

New Community Action Group in Ku-ring-gai

Ku-ring-gai residents have formed a community action group to protect its rare and critically endangered urban forest from further decimation.

KU-RING-GAI, NSW, AUSTRALIA,
December 6, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/
-- Ku-ring-gai residents have formed a community action group in an attempt to protect its rare and critically endangered urban forest from further decimation. The new community group Voices of Ku-ring-gai aims to lift the standards of integrity, community consultation and environmental protection at Ku-ring-gai Council.



Members of new community action group gather in Wahroonga Park for their inaugural event

The group formed in the aftermath of several Council decisions green-lighting projects while ignoring real community concerns. Earlier this year Council went ahead with synthetic turf at Norman Griffith Oval just two weeks after the Review of Environmental Factors was published. Community concerns about lack of time to respond, about run-off into Quarry Creek (flowing into Lane Cove River and Sydney Harbour) and about the potential impact on the critically endangered Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest beside the oval were aggressively rejected.

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“We refuse to let Council’s poor decisions go unchallenged”. “In Ku-ring-gai, we’re blessed to live amongst forests found nowhere else in the world, but this comes with great responsibility.”

Kristyn Haywood

There are more developments underway that have similarly ignored community concerns, such as the Northern Suburbs Football Association’s (NSFA) development at North Turramurra, where residents paid a

special levy for six years. They understood this levy was for upgraded facilities including a BBQ area, children’s playground, and walking trails joining up with those in the National Park only to have the entire site taken over by the NSFA after receiving a sporting grant by submitting a non-compliant application. Residents continue to fight this development.

This pattern is repeated at The Glade, Wahroonga where residents’ concerns have again been

ignored, this time over proposed floodlights beaming into their homes at night, and possibly leading to a disruption of the nesting and feeding activity of endangered Powerful Owls.

Voices of Ku-ring-gai says the local council needs to have real consultation with all members of the community, not just those who have political leverage and resources. Critically, it must acknowledge we are in a climate and biodiversity crisis and that in Ku-ring-gai's local government area, there are an astounding number of endangered ecological communities to protect – two of them critically endangered.

Voices of Ku-ring-gai believes urgent action is needed on important issues. "We want more protection for our incredibly rare remnant forests", says Kristyn Haywood, Convenor of the new group. "In Ku-ring-gai, we're blessed to live amongst critically endangered ecological communities found nowhere else in the world, but this comes with great responsibility. We can't just stand by and witness any more destruction."

Voices of Ku-ring-gai sees itself as a grassroots, mission-driven, values-led community group doing its best to make Ku-ring-gai a better place for all beings. It has set itself six key goals:

- * Protect the natural environment of Ku-ring-gai
- * Restore integrity to local government decision-making
- * Ensure that community voices are heard and acknowledged
- * Support candidates whose values align with our goals in the 2024 local council elections
- * Undertake community education on key issues
- * Inspire and support young people to take an active role in the community.

Residents of Ku-ring-gai wishing to join the group, or simply to learn more, can visit the Voices of Ku-ring-gai website at <https://voicesofkuringgai.org>. As anthropologist Margaret Mead famously said "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."

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