



Get to the Point Programme (Inc.)

PO Box 68 Greenwell Point NSW 2540

abn 84 102 326 427
admin@greenwellpoint.info
www.greenwellpoint.info

Minutes – Get To The Point Monthly Meeting 21st April, 2016

1. Meeting was declared open at 7pm by the Chairman
 - In attendance were 12 Residents, plus Mayor Jo Gash & Michael Davis (Ward 2 Candidate)
 - Apologies – Tanya Patterson, Clair Smith, Jemma Tribe
2. Minutes from last meeting were read by Graeme Gardiner
 - Mayor Jo Gash was formally welcomed. Mayor Gash requested that reports be given out of order as she would like to leave early. Mayor Gash advised that elections to council will not be held until 17th March 2017 due to the continued discussions surrounding council mergers.
3. Business arising from the minutes
 - **Drainage** - Bob Williamson reported that the upturn was removed from Church St due to its ineffectiveness in controlling water flow. He also re-iterated the efforts made by himself & Ken Knights as to his visit to the council as reported last month. Ken Knights/Bob advised that \$30,000 was put into budget for Adelaide St drainage.
 - **Mens Shed Report** - Bob reported on the Mens Shed. The move to the new (temporary) shed has been completed and work is being done to ensure that it is safe to use until our new shed is built. The DA is with Council at the moment.
 - **Dogs Off Leash**. Warwick gave an overview of his progress report (see Attachment 3). Since the sub-committee has not actually met yet, and no comprehensive surveying of residents has been done, the Chairman thanked Warwick for his work so far, but noted that this was a very preliminary report, and is not yet suitable for the GTTP Committee to consider. The item will stay on the agenda for future meetings for the GTTP to watch progress.
4. **Correspondence in / out – see Attachment 1**
5. **Presidents report** – The chairman had no separate report as all items are to be covered in general business.
6. **Treasurers Report – see Attachment 2**
7. Bob Williamson - Discussion on the Task Force for the Shoalhaven Heads. They have no money & no prospect of getting any. Doubtful if anything will come of the report. Water is declared clean.
8. **History Group**. Change of name of History group. Submit to GTTP next meeting. Peter Talty will attend the History groups next meeting.
9. **Gallery**
 - The Gallery currently has a Beautiful Exhibition by the “Thursday Art Class.” This is a collaborative exhibition by Local Artists exhibiting watercolours & pastels.

- Our next exhibition will be in May & will be beanies & Scarves and a wide range of knit ware for children , men & Women. Even footie scarves.
- The gallery had a very busy Easter with over 50 people coming on the one day.

10. **Community Garden.** Warwick Wright to follow up Ron Mank to obtain scope of his offer for the garden. How and when could the community use the garden? (Action - Warwick Wright)

11. **Gazette**

- Peter: Proposed that we move to 10 issues per year as it used to be. This would require more people to contribute to the preparation of content and to the production.
- Peter also proposed a change of name of the GTTP to a Community Based appellation such as “Greenwell Point Community Forum”. Many residents do not know what “GTTP” is for.
- Phil Morehead volunteered to interview persons within the Community with the idea of doing a monthly series of Greenwell Point personalities for the newsletter.

12. **Other Business**

> Peter has set up a trial Dropbox account for the use of GTTP to try to improve the efficiency of the transfer of information. It should help with Gazette preparation especially with the transmission of files too big for email – such as the MS Publisher file of the Gazette.

> The “Greenwell Point” sign has again been brought up. It was mentioned that it is indeed ongoing; waiting for Grahame Ross to return to interview the Commercial People. Council has no problem with its re-erection. Men’s Shed to consider steelwork. (ACTION – Grahame Ross on return, liase with Bob Williamson)

> Electronic Notice sign to be investigated to advise the fine denizens of Greenwell Point of upcoming events. (ACTION-Bob Williamson)

13. **Youth in the Community.** Investigate ways to involve youth in the community. (TBA)

15. Meeting Closed at 8.35pm. Next Meeting Thursday 19 May 2016

Attachment 1 – Correspondence In / Out as at 19 April 2016

13. Correspondence:-

Dated	#	Item	CCB
12-04-16	2016/12	Strategy & Assets Committee + attachments	CCB
		Notes 1 & 2 Below.	
31-03-16	2016/13	Receipt Milad Investments	
19-03-16	2016/14	Marine Rescue-Open Day, Greenwell Point	
21-04-16	2016/15	Ordinary Meeting 19/4/16	CCB

1. Federal Member	16
2. State Member	16
CCB	5
Other	14

Development Approvals

DA16/1389 – Detached habitable room in Adelaide Street.

