

Digital transformations. Elcom makes these happen.
See how we transformed The Inner West Council website.



Inner West Council is a local government area located in the inner western region of Sydney in the state of New South Wales, Australia. On 12 May 2016, Ashfield, Leichhardt, and Marrickville Councils merged together to become the Inner West Council. The Council has an estimated population of over 182,000 residents.



THE CHALLENGE

Prior to the council amalgamation, Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils managed their own websites, each using a different CMS. For almost 2 years, the newly formed Inner West Council continued to run all 3 websites, and an interim Inner West Council website built by Elcom.

Web-based services varied greatly across these websites. There was a need to align services and web-based offerings for residents, community members, businesses and other audiences. With only two people in the website team overseeing the content being published by staff across the council, as well as duplicate content across these websites, there was also a big need to bring it all together into one platform for operational efficiency.

We wanted to provision a world class website platform with outstanding design and functionality which includes a highly effective, user-friendly and powerful CMS.

THE PROCESS

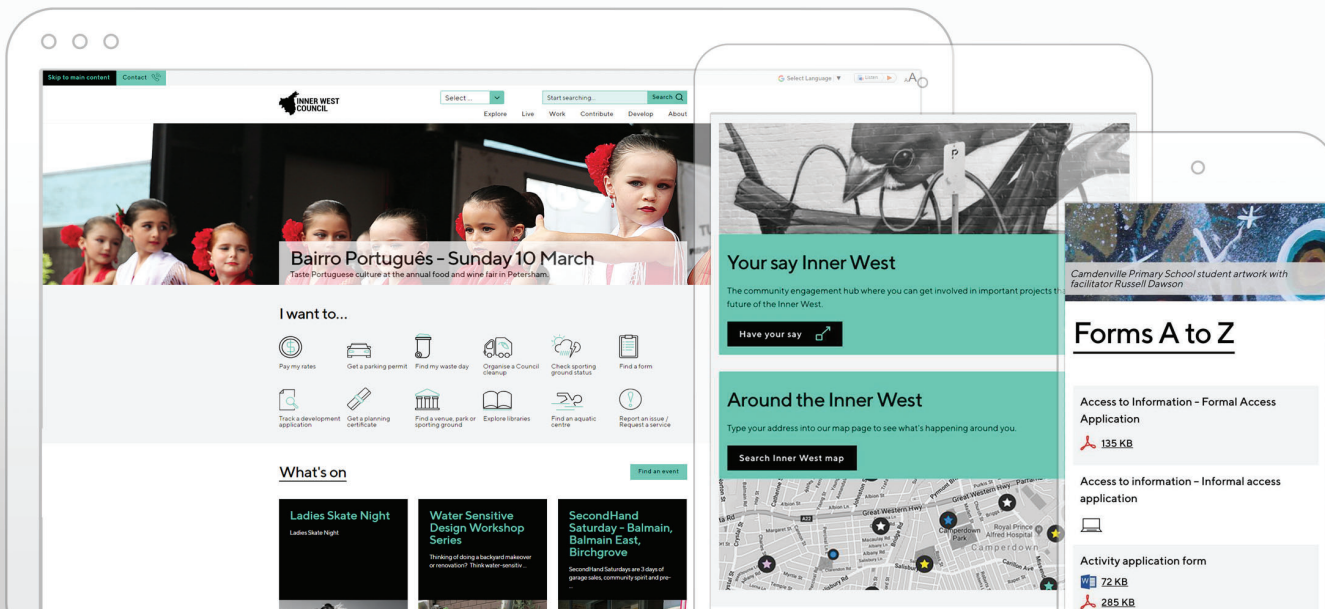
We ran an engagement process internally. This involved sending out an email survey and meeting with 20-25 groups from across the council to collect feedback on the current websites and create a wish list for the new website. We then ran user groups with community members from different age ranges to gather further insights. This formed the basis of the tender document.

Out of the 9 vendors and agencies invited to respond to the tender, we chose to partner with Elcom. Selection was based on criteria including cost, the ability to deliver the project, previous experience working in the field, relevant experience of key personnel and technical experience.

The project management was excellent. Our Project Manager went above and beyond in what we expected her to deliver. The communication was consistent, and we were guided through the project quite carefully and systematically.

"I've worked with Elcom for several years. First on the Leichhardt Council website and now on the Inner West Council website. There's always been a high level of reliability and professionalism from the Elcom team. They've given us a really great product and provided us with a really great website."

Jessica Prochazkova,
Digital Communications Coordinator



THE SOLUTION

The website has been refreshed with a new urban look and feel that reflects the Inner West community. In the first few weeks after launching, we displayed an interactive tour highlighting key functions of the new website such as the new predictive search with more ways to filter results, and the quick links of the top 12 tasks performed on the website.

We've grouped information by themes so people can easily find related information in one place. For example, in the environments section, you would be presented with only news, events and projects related to this theme.

We've introduced Around the Inner West which allows people to find out what's happening around them by entering their address. The results can be displayed in a map or list view, and filtered to show certain categories such as events, WiFi areas and off-leash dog parks.

The What's On pages make it easy to showcase all our events visually. People can filter events by date, category, location and more. Community members simply post their own events through an online form, which is then approved or rejected by our digital team.

The resource document list has been really helpful for people. We have loads of forms that we have to provide in different formats (PDF, MS Word or an online form). A widget we had custom built, nicely displays an icon representing the format available next to the form name.

We currently have 6 teams who manage their own newsletters using Elcom's email marketing module. We can easily manage the subscriber list and people can choose which newsletter they're interested in getting.

AA compliance was a key requirement. The website is fully compliant with WCAG 2.0 (AA Level) guidelines, offering several functions such as giving people the option to listen to the page using 'ReadSpeaker'.

THE BENEFITS

It's improved customer experience

- ✓ We can now showcase everything throughout the council on one website. We've been able to better serve our community with easy to access touchpoints, accessible content and easy to find information.
- ✓ People can also personalise their experience by inputting their location to find their waste collection days and other services, facilities and events close by.

It's made our jobs easier

- ✓ The main benefit internally has been the ease of the CMS platform for non-technical people. This has been a massive help in ensuring there's only one piece of content and it's up-to-date.
- ✓ We have 40 groups across the council who manage their own sections. We train new staff internally and have received a lot of positive feedback. The Web Administrator and I have visibility over changes publishers make and full version control capabilities.

It saves us time

- ✓ Showcasing all the events around the Inner West requires minimum effort. The automation saves us a lot of administration time. Community members can submit their events with an online form. It then triggers a workflow requesting our digital team approve or reject it. If approved, it appears on the What's On page.
- ✓ The form requires the event to be tagged with type, category, location and fields. This enables it to be filtered. It also automatically appears on relevant category events pages, and as part of results on the What's Happening Around Inner West mapping tool.

It's a partnership

- ✓ There's always been a high level of reliability and professionalism from the Elcom team. They've provided us with a really great website and we're continuing to work with them on site enhancements.