



Ku-ring-gai Council

Ku-ring-gai Snapshot

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Location

Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area (LGA) is located in Sydney's northern suburbs, 16km north of the city centre. It comprises nine suburbs (see Figure 1), covering 84 square kilometres. The area is predominantly residential with 95 per cent of the residential areas comprising of low-density housing. There are significant areas of park and bushland with very little commercial and no industrial land use (KMC 2007a).

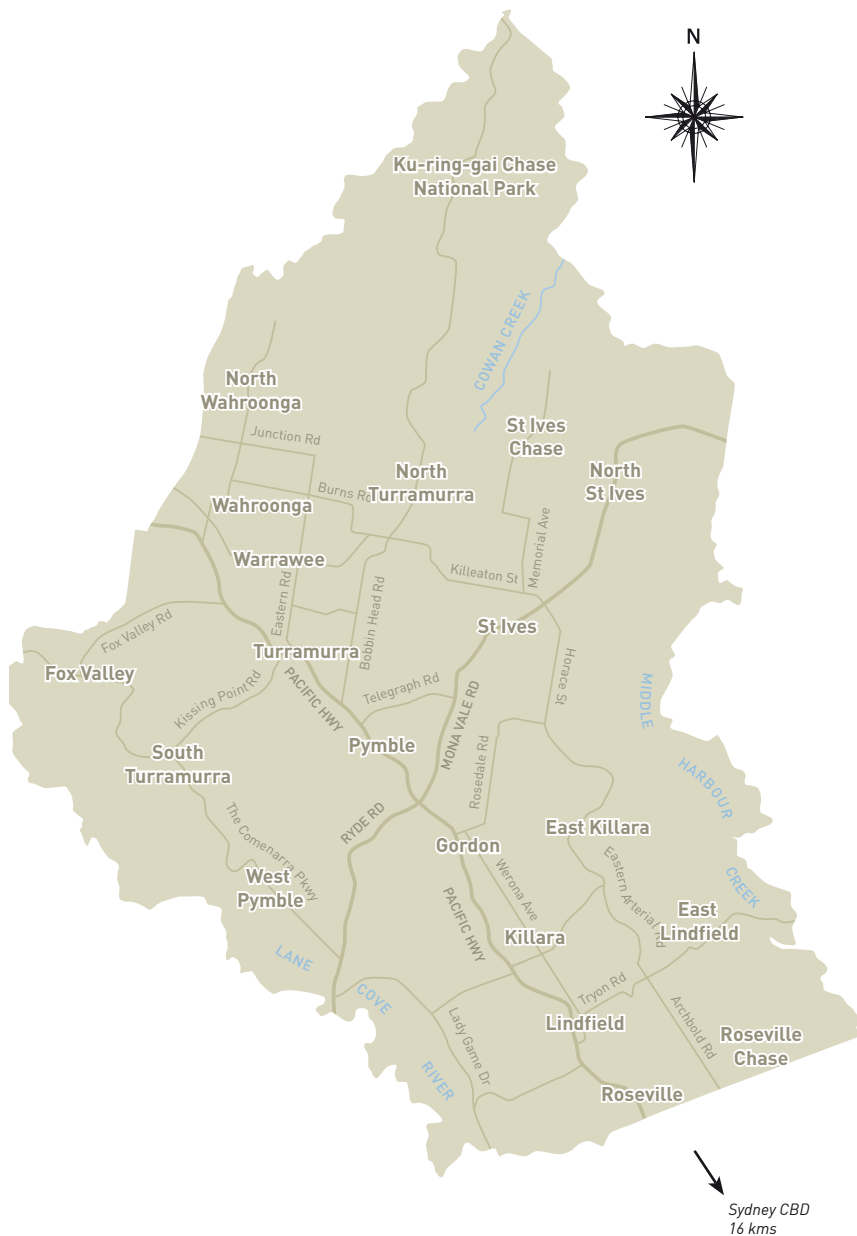


Figure 1: Illustrated image of the Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area showing suburbs and main roads.

Ku-ring-gai's heritage

The name Ku-ring-gai loosely translated means, 'belonging to the Aborigines' and is derived from the language of the Kuringgai (or Guringai) people, the traditional inhabitants of the region (Koettig, 1988).