DA15/1892 – Mods to Caravan Park in West Street. Change in mix long & short term.

Note 1 -Item 24 on above (Item 24) concerned the Greenwell Point Heritage Wharf –

<https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=gm3E1HaVXZ0%3d&portalid=3>

Note 2 -Grant for Rural Fire Service upgrade \$285,000.

Tabled Rescue Services Letter received regarding the Field Day in November. Note to add in next month's agenda. (Graeme Gardiner to add to Agenda)

Attachment 2 – Treasurer’s Report April 2016

**GET TO THE POINT PROGRAMME INC.
MONTHLY RECONCILIATION REPORT for GTTP meeting of 21st April 2016**

Reconciled with Account Balance as at 31/03/16 Statement 113

OPENING BALANCE \$ 7,511.96

1/03/2016 Interest \$ 0.11 TOTAL CREDIT \$ 0.11

CLOSING BALANCE \$ 7,512.07

Cash On Hand 31st March 2016 \$ 7,512.07

**Liabilities as at 30/03/16 \$ 1,465.00
(advertising paid for but not yet received)**

- Advertising Invoiced but unpaid Gazette #114
 - Shoalhaven Lawnmowing \$90.00 email 21/4
 - Dean Wilkins Plumbing \$90.00 email 21/4
 - Greenwell Point Service Centre \$205.00 hand deliver 21/4
 - Johnston Tobin Solicitors \$205.00 email 21/4

Ann Williamson
GTTP Treasurer

Attachment 3 – Interim report from “Dog off leash” sub-committee

Dog ownership responsibilities & consideration of a possible off leash areas or areas for Greenwell Point

Interim Report to GTTP 21 April 2016

The sub-committee consists of:

- Debra Roberson, Simon Frazer, Phil Morehead and Warwick Wright

Recommendation

That the sub-committee proceed with examining a number of issues relating to compliance with the Companion Animals Act (Refer Appendix) and make recommendations on improving the environment of Greenwell Point as well as the health and well-being of residents and their dogs.

The revised results of the recent survey are

Number of respondents	47
Those strongly objecting	4
Number who didn't care or did not answer the question	15
Those in support of an off leash area	28

Matters reviewed by the sub-committee

The sub committee was formed following the last GTTP meeting to examine off leash dog areas. It has been found necessary to broaden the scope of the enquiry to address related issues before proceeding to make any recommendations on whether or not there should be an off leash area or areas. These issues are

- Understanding of dog owners and council's responsibilities under The Companion Animals Act
- Responsible dog ownership
- Dog droppings on reserves and other public places
- Barking dogs
- Social and economic benefits to Greenwell Point of an off leash area or areas

Discussions have been held with local residents, Michael Jarman (Ranger Manager Shoalhaven Council), Liberty (the new ranger) and another animal welfare officer from the Council and Mathew Sturt (a dog trainer). A report from an animal behavioural expert, Prof Paul Mc Creavy (Sydney University) is expected shortly.

Overview of discussion

There is a misunderstanding in the community about off leash dog areas. Many consider that “off leash” means dogs just run free, defecating and disrupting other people. Nothing

could be further than the truth in a well-defined off leash area with adequate signage. This is addressed in detail in the draft report including comparisons with other council areas.

Most locals we talked to (including residents of Adelaide St) have no problem with locals walking their dogs off leash in the early mornings / evenings. Their main concern is visitors who they perceive as irresponsible and do not pick up after their dogs. There is far too much dog faeces on all our footpaths, parks and reserves. It is unlikely that visitors are the only people responsible.

