

# Kioloa Community Forum Report to the BPKTCA November 2021

## Background

The Kioloa Community Forum was established at a meeting of village residents on 18 April 2021. The Forum arose from the need for Kioloa residents to have a voice in what does and doesn't happen in our village. The poorly handled proposal for a skatepark was the catalyst for our community's call for action.

Due to anomalies in the BPKTCA's constitution, whereby voting is based purely on the number of residents who attend meetings to vote for Committee representatives, Kioloa has no representatives on the Committee at all. It is well known that Bawley Point residents outnumber Kioloa residents in the order of 3:1. That means we have no chance of equitably electing our representatives or being able to carry a vote on any proposals put forward by the Association at public meetings. This is irrespective of whether they impact directly on our village. Conversely, residents of Bawley Point are able to vote decisively at public meetings on any matters put forward by the Association. Bawley Point residents who are on the Committee are more in touch with the needs and expectations of their own village. That is how an Association with appropriate representation from all villages should be operating.

The Association often says that we are one community and that it serves all of our interests, irrespective of where the committee members are from. While there are many issues of common interest across our three villages, we each have points of difference that relate specifically to our individual communities. That may be the demographics where the number of young people may be in greater numbers and have different facility and infrastructure needs, environmental issues and the like.

## Points of Contention

Kioloa's issues with the BPKTCA constitution are well documented as noted above. We have lobbied the Association to change the constitution to enable equitable committee representation and voting rights. Pending the resolution of those issues we also proposed and agreed on a sub committee to enhance our dealings with the Association. Both proposals were rejected by the Association, the latter at the 12<sup>th</sup> hour after the paperwork had been drawn up. A further suggestion to undertake a whole of community needs survey to ascertain what we all want and need, was also rejected. This survey would have clearly provided a whole of community blueprint for a strategic plan to establish priorities with the SCC.

A fundamental issue for Kioloa residents is that the **shared community facilities hub** in the centre of our village is often seen as a development opportunity with scant regard for impacts on our amenity. The notion that a currently under-utilised playing field or run down basketball court are 'fair game' for some other facility needs to be abandoned immediately. We should all recognise that the hub in Kioloa is complete. We need to look elsewhere if the need for new and different community facilities can be **clearly and unequivocally** demonstrated and that they are supported by **a majority of residents in all communities**. We have seen the opportunities being pursued to refurbish the basketball courts and the renewed interest in that sport. And yet, only a few months ago, it was actively promoted as

a site for a skatepark. Similarly we only have one multi purpose playing field to serve Bawley Point, Kioloa and Termeil, but it has been touted as a site for alternative recreational facilities including a skatepark. We must learn to value what we have. By all means refurbish and improve them but if we lose them we won't get them back again.

## **Community Engagement**

The BPKTCA must fundamentally change the way it engages with all residents and listen to and take heed of our views, concerns and issues.

Going into 2022 we can no longer tolerate the way proposals like the skatepark were handled. This issue divided the community and pitched one village against another. Throughout there was no community engagement or any genuine attempt to talk to the community about this proposal. The Association and it's sub committee took a 'crash or crash though' approach. It wasn't until the SCC survey that residents had an opportunity to say whether we even want a skatepark in either of our villages. We won't know the results of that until next year. In the interim, and building on a proposal put forward by the KCF back in March, there is now emerging support for a new recreation hub on a site to the south of the Murramarang Men's Shed. Again, our initial suggestion for this site was originally rejected by the Association. It could have been pursued with community support months ago. Now it will potentially and unnecessarily become a Council election issue.

In the absence of engagement between residents of Kioloa and the BPKTCA, we had to write to and meet with Shoalhaven City Councillors and their officers to highlight our issues and concerns.

## **The future**

What we expect going into 2022 is that there will be significant and lasting changes to the way the Association relates to all of the residents it represents. We will need to have a real voice in what happens in our village and this should be reflected in the constitution. Importantly it won't be sufficient to just provide for proportional representation on the Association's committee. This only perpetuates the inability of Kioloa residents to have a decisive say in what happens in our village when it comes to a vote. No one village should be able to tell another what happens in its backyard. Where a proposal **may** impact directly on that village then only the residents of that village must have the decisive say in whether it proceeds further or not. In the meantime we expect to be included in **early** discussions about ideas and proposals, **before** they firm up and become agenda items on meetings with Council officers.

## **Some repairs and maintenance work for the village of Kioloa**

The attachment lists a range of areas where we need the SCC to develop a work plan for 'fixes' to our basic infrastructure. We recommend, if it hasn't been done, that the list be expanded to include all of the identified problems and work needed in Kioloa, Bawley Point and Termeil. These can be added to as the needs arise.

## Attachment

### Kioloa Community Forum – Interim List of Required Village Works

- Murramarang road is in a very poor state of repair end to end. Broken shoulders need to be fixed and the road resurfaced. Debris, such as fallen or cut branches, needs to be removed from the side of the road;
- The pathway on Scerri Drive leads through a section of bush and then onto the beach. This last section needs a ramp or stairs to provide an easier and safer access to the beach;
- The picnic tables and benches at Kioloa beach need painting;
- The pathway from the bottom of Boomer Cresc to Merry Beach Caravan Park needs overhead trees trimmed and exposed roots removed or covered to lessen the tripping hazard;
- The area outside the Merry Beach Caravan Park is used extensively as an adjunct car park for both park visitors and people accessing the beach. The area is continuing to degrade and could benefit from some resurfacing or stabilisation;
- The roads in the central part of Kioloa and down to the boat ramp, have large potholes that need to be filled. This should happen as an interim measure while waiting for the road resurfacing of Murramarang road. Drains in this area also need clearing; and
- The Butler Creek bridge pathway needs to be properly maintained.