

Annual Report

2020/21

Welcome to the summary version of our 2020/21 Annual Report

The full version is divided into the below seven sections and can be viewed [here](#).

Welcome	Our Organisation
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Year in review

A record capital works program has seen \$103 million invested in projects across the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) in the past 12 months. This surpasses the previous year's record investment by \$10 million.

We spent a record \$103 million on capital works

Key projects delivered in the past 12 months include:

Renewal of Joslin Street, Kotara, local centre: \$2 million
Renewal of Llewellyn Street, Merewether, local centre: \$2 million
Playground upgrades: \$1.3 million
Bathers Way upgrade, South Newcastle Beach: \$5 million
National Park redevelopment: \$5 million
Street lighting upgrades: \$5 million
Merewether to city centre cycleway: \$2.4 million

In addition, the Summerhill Waste Management Centre Cell 09, Stage 2 project was completed.

The delivery of our capital works program over the past 12 months is a great achievement for our organisation, especially considering the additional challenges of COVID-19. It is a result that deserves to be celebrated.

Here is a closer look at a few of our major projects.

New local centre for Merewether

CN delivered a \$2 million upgrade of Llewellyn Street, Merewether, ahead of schedule and to budget, creating a safe, attractive space for the community to shop and enjoy.

The upgrade includes new street furniture and landscaping, alongside a range of pedestrian safety improvements including three new raised crossings, kerb extensions to reduce road crossing distances and upgraded footpaths.

The Llewellyn Street upgrade was delivered as part of CN's local centre program, which is delivering upgrades to suburban centres across the LGA. Projects include the recently completed upgrade at Joslin Street, Kotara, the upgrade underway at Mitchell Street, Stockton, and upgrades due for delivery later this year at Shortland and James Street Plaza, Hamilton.

Works on the next stage of Wallsend and Orchardtown Road local centres are scheduled to commence construction in 2021/2022.

New playgrounds in Mayfield and New Lambton

The Mayfield and New Lambton communities celebrated the official opening of two upgraded playgrounds as part of CN's annual playground improvement program.

As part of the upgrade, the former Novocastrian Park playground in New Lambton was replaced with new features catering to a range of age groups, including a rope climber, swings and a slide.

The newly upgraded Dangar Park playground was expanded to include a new climbing frame and rocker and a new larger swing set to replace the set that was damaged during storms in 2020. These improvements will also cater to a broader age range of children.

Newcastle has 125 playgrounds across the LGA and has an ongoing program of upgrading and renewing any ageing facilities.

Road reconstruction projects

Cardiff Road, New Lambton Heights – Lookout Road to Marshall Street – ongoing maintenance

Elizabeth Cook Drive, Rankin Park – Chollerford Drive to Grandview Road – replace deteriorated road pavement

King Street, Newcastle – Perkins Street to Wolfe Street – replace deteriorated road pavement

Pebblestone Street, Fletcher – Waterside Drive to Wedgetail Street – rehabilitation of deteriorated road pavement

Wentworth Street, Wallsend – Minmi Road to Richardson Street – replacement of failed road pavement on bus route

Yangan Drive, Beresfield – Stage 1 & 2, Weakleys Drive to Birraba Avenue – rehabilitation of deteriorated road pavement to support industry efficiency

Railway and Albert Streets, Wickham – roundabout construction.

Shared pathway reconstruction

Warabrook Wetland Reserve, Stage 1 – replacement of deteriorated asphalt pathway with concrete.

Footpath construction

Crest Road, Wallsend – Newcastle Road to Victory Parade – footpath to support access

Steel River Estate – footpaths Stage 1, footpath construction.

[Read more about our highlights](#)

Acknowledgment of Country

City of Newcastle acknowledges that we operate on the grounds of the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and that they are the proud survivors of more than two hundred years of dispossession.

City of Newcastle reiterates its commitment to address disadvantages and attain justice for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this community.



Our response to COVID-19

Service changes

CN services and facilities were closed in March 2020 following Public Health Orders from the NSW Government, reopening with restrictions from July 2020. Many began to close again from August 2021 due to the Delta variant.