Why is an off leash area in GP important?

- For the health and wellbeing of dog owners and their dogs.
- To enable residents to comply with the Companion Animals Act without having to travel long distances to off leash areas in other Shoalhaven towns. .

Dogs need to exercise as well as socialise with other dogs and people. Young dogs in particular need to play. Walking on a leash does not give many dogs sufficient exercise. Confining dogs to their properties, which is common in Greenwell Point, denies dogs the exercise and socialisation required to be well behaved, preventing escape, aggression towards other dogs and people as well as unnecessary barking.

Well exercised dogs make better neighbours with no or minimum barking. Encouraging people to regularly exercise their dogs brings people together and creates a greater sense of community. Most of the dog owners we spoke to said they first met other residents through regular contact with their dogs. Many long term friendships have been established prior to the current Council enforcement program which has seen less people walking their dogs off leash. The reason is because they fear being fined by rangers. There is minimal socialisation of dogs and people with those who do walk their dogs on leash.

The Companion Animals Act places responsibility on local councils to promote public awareness of and to administer provisions of the Act including responsible pet ownership. Councils are required to provide at least one off leash area but in practice most councils provide a number of areas. There are 22 in The Shoalhaven. Most are in larger coastal towns.

Designated off leash areas are for responsible dog owners who have effective control of their dogs and ensure that they pick up after their dog. It is recommended that should any area or areas be designated as off leash that signage be erected stating

- Please pick up after your dog and dispose of waste in the bins provided
- Dogs must be on leash on entry and exit
- Your dog must be under voice control
- Ensure your dog is not a nuisance to other users of this area
- Dangerous or restricted breeds are not permitted to use this area.

It is also recommended that poo bag dispensers be acquired by GTTP and installed on all reserves irrespective of whether they are off leash. The Council will provide the bags. This is done in a number of villages including Kangaroo Valley, Currarong and Callala Beach.

The population demographics have changed with many young families and new residents considering the dog as part of the family rather than the animal in the back yard.

Where once the dog was left at home when the family went on holidays, there are now dog friendly caravan parks and motels around Australia. Anglers Rest in Greenwell Point is one such park. There is also dog friendly accommodation in the Waterside Cabins and a house fronting Adelaide Street Reserve. (The property is the cause of concern by residents and needs to be addressed separately.)

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Dog droppings /poo bag dispensers.

There is far too much of it in Greenwell Point. After inspection of parks (both on and off leash) in The Shoalhaven, Illawarra and Sydney, which provide poo bag dispensers, it is evident that the dispensers and appropriate signage are effective. Whereas most councils provide dispensers, communities in The Shoalhaven need to provide their own in the interests of public health.

To encourage residents and visitors to clean up their dog's droppings, GTTP are asked to consider installing poo bag dispensers at entrances to the foreshore parks in the interests of public hygiene and to make the village a more attractive place.

Unlike most NSW Councils, Shoalhaven Council has a policy of not installing or refilling dispensers. Those towns which do have dispensers have arranged for resident associations to pay for their installation and maintenance.

Barking dogs

Many residents complain about barking dogs in adjoining properties, but like most things in Greenwell Point, people are reluctant to take any action. Encouraging residents to walk their dogs, particularly in an off leash area, would provide exercise and socialisation to help the dogs eliminate barking.

Responsible use of off lease areas.

Introduction of one or more off leash areas in Greenwell Point should be accompanied by appropriate signage as well as information to residents and visitors, along the lines of that produced by Kiama Council. The information could be made available on public notice boards, The Gallery and dog friendly accommodation places.

Comparison with other Councils in responsible dog ownership Kiama and Leichardt

Kiama

The Council website acknowledges the health and social benefits of off leash areas.

The Council has issued a welcoming booklet for responsible dog owners. The booklet states that the Council

“Understands that companion animal ownership is an integral part of family life. It recognises the need for resident and visiting dogs and their owner families, to be provided with facilities that promote health, recreation and socialisation. Dog Off-Leash Areas represent Council’s holistic approach to sustainable living and environmental management.”

