



MEDIA RELEASE

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Local action earns Dungog NSW's top Tidy Towns honour

Dungog has been named the Overall Winner of the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW (KAB NSW) 2026 Tidy Towns Awards, recognising its strong community leadership, environmental action and sustained volunteer commitment. The winners were announced on Saturday 17 October at an awards ceremony hosted by Orange, the 2025 titleholder.

With this award, Dungog will represent New South Wales at the 2027 Australian Tidy Towns Awards.

Dungog was recognised for its strong volunteer networks, community ownership and ability to turn local concerns into lasting action. Its achievements span waste reduction, environmental education, biodiversity and community connection.

The community also received awards for Single Use Plastic-Free Dungog, Myall Creek Rehabilitation - A Rediscovery and Local Heroes recipient Michelle Dado-Millyn.

KAB NSW Overall Assessor Peter Clark highlighted the community's ability to sustain action over time:

"Dungog's greatest strength is the combination of resilience, initiative and community capacity," Mr Clark said.

Across NSW, the awards recognised projects led by councils, community groups, schools, businesses and individuals, from habitat restoration and water protection to waste avoidance, heritage and inclusive public spaces.

Since 1981, the Tidy Towns program has recognised and celebrated efforts to protect and enhance the environment in rural and regional NSW. The awards highlight the contribution of local people and the practical results achieved through community partnerships.

KAB NSW CEO Val Southam congratulated Dungog and all award recipients:

"These awards celebrate the people who give their time, energy and ideas to make their communities better places to live. Dungog's achievements show how much can be accomplished when local people work together and sustain that commitment over time."

The awards are hosted by Keep Australia Beautiful NSW with support from Orange City Council, NSW Environment Protection Authority, Snowy Hydro and JR Richards & Sons.

Photos from the event and the awards winners' book will be available shortly after the event at:

<https://www.kabnsw.org.au/2026-tidy-towns-winner/>

Thank you to our 2026 awards and event supporters



[ENDS]



KAB NSW 2026 Tidy Towns Awards Winners and Highly Commended Table

POPULATION CATEGORY	AWARD	RECIPIENT
OVERALL TIDY TOWNS AWARD		
Overall Winner	Dungog	
Population category A	Winner	Coomba Park
	Finalist	Walcha
Population category B	Winner	Dungog
	Finalist	Bellingen
Population category C	Winner	Leeton
	Finalist	Parkes
	Finalist	Moss Vale
Biodiversity Conservation		
Population category B	Winner	Myall Creek Rehabilitation - A Rediscovery Sustaining the Williams Valley Inc (Dungog)
Population category C	Winner	Land for Wildlife Koala Tree Give Away Wingecarribee Shire Council
Population category E	Winner	Cessnock Koala Habitat Study Cessnock City Council
Circular Economy - Sponsored by NSW EPA		
Population category A	Winner	Mystery Market Lynda Love and Coomba & District Progress Association
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation – Sponsored by Snowy Hydro		
Population category B	Winner	Climate Emergency Response Bellingen Shire Council
Population category C	Winner	Parkes Urban Heat and Canopy Mapping Parkes Shire Council
	Highly Commended	Byron's EV Transition to Net Zero Byron Shire Council
Population category E	Winner	Ross Hill: Carbon Neutral Winery Ross Hill Wines (Orange)
Communication & Engagement		
Population category A	Winner	Coomba Gardening and Produce Kim Peace and Coomba & District Progress Association
Population category B	Winner	Life in our Cemeteries Bega Valley Shire Council and Atlas of Life
Population category C	Winner	FOGO Leeton Shire Council
	Highly Commended	WSC Priority Weeds Information Days Wingecarribee Shire Council
Community Spirit & Inclusion		
Population category A	Winner	Paterson Hub & Harvest Paterson Hub & Harvest
	Highly Commended	WinterFest: Walcha's Winter Connection Walcha Business Group
Population category C	Winner	Multicultural Cherry Fiesta Hilltops Council – Destination and Economy Team
	Highly Commended	Old TAFE Restoration and Repurpose Ethical SDA (Lithgow)