Community and Economic Resilience Package



Financial hardship interest-free deferred rates
761 payment plans
\$1.25m value



Rent relief (50%)
\$732,000
in rent reductions over a six-month period
60 local businesses and community organisations



\$100,000 e-Library expansion
46% of subscribers using the e-Library more frequently during lockdown
82% feel they would continue use in the future



WINNER
COVID-19 Community & Economic Resilience Package
Special Project Initiative Award, Local Government Awards 2021



\$800,000 Community Grant Program



Lean in Newy launched
3,850+ downloads
7,556 challenge participants

City Taskforce

17 key city leaders
\$500,000 in funding including the following programs and initiatives:

- Advocacy
- Unified voice to NSW and Federal Governments
- Industry Response Program
- Small Business Recovery Centre
- Hometown Holiday
- Live-streaming local music
- Local makers and traders online platform
- Greater Newcastle Youth Employment Charter

[Read more about our response to COVID-19](#)

People, economy and environment

People



Population	Median age	Homeless	Overseas born
171,307	37	802	13.9%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	Languages other than English spoken	Average household size	Profound or severe disability
3.5%	10%	2.5	5.9%

Economy



Local jobs	Local businesses	Development application value	Unemployment rate
102,800	14,312	\$809 million	5.3%
People with internet connection	Gross regional product	Residents with formal qualification	Annual visitors
80.85%	\$18.2b	65,000	5 million

Environment



Air quality	1 solar farm	Creeks	Sand dunes
Good	14,500 panels	607	4.5km
Tracks and trails	Wetlands	Bushland parcels	Coastal cliff lines
57.8km	65	88	21

Source: REMPLAN, ID profile



[Read more about our city](#)



[Read more about our organisation](#)

[Read the Chief Executive Officer and Lord Mayor message](#)

Our path to reconciliation

CN is committed to reconciliation which is expressed through its Reconciliation Action Plan. With the guidance of the internal Reconciliation Action Plan working group, CN is achieving positive inroads on the path to reconciliation.

Programs included:

Dance residency with emerging Indigenous dancer Jesse Murray in partnership with Catapult Dance

Tastes of the Bush featuring local Aboriginal dancers, artists and musicians

Teen masterclass workshops with Aboriginal artist Michelle Napanangka Earl

Last Fridays featuring Indigenous artists Nicole Monks and Wanjun Carpenter

WARWAR: The Art of Torres Strait, a landmark exhibition for Newcastle and the Hunter region was hosted by the Art Gallery

VOID: Aboriginal artistic practice, hosted by the Art Gallery

Tiddas in Muloobinba, an intensive musical and cultural mentoring opportunity for seven aspiring First Nations women in partnership with locally based Yolngu artists and industry professionals the Illume Girls

Award-winning podcast series: *Newcastle's First Storytellers*



Libraries held **5** Indigenous programs with **542** participants



The Art Gallery held **34** events that featured local Indigenous practitioners



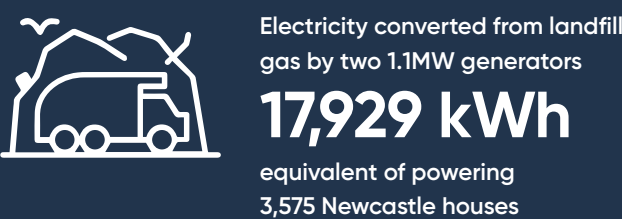
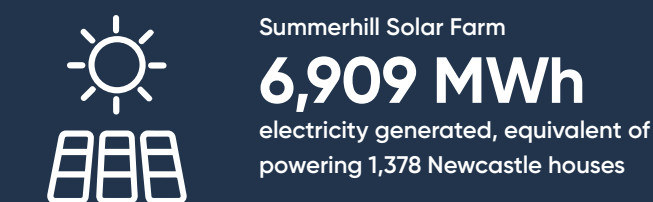
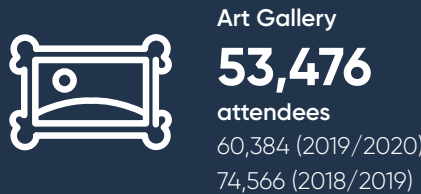
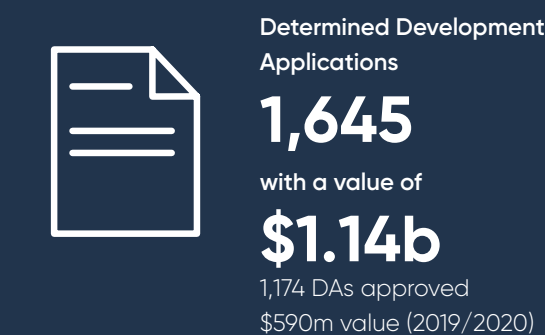
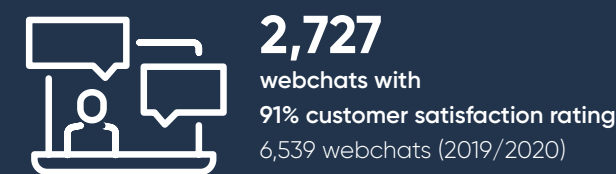
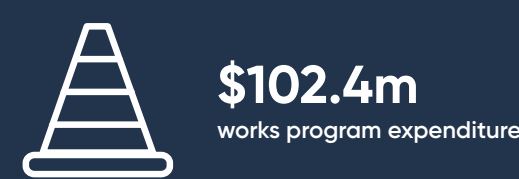
The Museum collaborated with the community **370** times with **42** Indigenous organisations and participants