The Kuringgai people left an indelible mark on the landscape. As European occupation became established, Aboriginal burning was noted in the journals of early settlers. Early historic accounts of North Head report that the Cannalgal Clan used fire to intensively burn the area on a regular basis (Kohen, 2001). By 1848 there had been a change in the vegetation pattern, with an increase in the amount of undergrowth. Major Mitchell attributed this change to the "omission of the annual burning by the natives" (Koettig, 1988). Aboriginal occupation of Ku-ring-gai is still evident today with 92 sites recorded within the LGA (Aboriginal Heritage Office and Ku-ring-gai Council, 2007).

The Aboriginal population was greatly reduced by the introduction of exotic European diseases such as smallpox, to which indigenous people had no built resistance. Death rates of the Kuringgai tribe are estimated at being between 50 and 90 percent throughout the 1790's (Kohen, 2001). By the 1830's records suggested that the total Kuringgai population was less than 100 people (Kohen, 2001). The impact of disease on the population decline was further exacerbated by competition for resources. Hostilities between the Kuringgai and Europeans occurred as the indigenous people were displaced from their traditional lands (Kohen, 2001).

European settlement in Ku-ring-gai began in 1814. One of the first white settlers was William Henry who farmed land along the Lane Cove River. The early population consisted of itinerant workers, loggers, farmers and orchardists who were often self-sufficient and lived in communities that were both isolated and without access to a reliable water supply (KHS, 1996). These two limiting factors to population growth were overcome in

the mid to late 1800's with the establishment of major transport routes, including the completion of a railway line from Hornsby to Milsons Point in 1893. Construction of water tanks at Wahroonga and Pymble connected the district to the Sydney metropolitan water supply based on the Nepean Catchment. The series of isolated farming communities transformed into residential suburbs with the establishment of local government to the area in 1906 (KHS, 1996).

The interwar period saw vast improvements in infrastructure and an era of urban consolidation. With the increase in building applications, local government needed to expand. In 1928 the Shire was converted into a Municipality with four wards each represented by three aldermen. The original building of the present Council Chambers was opened in 1928 (KHS, 1996).

Ku-ring-gai is renowned for its architectural heritage, particularly the homes built in the Federation and interwar periods (KHS 1996). The larger than average suburban allotments, building covenants, fine gardens, retention of native flora and restriction of industrial and commercial development are indicative of Ku-ring-gai's heritage.

Ku-ring-gai has a long history of migration commencing with the Chinese arriving in the 1920's at a time when the insect pest, fruit fly, put an end to commercial cultivation of fruit on the North Shore. As a result, many orchardists leased their land to Chinese settlers for market gardens. The market gardeners grew a range of produce including bulk vegetables. These gardens disappeared from Ku-ring-gai by the end of World War II (Curby & McLeod, 2006).

Italians moved to Ku-ring-gai during the 1920's and 1930's, working in orchards and on farms. Between 1941 and 1946, many Italian Prisoners of War (P.O.Ws) being held in Australia were permitted to work on farms largely located at St Ives (Halstead 1982).



Indigenous dancers at the Guringai Festival. Ku-ring-gai Council.

Society

Ku-ring-gai is one of the most advantaged Local Government Areas in Sydney with high levels of education, employment and financial security (ABS, 2001). Christian religions are highly prominent, with Judaism being the largest non-Christian religion.

Ku-ring-gai is characterised by populations of older residents and families with school age children. It has a significant ageing population with 29 percent of people aged 55 years and over residing in the vicinity (ABS, 2006b). The other dominant group, families with children, account for 58 percent of the total population. Statistics released by the ABS (2006c) show that the percentage of 15-24 year olds that live at home is higher in Ku-ring-gai than the Sydney average (see Figure 2).

