



Killcare Wagstaffe Trust  
keeping an eye on the environment

# Killcare Wagstaffe Trust

## Newsletter

November / December 2021

### Administration

Changes to our constitution that were advertised in the last newsletter and passed unanimously at our delayed AGM have been accepted by Fair Trading and have been incorporated into our current constitution. The main aim of these changes was to make the association a little easier to run. We were finding that we were having meetings because our constitution demanded it rather than because there was any business to deal with.

Most of the work of the Trust is carried out by the committee, which meets regularly and is working well. Many of our projects are undertaken by smaller groups of committee members.

Apart from general meetings, communication between the committee and the general membership occurs via the newsletters, the website and our email ([killcarewagstaffetrust@gmail.com](mailto:killcarewagstaffetrust@gmail.com)). It does seem that most members are happy to support the work of the Trust without wanting to be more active.

We foresee having fewer general meetings unless there is an issue of local concern that warrants more public engagement. The committee met in November and decided to put off our November general meeting until early next year.

### Spring flowers

Spring sprung with more enthusiasm than usual this year. First the whites – flannel flowers down low, Kunzea in the midstory and angophora and bloodwoods in the canopy. Then we had the trifecta Illawarra flame, Jacaranda and Silky oak. Thanks to Ian Bull for the following photos:



## Unauthorised bike tracks

The committee discussed the increasing use of unauthorised bike tracks in Bouddi NP. At the AGM the NPWSs representative, Andrew Bayley, said that they were concerned as well and were doing what they could to police the rules and issue fines. He also mentioned that they had received many submissions to the draft Bouddi NP Plan of Management from the bike riders asking for more tracks to be built and maintained in NPs. He said that they have a responsibility to take these submissions from the public into account.

This issue goes to the heart of the function of the NP system. We hold the view that their conservation function must be paramount and any activity that degrades the health of the parks should be actively discouraged. Others say that NPs are a community resource that should be able to accommodate a variety of recreational uses.

We will be making a submission to the NPWS draft cycle strategy. In the meantime, we have written to NPWS to ask that signs be installed at staging areas where bikes are unloaded. These locations are the car parks at top of Wards Hill, Hawke Head Drive, and the Mt Bouddi entrance to the Strom fire trail. The signs could clearly state that riding off the fire trail is prohibited and detail the penalties for doing so.

