



Borough of Queenscliffe

Sustainable Living Action Plan

Adopted: 18 August 2010

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Sustainable Living Action Plan

Introduction

The Borough of Queenscliffe (Council) is working towards lowering its carbon emissions in response to climate change with the aim of moving Council to be carbon neutral by 2013 and the community by 2020. There are several ways of approaching emissions reduction, but effective long-term behavioural change across the community is required to achieve this goal. An engaged community, given the right support and facilitation, is the best way to bring about long-term change.

The Council is developing a Sustainable Living Action Plan that facilitates community change as central to an emissions reduction strategy. The Plan needs to be holistic because everything we do impacts on emissions; what we purchase, what we build, which services we use, how we deal with our waste and our stewardship of biodiversity ecosystems.

The Action Plan recognises that many of the actions required for reducing carbon emissions are beyond the jurisdictional authority (powers) of the Council and that Council needs to operate within (as part of) the broad framework of Commonwealth, State and Local Government jurisdictions. Hence, in meeting Council's goal of carbon neutrality within the Borough, the Plan focuses on actions that clearly fall within the jurisdictional authority of Local Government and it identifies where the Council and the community of the Borough can through liaison and community consultative and education processes influence government, the neighbouring councils, relevant agencies, and the local community to act in concert to bring about required change.

The Plan also recognises and seeks to complement the broadest context of sustainability associated with maintenance of ecosystem structure and function, protection of biodiversity, use of renewable resources, and maintenance of human health and wellbeing, economic and social systems, and cultural and heritage assets. In doing so, the Plan recognises that there will be a need to develop other complementary plans and it does not in any way replace or diminish existing Council plans or strategies such as:

- BoQ Business Plan and Budget documents,
- BoQ Tree Management Plan,
- BoQ Weed Management Plan,
- BoQ Planting on Nature Strips,
- Queenscliffe Coastal Management Plan, and
- BoQ Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Action Plan (available later 2010)

Following a limited community consultation process based on a sustainability survey the Borough of Queenscliffe has produced an Action Plan to begin addressing the future sustainability of our community. It is the first time the Council has invested resources in this area in a coordinated manner in response to community concerns and interest. The Council is committed to working with the community to effectively manage and limit and possibly reduce or reverse the impact of human settlement on the natural environment and therefore leave a better environment for future generations based on the following UN accepted, World Commission of Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) definition of Sustainability

Borough of Queenscliffe

Sustainable Living Action Plan

"Sustainability is defined as *"forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."*

Environmental Sustainability refers to the environmental actions or impacts of what we do. In moving towards Sustainability, we are attempting to reduce our ecological footprint or to tread more lightly on the Earth. This equates to reducing the amount of resources we use (and buy), the waste we produce and the emissions we produce.

Council's Vision 2009-2013

Council's Vision is *'the making of a place in which people live, work and visit with a mutual respect for the environment and for others with whom we share our Borough'*.

Strategic Direction

The Strategic Direction for the Sustainability & Local Environment portfolio is identified as *'living more sustainably and protecting and restoring our diverse environment'*.

Key Strategies for 2009-2013

The Council Plan strategies for Sustainability & Local Environment include:

- Work in partnership with the community and other organisations to protect and restore the local environment and promote sustainable practices.
- Protect, restore and rehabilitate the natural ecosystems of the foreshore, coastal and marine environments and increase ecosystem connectivity.
- Initiate actions related to climate change.
- Work towards being a Carbon Neutral Council and community.
- Promote more sustainable energy, waste and water management practices.
- Increase the amenity and usefulness of paths and trails in the Borough and surrounds without any detrimental impact on the significant environmental values.
- Protect and restore landscapes and heritage plantings in the Borough.