Dog ownership can provide many health and social benefits for their owners. It also carries with it an obligation to care for the dog in a responsible fashion, and to ensure that the dog does not cause a nuisance to others.

The website offers residents and visitors advice for off leash areas. The emphasis is on the benefits of controlled exercise and play. The following advice is offered to residents and visitors.

Some advice for off-leash users:

- your dog should be trained to consistently return to you in the face of distraction
- silent whistle recall training is recommended
- if you know your dog has doubtful social skills, is not trained to always come when it is called or is the fearful type, do not take the dog to any off-leash areas
- don't feed your dog before visiting an off-leash area. Let your dog know you are carrying food treats as this will keep him close by and his focus on you
- reward your dog with treats each time he returns or retrieves on command
- if your dog appears to be showing unwanted attention to, or interest in another person or dog, immediately reward it when it responds and place a collar and lead on it, and quietly move it away
- restrain your dog if asked and don't allow it to be a nuisance
- do not allow your dog to wander off exploring. Use your visit to the off-leash area for controlled exercise or play only
- keep your dog under control at all times. Keep your first visits to strict routine and your dog will still learn the drill
- keep play activities away from main walking tracks and other users
- ask any person approached by your dog to remain still until the dog has scented them. Do this if you are approached by another dog
- if your dog is approached by another while playing with toys, recall your dog. Restrain it and remove the toy so your dog won't feel that it needs to protect it from the other dog.
- if your dog approaches another person or dog, don't rush up yelling at your dog as this could incite it or the other dog into attacking. Quietly wait a reasonable distance away until the dogs have lost interest in each other. You should then call your dog, praise and reward it on its return.

Control over your dog and respect for the rights of local residents, other users and the environment are the keys to preserving these facilities.

The following are examples of the diversity of off leash areas

Balmain adjacent to the Thames Street Wharf is next to the ferry terminal and residential housing not dissimilar to the Adelaide St reserve. There are no time restrictions. Dogs on and off leash, commuters, walkers and runners all mix freely with no incidents of anyone being upset by the dogs which are off leash.



Rozelle adjacent to the Iron Cove Bridge and adjoining the residential development of Balmain Cove / Balmain Shores. The harbour walkway and the park next to the apartment blocks are designated off leash areas. The only restriction is that off leash dogs need to be kept 10 metres away from the children's playground. There is an On Lease Zone between the park and Callan Park on the other side of the Iron Cove Bridge which is clearly marked by sign posts and paving signs (see below).



Glebe Point is further away from residents with a beach on the harbour. There are no time restrictions. During the day there are always plenty of activities including family picnics, people playing sport, walkers, and weddings. – and off leash dogs. Everyone has a good time and there is no issue with the dogs being off leash.

Example of foot path markings where there are Shared Zones, eg children’s playgrounds.



Warwick Wright

on behalf of the sub-committee

20 April 2016

Appendix

THE COMPANION ANIMALS ACT 1998

Part 1 of The Act places responsibility on local councils to promote public awareness of and to administer provisions of the Act including responsible pet ownership.

Part 3 deals with responsibility for control of dogs including

- Micro chipping, wearing collars, escaping from property
- Responsibilities in public places
 - Dogs must be under effective control which includes being on a leash held by a responsible person. This does not apply in areas designated as off-leash, training or to certain dogs such as Police dogs
 - Penalty for non-compliance apply
 - The local authority can by order declare a public place to be an off-leash area and can determine particular times for the use of off leash dogs.
- Dogs are specifically excluded from some public places
 - - Within 10 metres from Children's play areas
 - Certain food preparation and consumption areas (There are some exceptions including outdoor dining areas such as DJs at Greenwell Point. See 14A)
 - Recreation areas which Councils have ordered dogs prohibited.
 - Public bathing areas that council has specifically ordered are prohibited areas.
 - School grounds (unless permission is granted CI 5)

Council must provide rubbish receptacles for disposal of dog defecation. There is no requirement to provide poo bag dispensers or bags although this is common practice in many council areas.

GTTP website is <http://greenwellpoint.info>

GTTP email is greenwellpoint@gmail.com