urban farm, Market stall, Food forest.
- Recreational
- Recreation : Passive / active, Kids play area, Wellness classes,
- Volunteer days.
- Education : Working urban farm, Demonstration garden, Composting and harvesting, Chicken coop, Hospitality courses (20% at discounted rates).

Camperdown Commons is an innovative collaboration of commercial leasing, non-for-profit partners and community spaces:

- Acre – the eatery
- A family-friendly place to relax, socialise and enjoy a meal selected from a sustainable focused menu. Pocket City Farms
- A working urban farm, where the community can learn all about farming and sustainable food production. Common Spaces
- Interactive kids play area, community library and sophisticated spaces available for hire and use, with free or subsidised rates for NFP's and community groups.

### **Tell us what resources contributed toward this story/project/program?**

A significant amount of time, effort and funding went into the planning and execution of this innovative concept which is relevant to the CHPRSL CSR pillars and delivers a relevant, responsible and sustainable solution for the community.

### **How did the project/program meet the local community needs?**

Camperdown Commons is a collaboration of key partners – Acre and Pocket City Farms and key stakeholder Inner West Council.

The aim was to reinvigorate the space that was beneficial and more importantly, relevant to the local community as a whole. The bowling club had lost its relevance due to the evolution of its surrounding demographic.

Since opening in July last year, Camperdown Commons has been extremely well received by the community and is soon to be celebrating its first birthday.

In the first 12 months, Common Spaces has been used by almost 100 not for profit and community groups ranging from Planet Ark to NSW Knitters Guild. Additionally, Common Spaces has hosted author talks by Stephanie Alexander, Adam Liaw and Sarah Wilson in collaboration with local book store Better Read than Dead.

Not for profit partner, Pocket City Farms has delivered workshops on growing produce, composting, cooking, preventing food waste, and other areas of food, gardening, lifestyle and health have engaged hundreds as well as yoga classes providing many locals with enjoyable outdoor recreation and hundreds of hours of volunteer time have provided assistance in the running of the farm.

Acre eatery has welcomed thousands of visitors, most of which are regulars living or working in the local area and enjoys consistently good reviews from critics and review sites alike.

### **Do you have long-term plans/goals for this story/project/program?**

Camperdown Commons is a result of extensive community consultation and delivers on CHPRSL's commitment to the local community.

Camperdown Commons intends to continue to seek feedback from the community and evolve with the community's requirements.

CHPRSL intends to utilise its learnings from this project to further innovate and collaborate with the local communities in which it belongs, in delivering valuable assets and services that our sustainable well into the future and deliver on the foundation of the essence of which Clubs were originally formed.