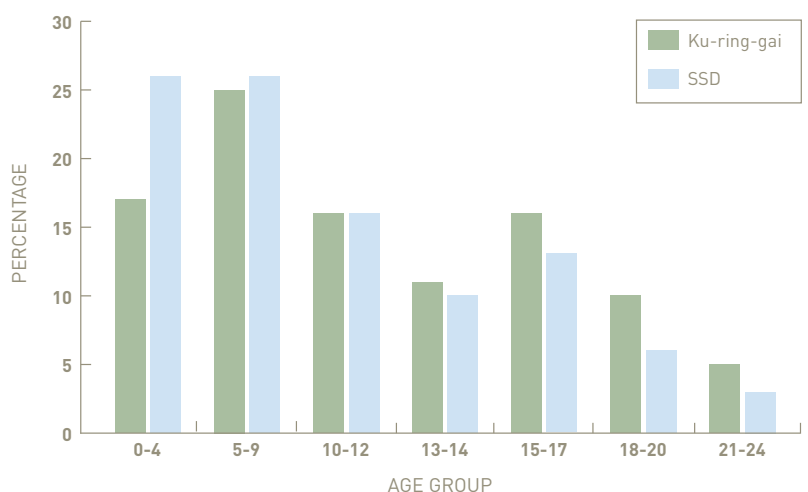


Figure 2: Age of dependent children within Ku-ring-gai (ABS, 2006)



Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony, 2005. Ku-ring-gai Council.

Ku-ring-gai can be described as a safe area. Statistics for crime rates in NSW indicate that recorded criminal incidents of assault, domestic violence, sexual offences and malicious property damage are significantly below the averages for other NSW LGA's (Table 1 and Figure 3). Most crime rates remained stable or declined between 2002 and 2006 (BOCSAR, 2006).

The estimated residential population of Ku-ring-gai in 2006 was 106,029 (ABS 2006d), with 0.1 percent being indigenous. More than 32 percent of Ku-ring-gai's population were born overseas, mainly in the United Kingdom, South Africa, Hong Kong, New Zealand and China (see Table 2, opposite page).

The 2006 Census Data (Table 2, opposite page) provides a snapshot of Ku-ring-gai's society and the changing trends from 2001 to 2006. It shows population and family statistics, dwelling characteristics, income, qualifications and volunteer rates.

TYPE OF CRIME	KU-RING-GAI	SYDNEY	RANK (OUT OF 143 NSW LGAS)
Assault	106.1	585.6	142
Domestic Violence	77.5	337.4	140
Sexual Offences	32.3	109.3	141
Robbery	40.6	158.6	64
Break & Enter (dwelling)	450.2	695.9	104
Break & Enter (non-dwelling)	179.9	310	136
Vehicle Theft	94.1	460.3	132
Steal from Retail Store	36.9	288.8	127
Steal from Dwelling	183.6	269.5	128
Steal from Person	48	232	78
Fraud	197.4	619	112
Malicious Property Damage	626.5	1390.7	141

Table 1: Crime rates and ranking for Ku-ring-gai (BOCSAR, 2006)

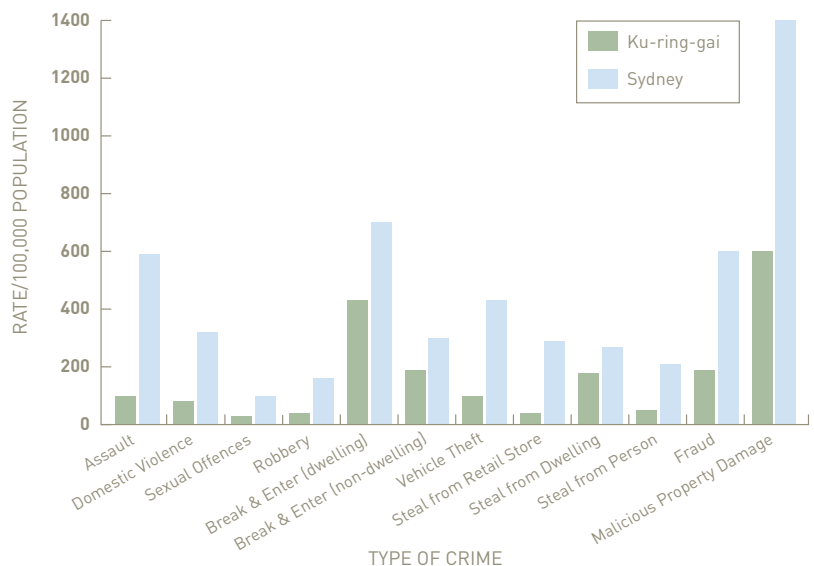


Figure 3: Crime rates for Ku-ring-gai (BOCSAR, 2006)

