

# Community engagement case study





# Malabar Water Resource Recovery Facility Fence Renewal

Sydney Water values community and customer engagement of all kinds. Just recently, we completed the Malabar Fence Renewal Project. This was an opportunity to connect with and actively involve First Nations communities and stakeholders in the planning and delivery of this project to leave a positive legacy for the community.

## Background

The Malabar Fence Renewal project completed in September 2023 renewed 1.8 kilometres of perimeter fencing around Sydney Water's Malabar Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) to improve site security. Sitting on the Malabar Headland, it's an area of national significance listed as one of 32 endangered places in Australia.

The headland also has four registered Indigenous sites with evidence of the Bidjgal and Gadigal People, including rock engravings, grinding grooves and middens.

## Planning

During the project planning phase, Sydney Water engaged with stakeholders including Randwick City Council, La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services, the Gamay Rangers, IndigiGrow and the Gujaga Foundation.

The Gamay Rangers and IndigiGrow (who collect, propagate, and care for native vegetation) were engaged for bush regeneration work and the creation of native gardens. The Gujaga Foundation was engaged to consult with Elders and Senior Knowledge Holders to tell appropriate dreaming stories that could be shared. A local First Nation's artist was commissioned to create artwork representing the surrounding water systems and their significance to the Aboriginal people of coastal Sydney.

## Our shared purpose

Our shared purpose was to work with the community and stakeholders to care for country and construct new fencing with respect and appreciation for First Nations knowledge.



## What we delivered

The completed project has respectfully incorporated native planting, language, storytelling and artwork along with the required perimeter fencing. At the entry to the Malabar WRRF, there's now a yarning circle and water station. A place for people to meet at the start or finish their walk over the Malabar Headland.

A walkway with Indigenous etchings has been constructed running parallel to the new fence, from the yarning circle to the start of the landscaped bush track over the headland. It includes sandstone seating, with QR codes linking stories from Elders with information on nearby plantings, some edible. The specially commissioned artwork has been installed on the water station and will be used throughout the WRRF.

Sydney Water also took pride in providing economic opportunities with the engagement of the La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council, Gamay Rangers, IndigiGrow, Gujaga Foundation and local artists. Strong and trusted connections and relationships have been established as we continue to look for opportunities to work together.