Heritage and Culture		
Population category B	Winner	Bellingen Town Entry Statements Bellingen Shire Council
Population category C	Winner	Rainbow Serpent Water Feature Restoration Gunnedah Shire Council
	Highly Commended	Roxy Community Theatre Refurbishment Leeton Shire Council
Population category E	Winner	Mulaa Giilang Exhibition Orange City Council – Orange Regional Museum
Litter Prevention - Sponsored by NSW EPA		
Population category D	Winner	Adopt a Road: Worth Celebrating Singleton Tidy Towns
Liveable Towns		
Population category A	Winner	The Tidal Pool John Coles, Lynda Neslen and Coomba & District Progress Association
Population category B	Winner	Connell Park Redevelopment Bellingen Shire Council
Population category C	Winner	Chelmsford Town Square Upgrade & Activation Leeton Shire Council
Population category D	Winner	Broken Hill Accessible Bus Shelter Program Broken Hill City Council
Population category E	Winner	Experience Orange Orange City Council
Local Heroes		
Population category A	Winner	Peter Blomfield Walcha
	Special Commendation	Thomas Jeffs Canowindra
Population category B	Winner	Michelle Dado-Millyn Dungog
	Special Commendation	Patricia Maybury Weston
Population category C	Joint Winner	Roxy Volunteer Dream Team Roxy Community Theatre (Leeton)
	Joint Winner	Marie Armstrong Barrack Heights
Population category D	Winner	Rik Whitehead Ballina
Population category E	Winner	Chris Gryllis Orange
Plastic-Free Communities		
Population category B	Winner	Single Use Plastic-Free Dungog Single-Use Plastic Free Dungog
Population category C	Winner	TrailerBlazers: Byron Shire's Move to Reuse Byron Shire Council
Resource Recovery - Sponsored by JR Richards & Sons		
Population category C	Winner	Moama Return & Earn Facility Murray River Council
Population category D	Winner	Singleton Gives FOGO a Go! Singleton Council
Population category E	Winner	Smarter Resource Recovery for Orange Orange City Council
Waste Avoidance		
Population category A	Winner	Sustainability Table Kirsty Duncan and Coomba & District Progress Association

Waterways & Marine Protection		
Population category C	Winner	Urban Rivers Restore the Wingecarribee River Wingecarribee Shire Council
	Highly Commended	Water Network Management - Digital Twin Tech Leeton Shire Council
Population category E	Winner	Healthy Waterways, Healthy Communities Orange City Council
Young Legends		
Population category A	Winner	St Joseph's Primary Earthwise Academy St Josephs Primary School, Merriwa
Population category D	Winner	Greta-Branxton Primary School Legends Cessnock City Council
Population category E	Winner	Orange Nature Playgroup Orange Nature Playgroup

Population Categories

- Population Category A: ≤ 1,500
- Population category B: 1,501-5000
- Population category C: 5001-12,000
- Population category D: 12,001-23,000
- Population category E: > 23,001

CONTACT DETAILS

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

About the KABNSW Tidy Towns Awards

Since 1981, the Tidy Towns Program has been rewarding and recognising projects around litter, waste management, recycling, heritage, community spirit and other environmental areas in towns both large and small across the breadth of NSW.

We endeavour to deliver an inclusive and positive platform that encourages shared learnings and inspires environmental action at the local level. The program recognises and celebrates those rural and regional communities who are pioneering the path towards a more sustainable future.

About KAB NSW

Keep Australia Beautiful NSW (KABNSW) is the state's premier organisation for litter reduction and environmental sustainability. Independent and not-for-profit, our focus is to engage communities to make NSW the least littered state in Australia, transforming littering behaviour to create a beautiful and more sustainable environment.

Over a 40-year history we have built a state-wide network of dedicated individuals, businesses, schools, community groups and government bodies striving to deliver a cleaner environment.

Through five core programs we work with communities across regional, metropolitan, and coastal NSW to educate and motivate environmental initiatives.