Featured artwork by Rod Smith

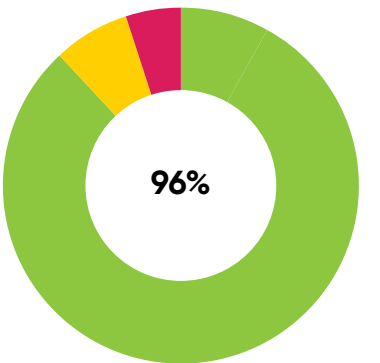
Rod Smith is a Newcastle born and bred Aboriginal man, his family moved from Anaiwan country of New England in the late 1950s and worked on the railway, creating Smith General Contractors. He has a long cultural connection with music, dance and the arts.



2020/2021 highlights

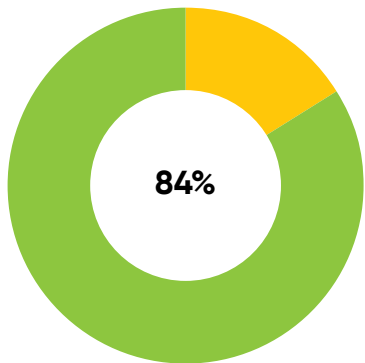


Total initiatives
232
Initiatives completed or on track



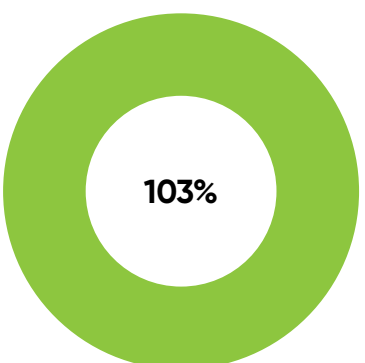
Off track On track Monitor

Total resolutions
226
Resolutions completed



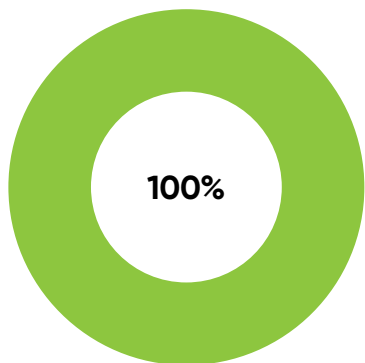
Active Resolutions Completed Resolutions

Total expenditure
\$344,867 YTD Actual ('000)



Budget \$335,778 Actual \$344,867

Total income
\$312,405 YTD Actual ('000)



Budget \$313,056 Actual \$312,405

Budget as at fourth quarter 2020/21

Reporting on our performance

Our annual report details CN's progress on the objectives in *Our Budget 2020/21* CN's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Of the 232 initiatives, 223 were on track or completed, seven monitored, and two off track.

Initiatives are sorted into seven themes from the *Newcastle 2030* CN's Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

Click on the below themes to read about CN's performance highlights, achievements and what we did during 2019/20.

[Highlights of Integrated and Accessible Transport](#)

[Highlights of Protected Environment](#)

[Highlights of Vibrant, Safe and Active Public Places](#)

[Highlights of Inclusive Community](#)

[Highlights of Liveable Built Environment](#)

[Highlights of Smart and Innovative](#)

[Highlights of Open and Collaborative Leadership](#)

\$102.4 million in capital works expenditure



Expenditure by strategic direction



- Integrated and Accessible Transport: \$51,946
- Protected Environment: \$91,465
- Vibrant, Safe and Active Public Places: \$76,683
- Inclusive Community: \$7,577
- Smart and Innovative: \$28,075
- Liveable Built Environment: \$9,991
- Open and Collaborative Leadership: \$79,130

[Read more about our performance](#)

Community financial report

CN spent \$345 million this year to provide services and facilities to more than 167,300 residents. We managed \$2 billion of assets including roads, bridges, drains, land, halls, recreation and leisure facilities, libraries and parks for the benefit of the local and visiting community.

We generate income to fund services and facilities via rates on property, government grants, interest on investments and user charges.

This income is then spent on construction, maintenance, wages, grants to the community, and other services to the community like libraries, pools, art gallery programs and waste facilities.

The following information aims to provide a brief summary of our 2020/2021 financial statements.

Finance summary

The COVID-19 global pandemic had an impact on CN's operating budget, reducing income by \$20m, and resulting in a \$4.4m deficit (inc grants and contributions for capital purposes). In the same financial year though, CN invested \$5.5m into a Community & Economic Resilience Package to support the pandemic recovery and delivered a \$102.4m works program.



