



Ebenezer Church wins a Top Sustainable Cities Award!

Ebenezer Church in the Hawkesbury region was a winner at the Sustainable Cities Awards Dinner hosted by Keep Australia Beautiful NSW and City of Canada Bay Council, and attended by The Member for Drummoyne, The Honorable Angela D'Amore MP, Parliamentary Secretary Assisting the Minister for Climate Change and the Environment last night.

The Sustainable Cities program is a Keep Australia Beautiful NSW initiative to recognise outstanding environmental initiatives implemented by local government authorities, schools and community groups and businesses whilst raising public awareness of a range of environmental issues affecting metropolitan NSW.

The incredible and lengthy work undertaken by the Ebenezer Church Council to restore Ebenezer Church in Ebenezer was the winning entry of the NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Award.

Peter McLean, CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful, said the project was particularly impressive for the way in which it pulled the small congregation together for a common goal:

“Ebenezer Church was incapable of meeting the costs of the restoration work but with some lateral thinking, the council was able to contact descendents of the 15 pioneer families who built the church in 1809, and obtained 60 percent of the needed funds.”

The church is the oldest existing church in Australia and the five year *Restoration of Australia's Oldest Existing Church* project included roof repairs, water tank replacement, new toilets, painting, and weed clearing from river banks with some funding through the NSW Government's Heritage Grants Program administered by the Department's Heritage Branch.

The NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Award is sponsored by the Heritage Council of NSW and the NSW Department of Planning.

Petula Samios, Director of the Department of Planning's Heritage Branch, said: “The conservation work undertaken on the Ebenezer Church over the past five years has demonstrated a high standard of workmanship and has engendered strong feelings of community ownership of the site. This is evidenced by the high levels of support received from the local community, including the donation of skills and labour by experienced retired tradesmen, and the endorsement of Hawkesbury City Council which has identified the project as a model of best practice.

“The project has increased and improved public access, use and enjoyment of the site, including the installation of disabled toilets and maintenance work on the church grounds.

“The project has also benefitted the local environment through the removal of weeds along the adjacent river bank.”

The top award on the night of Overall Sustainable Council was presented to Hornsby Shire Council for its strategic and focused *Hornsby Shire 2020: Our Framework For A Sustainable Future* plan. The plan encompasses all the council's policies, strategies and directions for achieving a sustainable city in one document, and provides a community and organisational engagement framework. The plan has already achieved significant water and waste reductions in the Hornsby region.

For further media information or event photos please contact: Ilona Marchetta, Media and Communications Manager at Keep Australia Beautiful NSW on 02 9633 3380. For media comment please contact Peter McLean, Chief Executive Officer of Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, 0416 227 158.

The list below contains a full summary of all Sustainable Cities award recipients for 2010

AWARD TITLE	WINNER	RUNNER UP	HIGHLY COMMENDED
Overall Sustainable Council Award	Hornsby Shire Council: Hornsby Shire 2020: Our Framework For A Sustainable Future	Ryde City Council: Working Towards A Sustainable City	Waverly Council: Environmental Action Plan
Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW Environmental Education Award	Willoughby City Council: Climate Clever Education Campaign	Lane Cove Council: Lane Cove Sustainable Living Project	Randwick City Council: The Eco Heroes Club
Grundfos Water Conservation Award	City of Canada Bay Council: Saving Energy and Water by Using the Weather	Macquarie University: Leading By Example: Water minimisation, efficiency and harvesting at Macquarie University	Cooks River Sustainability: Our River - Cooks River Sustainability Initiative
Landcom Metropolitan Schools Environment Award	Cherrybrook Technology High School: Outdoor Biodiversity Learning Area	Fisher Road School: Environmental Education and Work Education at Fisher Road School	Karonga Special School: Greening Our Sustainable School Space Lambton High School: All in this together now- Building a Sustainable School Community
Packaging Stewardship Forum Waste Minimisation Award	OzHarvest Limited: OzHarvest - Food Rescue	Pretty Beach Community: Pretty Beach Community Preschool and Multipurpose space	Concord Hospital: Reducing Clinical Waste and Increasing Recycling of Waste in the Operating Theatres at Concord Hospital Macquarie University: Motivating the future: reduction, reuse and recycling at Macquarie University
ClubsNSW Sustainable Clubs Award	Oak Flats Bowling and Recreation Club: Oak Flats Bowling and Recreation Club Sustainable Practices Program	Long Reef Golf Club: Ongoing Sustainable Practice Makes the Difference	
NSW Heritage Branch Heritage Award	Ebenezer Church: Restoration of Australia's Oldest Existing Church	Delfin Lend Lease: Nelsons Ridge	
Biodiversity Conservation Award	Blue Mountains City Council: Save Our Swamps	Blacktown City Council: Regenesis - A community engagement, revegetation, carbon sequestration and trading project.	