

Thursday 23 January 2025

Putney Beach opening makes a big splash

Happy swimmers – including City of Ryde Mayor Trenton Brown and Councillors – took the plunge at the Putney Park swim site on Wednesday 22 January, celebrating the grand opening of Sydney’s newest beach under beautiful blue skies.

Residents gathered from early morning to be among the first to officially enjoy the refreshing waters of the Parramatta River, which proved the perfect place to be on a hot Sydney summer’s day.

“This is a sparkling new jewel on the Parramatta River foreshore and an exciting addition to City of Ryde’s wonderful and essential portfolio of open spaces and recreation areas,” said Mayor Brown, who was joined by NSW Minister for Planning and Open Spaces Paul Scully at the opening ceremony.

“The realisation of this scenic swim site – which has already been affectionately dubbed Putney Beach by locals – would not have been possible without the assistance of the NSW Government’s fantastic Places to Swim program, which is delivering improved water recreation opportunities across the state.”

Mayor Brown also thanked the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG), which has been working since 2014 on a comprehensive strategy to clean the river ecosystem through improvements in stormwater runoff, planning controls, sewer overflows and community education.

“This vital organisation, of which Council is a proud, longstanding member, is an alliance of local and state government agencies and community groups, working to create a healthy, liveable, and swimmable river for wildlife and the community to thrive,” he said.

“In partnership with the Parramatta River Catchment Group, Council is dedicated to improving the health of the river long term. This commitment involves regular ongoing water testing, which has already shown good results.”

The City of Ryde has been working to prepare the Putney Park swim site since 2021, when it first constructed the set of sandstone stairs to enable community access to the beach.

Following the awarding of the Places to Swim grant, major construction on the swim site began in August 2023.

The project included construction of an amphitheatre style seating, upgrading the seawall area, installing the swim site enclosure and netting for secure swimming, and continued water quality monitoring.

But the story of swimming at Putney Park goes back a lot further.

In 1929, one of the original swimming baths within the City of Ryde was constructed into the bay on the lower section of Putney Park and it was a popular local destination until the late 1950s and early 1960s when they fell into disrepair and were eventually filled in.

“I’m extremely pleased to see that history has now come full circle,” said Mayor Brown.

“Swimwear fashions may have changed a little bit over the ensuing decades but the sense of fun and enjoyment that people of all ages will get from being able to join their family, friends and neighbours here is exactly the same.”

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