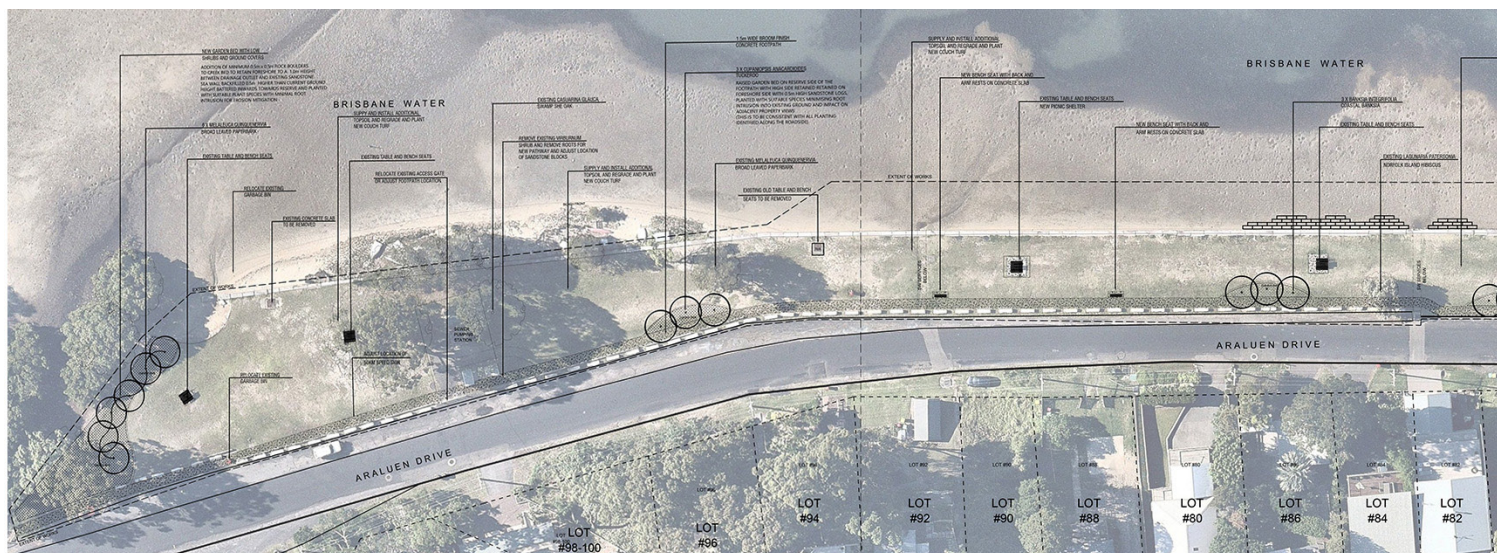
## Hardys Bay Foreshore Proposals

The progressive degredation of the Hardys Bay foreshore is a continuing concern. The seawall is being undermined and is collapsing in places. The area is rutted and trip hazardous with no safe pathways for walkers, pram-pushers and runners. The surface becomes waterlogged after moderate rain. It is a sparse and unattractive recreational area. Our community deserves better.

Both the Trust, the Community Association as well as motivated community members have been working on plans for a new seawall, pathways, simple plantings, remediation of grassed areas and the sea wall for over 12 years.

It is disappointing to report that the Council has abandoned any support for our planned improvements to the foreshore between the toilet block opposite the shops and the pumping station near the club. The latest reason for no action is the Council's financial crisis and unavailability of any funds.

Past reasons for delays and no action have included the impact of development on potential sites of indigenous cultural significance (buried middens, in particular). We are supportive of the need to protect such sites and subsequently proposed plans were modified to have raised planting beds and reduced pathways to reduce the impact. Council representatives nominally agreed with this amended plan. However, communication ceased when the Council went into administration.





It is with some bemusement that we note the erection of minor shelters over two picnic tables along the foreshore. Compare this to the foreshore developments at Ettalong and Gosford in recent times. Hardys Bay deserves better. The Trust will continue to promote and take action for foreshore development and planting initiatives.

## Letter from the Minister for the Environment

One recent project was to engage with the federal government about its response to Graham Samuel's review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Three committee members had a zoom meeting with Lucy Wicks, our local member, who agreed to forward a letter outlining our concerns to the environment minister, Sussan Ley.

We did get a response from the Minister, that, as expected, essentially outlined the government's intentions to avoid accepting Samuel's recommendations. We asked that, in line with Samuels review, that:

1. A National Audit of the environment to provide accurate information about the distribution of threatened species and their habitat. This baseline data is essential if outcomes-based protections are to be used.
2. Legally enforceable National Standards to be in place before approval powers under the Act can be handed to the States. They should ensure that all levels of government contribute to restoring environmental health rather than contribute to further degradation.
3. Assurance/enforcement. An independent body with strong powers, the ability to investigate individual proposals and the power to overturn approvals granted by the States.
4. A commitment to stopping and reversing the catastrophic deterioration in the health of our Natural environment

Unfortunately, the focus of the government seems to be on the use of the Act in assessing development projects rather than as an instrument to improve the health of the environment. In particular they aim to devolve approval powers under the Act to the States before a set of new national standards have been developed.

One interesting matter in the Minister's reply was the intention to use an outcomes-based approach to environmental standards. An example would be that there be no loss of a particular habitat or a reduction in numbers of a particular species. While these are not a bad thing in themselves, they do encourage the use of offsets, which have not had a successful history, and can have a granular focus on individual species which does not consider the complex relationships that must be maintained for a healthy environment. Without adequate baseline information they become very difficult to enforce.

The minister's response can be found on our website.





## Bags

The highly popular KWT calico and hessian bags will shortly be available again at the local outlets and the MBC. Overall, the campaign to eliminate single use plastic bags was a success. Most businesses no longer offer them and those that do, report a dramatic reduction in their use.

## Vale Don Runcie

We were sorry to hear that Don Runcie died last week.

Don was an active community worker particularly after his retirement from his work as an anaesthetist. He was an active member of both the Trust and the Community Association. He was a regular at Trust meetings and an enthusiastic participant in discussions. He served time on the KWT Committee and was a long-term volunteer at the Maitland Bay centre.

Don was a keen photographer with a particular fondness for the black and white form.

He will be missed.

There will be an informal 'celebration of Don's life' at the Community Church at Hardys Bay on Wednesday 15th December at 10.30.