Census Data 2006 Ku-ring-gai Local Government Area			
PERSON CHARACTERISTICS			
	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	% TOTAL PERSONS (KU-RING-GAI)	% TOTAL PERSONS (SYDNEY)
Total persons (census count)	100,460 *	-	-
Total persons (estimated resident population)	106,029	-	-
Australian citizenship	87,054	87.6	82.6
Persons born overseas	32,406	32.6	31.8
Indigenous persons	112	0.1	1.1
Persons involved in volunteer work	21,334	27.1	14.8
AGE			
0 – 4	5,238	5.3	6.6
5 – 11	10,354	10.4	9.1
12 – 17	10,210	10.3	7.9
18 – 24	8,648	8.7	9.9
25 – 34	6,809	6.9	15.3
35 – 49	21,857	22.0	22.5
50 – 59	14,071	14.2	12.2
60 – 69	9,443	9.5	7.8
70 – 84	9,932	10.0	7.3
85 and over	2,823	2.8	1.6
COUNTRY OF BIRTH			
Australia	63,371	63.8	60.3
England	6,979	7.0	4.2
South Africa	3,834	3.9	0.7
Hong Kong	2,515	2.5	0.9
New Zealand	2,168	2.2	2.0
China	2,047	2.1	2.7
Others/not stated			
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME			
English only spoken at home	79,484	80.0	63.9
Others/not stated	19,901	20.0	36.0
FAMILIES			
Couple families with children	15,989	57.9	49.3
Couple families without children	8,709	31.5	33.2
One parent families	2,644	9.6	15.6
Other families	294	1.1	1.9
DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS			
Separate house	28,853	79.8	57.1
Semi-detached	2,879	8.0	17.4
Flat, apartment	2,002	5.5	17.3
HOUSEHOLD INCOME**			
Lowest group	3,687	12.9	25.0
Medium lowest	4,699	16.4	25.0
Medium highest	5,601	19.5	25.0
Highest group	14,677	51.2	25.0
QUALIFICATIONS			
Bachelor or Higher degree	30,847	39.1	20.0
Advanced Diploma/Diploma	9,002	11.4	8.1
Vocational	6,557	8.3	14.9
No qualifications	25,248	32.0	42.8
Not stated	7,209	9.1	14.3

* The Census count is not the official population of an area. To provide a more accurate population figure which is updated more frequently than every 5 years, the Australian Bureau of Statistics also produces "Estimated Resident Population" (ERP) numbers. Based on population estimates as at 30 June, ERP's take into account people who missed the count on Census night, including people who were temporarily overseas, an under-count adjustment for those who did not complete a Census form and an over-count adjustment for anyone who was double counted.

** The income quartile method has been adopted as the most objective method of comparing change in the income profile of a community over time. The income quartile method assumes an even distribution within each income group. Quartiles are calculated from the Sydney Statistical Division household income data.

Table 2: Ku-ring-gai Population Snapshot (adapted from ABS 2006).

Natural environment

Ku-ring-gai is home to more than 100 bushland reserves covering approximately 1,100 hectares (KMC, 2004a). An environmental base study undertaken as part of Ku-ring-gai’s Residential Strategy highlighted the national significance of the Ku-ring-gai bio-region (Travis McEwen Group, 2000). The key findings outlined the unique features of Ku-ring-gai’s environment, including: its remnant Blue Gum High Forest; high biodiversity; and the proximity of four surrounding National Parks (Travis McEwen Group, 2000).

There are a large variety of native plant species with over 800 recorded, including around 18 threatened species, two endangered ecological plant communities and one critically endangered community (KMC, 2004a). Of note is the Blue Gum High Forest which covered the shale ridgetops of northern Sydney prior to European settlement. Less than 5% of the original forest remains today and is particularly vulnerable to the pressures of urbanisation.

Ku-ring-gai has an unusually high variety of native fauna for an urban area so close to Sydney. There are more than 500 species of native animals (KMC, 2004a).

Water management is a significant issue in Ku-ring-gai as it is positioned at the head of three major catchments and falls within



one of the highest rainfall zones in Sydney (KMC 2007b). Review of water quality data collected over a recent 8 year period has shown significant contrast between the area’s natural and urbanised waterways both in water quality and ecology. This has emphasised the need to be conscious of the negative impacts of urbanisation and to protect Ku-ring-gai’s better quality waterways such as Tree Fern Gully Creek and Cowan Creek.