\$46m
received in grants
and subsidies



\$193m
raised in rates



We invested
\$102.4m
in new and updated
infrastructure



Including
\$32.7m
in the renewal of the city's
infrastructure assets



CN achieved a
**perfect
scorecard**
from the Auditor-General for NSW



\$4.4m
operating deficit
(including grants and contributions
received for capital purposes)



\$8.7m
interest and investment income

[Read more about financial performance](#)

Our statutory reporting

Where did our money come from

This year, our main source of income (other than rates) was from user charges and fees of \$76 million, down by \$11 million due to the impact of COVID-19 for the second year. The impact was felt across multiple areas of CN's services, including:

Reduced commercial waste volumes to the Summerhill Waste Management Centre

Loss of ticket sales from the closure of the Civic Theatre

Loss of bookings from the almost-complete closure of the Stockton Beach Holiday Park

Reduced Newcastle Airport dividend

Reduced income from investments

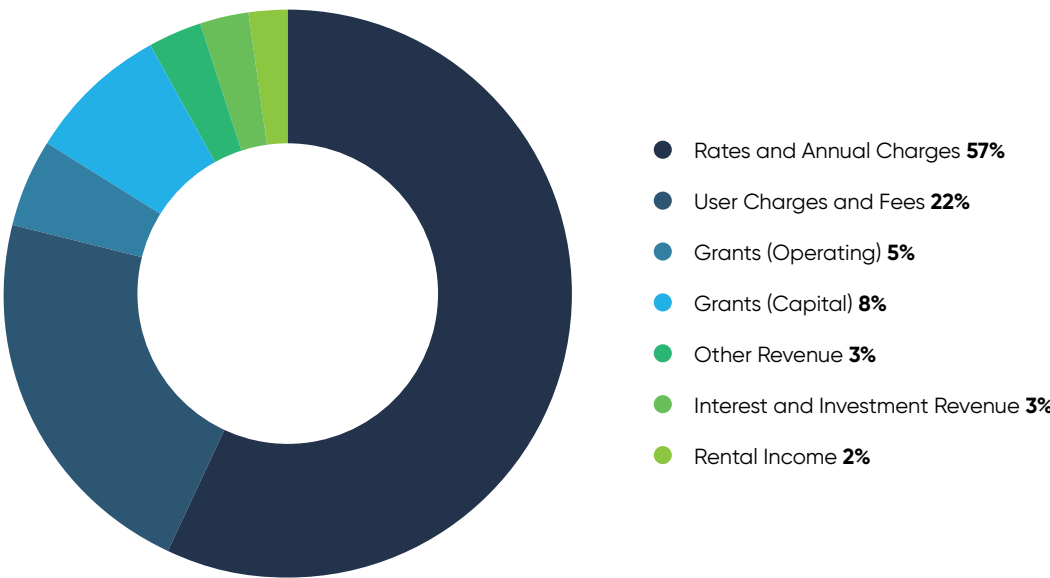
Reduced parking meter revenue

Reduced traffic infringements.

Income from rates and charges contributed \$193 million or 57% of total revenue.

Federal and State Government grants and contributions assist us to provide facilities and services in the community. This year we received \$46 million or 13% (including capital and operational).

Total operating income \$340 million



Special Rate Variation (SRV) Section 508 (2) and 508A

2012 SRV

In 2012, CN successfully applied for a Section 508(2) special rate variation (SRV) of 5% above the rate cap for one year. The variation occurred in the 2012/2013 financial year, increasing the base rate charge. The 2012 SRV was granted for works of a capital nature for specific projects, such as the below:

Since its introduction in July 2012 the special rate has raised \$52.3 million, with \$7.3 million being raised this year. This revenue is placed in a restricted reserve to fund the projects outlined in the 2012 SRV application only.

Over \$10.3 million was spent this financial year on the top four priority projects with the majority of funding being used for coastal revitalisation and cycleways.

In total, \$69.5 million has been spent to date on these capital projects, which is \$17.2 million more than the SRV has raised.

2012 SRV priority projects

City centre revitalisation

Revitalising our coast

Upgrading Blackbutt Reserve

Providing new cycleways

Improving our swimming pools

Modernising our libraries

Expanding our Art Gallery.

2012 SRV projects	Total spend to 30 June 2021 (\$'000)
	Actual
City centre revitalisation	7,514
Coastal revitalisation	51,749
Blackbutt Reserve	5,642
Cycleways	14,891
Total	79,796

Statutory reporting contents

Special Rate Variation (SRV) Section 508 (2) and 508A

Contractors/Works Awarded Regulation cl 217(1)(a2)

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act

Legal proceedings Regulation cl 217(1)(a3)

Public Interest disclosures Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 Regulation

Stormwater levies and charges Regulation CL217(1)(e)

Total rates and charges written off Regulation cl 132(5)

Government Information (Public Access) Act (GIPA Act)

Swimming pools inspections

[Read more about statutory reporting](#)