Transport

Two arterial roads traverse Ku-ring-gai: the Pacific Highway running southeast to northwest and Mona Vale/Ryde Roads running southwest to northeast. Congestion on these roads is a major issue for Ku-ring-gai residents, resulting in increased air and noise pollution as well as lengthy traffic delays during peak travel periods. This situation is exacerbated by the number of school students who are driven to school and a high proportion of residents preferring to travel by personal vehicle to work (Table 3).

Public transport by bus is sporadic and focuses on transport of school children with few services at other times or during school holidays. Bus routes service major centres such as Macquarie

MODE OF TRAVEL	KU-RING-GAI	SYDNEY AVERAGE
Car (as driver)	51.2%	53.7%
Car (as passenger)	3.5%	5.3%
Train	19.2%	12.3%
Bus	1.5%	5.4%
Walked Only	2.2%	4.2%
Bicycle	0.3%	0.6%
Other	1.5%	3.3%
Worked at Home	8.4%	3.9%
Did not go to Work	10.6%	9.5%
Not Stated	1.5%	1.9%

Table 3: How people travel to work in Ku-ring-gai (ABS 2006)



Native plant seedlings at Ku-ring-gai Council Community Nursery. Ku-ring-gai Council.

six town centres identified in the NSW Metropolitan Strategy (Gordon, Turramurra, Pymble, St Ives, Lindfield and Roseville) serve as local business and retail hubs. It is notable that there is not a major shopping complex within the LGA.

Changing landscape and society

Ku-ring-gai is currently experiencing unprecedented residential development particularly in relation to medium density housing in response to continued population growth of Sydney. This has been the result of the New South Wales Government's Sydney Metropolitan Strategy to accommodate population growth along transport corridors and urban consolidation which enables dual occupancy and accommodation for the over 55's (NSW Department of Planning, 2005).

Ku-ring-gai Council is developing a revised Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plans (DCP). These will cover the whole LGA in line with the directions by the NSW Government. The plans involve a revitalisation of each of the town centres as business, social and cultural precincts. The town centre strategy is predicted to create an additional 10,000 new dwellings in Ku-ring-gai during the next 25 years, with a projected population increase of 17 percent on the 2001 Estimated Resident Population (ABS, 2001 cited in KMC, 2004b) from 107,819 to 126,181 in 2026 (refer to Table 4).

Centre to Gordon Station and St Ives shopping centre but are limited in the smaller town centres and residential areas.

Adjacent to the Pacific Highway is the North Shore rail line. Train stations are situated in all Ku-ring-gai suburbs except St Ives. Trains on this line receive high patronage from Ku-ring-gai residents, with 19 percent of workers using only the train to get to work (ABS 2006e). The percentage of those who commute to work by bus, walking or cycling is low. A larger proportion of Ku-ring-gai residents (8 percent) work from home.

Economy

Almost sixty percent of Ku-ring-gai residents are employed as managers or professionals (ABS, 2006f). Schools account for a significant proportion of business activity in Ku-ring-gai. Sixteen public primary schools, four public high schools, eighteen private schools and four schools devoted to educating children with special needs are located in the area.

Ku-ring-gai is an affluent residential area. There is no industrial activity and the predominant type of business in Ku-ring-gai is small-medium sized enterprise. Ku-ring-gai does not have a CBD, the

PRECINCT	2001 *	2004	2009	2026
Roseville	8,776	8,905	9,182	10,015
Lindfield	12,524	12,785	13,695	15,212
Killara	11,842	11,998	12,573	14,216
Gordon	6,184	6,289	6,907	8,254
St Ives	18,547	18,816	19,357	20,939
Pymble	15,343	15,593	16,376	17,163
Turramurra	21,249	21,614	22,281	24,032
Wahroonga	13,356	13,825	14,452	16,351
Total	107,819	109,824	114,823	126,181

Sub totals do not sum to totals due to rounding

**2001 Census figure for Estimated Resident Population (ERP)*

Table 4: Projected Resident Population by Precinct (adapted from Ku-ring-gai Section 94 Contributions Plan 2004 – 2009 – Residential Development, p. 39)