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Principles

Council endorsed the preparation of a Sustainability Action Plan based on the following principles:

- Recognise that communities are best positioned to plan for and shape their futures and that 'grass roots or bottom up' initiatives are more likely to be sustained and succeed over time;
- Support the ideas, interests and skills of local residents, facilitate community participation and build a positive working relationship between Council and the community;
- Invest Council's limited financial, infrastructure and staff resources in the most effective manner and take advantage of other funding sources;
- Place emphasis on both reducing the emissions of Council and facilitating and supporting the community in taking its own sustainable change direction;
- Utilise the ICLEI baseline data and Council's financial reporting to determine priority action areas and evaluate the level of change over time;
- Capitalise on those opportunities to share resources with neighbouring Councils;
- Regularly review the progress of the Action Plan implementation and the progress towards the goal of carbon neutrality.
- Allow for some flexibility in timelines as new programs are developed and released and may be suitable for uptake by the Council to best achieve recommended results to suit the changing needs of the community.
- It is also possible that, once finalised this document could be absorbed into the future Carbon Neutral Action Plan.

Key Result Areas

This Action Plan will be framed around four 'key result areas':

1. Increase community understanding and involvement in making living in the Borough more sustainable.
2. Reduce the level of carbon emissions produced by Council.
3. Reduce the level of carbon emissions produced in the Borough of Queenscliffe.
4. Increase the amount of recycling and reduce landfill.

Key Result Area 1: Increase community understanding and involvement in making living in the Borough more sustainable.

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Work with the QNH and other sustainability focused community groups to secure funding to establish a 'sustainable community' demonstration centre.	Source and secure State Government funding (not available in 2009/10).			
	Develop Environmentally Sensitive Design (ESD) concept plan to be 'submission ready'. Eco house and community garden concept to showcase retrofitting opportunities for residents and outline cost benefits.	12-18 months	Budget for 2010-2011 Officer time +\$6000	\$6000.00
Continually improve Council's communications strategy to enable easy access to quality information regarding 'living more sustainably'. To be threefold; a) physical- demonstration site/ eco house concept b) available via web c) hardcopy as brochures	Improved function of Council's website to be completed by 30 June 2010. Ensure all current strategies and policies are easily available.	Current	Separate program area	
	Establish 'Sustainable Living' section in new Council website. Accessible via web or hardcopy as brochure. Allow for "local events" column to be periodically updated. Establish easy access links and develop with S&E Portfolio Reference Group the best way to disseminate information utilising existing networks.	3 months	\$2500.00 pa \$1500.00 Establishment fee.	\$4000.00
	Work with key stakeholders to identify 'best practice' information.	ongoing	Officer time	
	Identify opportunities to "re-badge" existing ESD guidelines information or design Borough specific guidelines brochure. Ensure production is on 100% recycled post-consumer waste and printed with vegetable dyes.	6 months	Officer time +\$10,000 print/graphics	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Encourage local initiatives and community actions that make the Borough more sustainable.	Develop proposal to create a new category to the Community Grants program to specifically support community initiatives that aim to make the Borough more environmentally sustainable.	commence 2011 3 months	Officer time	
	Investigate and report on the potential application of community leadership and planning models designed to promote more sustainable communities. eg SCSC Eco-Casurina model or equivalent	3 months	Officer time +\$3000 If applicable	
	If supported, prepare budget submission and funding application for 2011/12 to establish a chosen model relevant to the Borough. eg Transition Town or equivalent	3 months	Officer time	
	Work in partnership with community groups and networks to improve health, resilience and connectivity of coastal ecosystems through on-ground works and supporting awareness raising, capacity-building and community involvement activities that protect and rehabilitate the natural environment.	ongoing	Officer time	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Key Result Area 2: Reduce the level of carbon emissions by Council.

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Increase Council officers' awareness of and commitment to carbon emissions reduction.	Establish 'green team' of carbon reduction 'champions'.	Current ongoing	Officer time	
	Undertake 2 staff training workshops designed to increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon pollution.	TBA	\$5,000	
	Promote good practices across the organisation.	Current ongoing	Officer time	
Establish a system for monitoring Council emissions.	Determine and implement the most appropriate system for BoQ: a) Sustainability Victoria's 'Utility Tracker' free monitoring tool with BOQ staff to feed and monitor data b) Planet Footprint external tracking service (recommended)	3 months + regular update time	a) free plus staff time b) Approx. \$2,000pa	\$2000.00
Reduce the impact of Council's electricity use.	Investigate and provide a Council report on the cost benefits associated with purchasing 'green electricity' for Council owned and managed assets.	current	Officer time plus cost of offset which are yet to be determined	
Implement the introduction of energy efficient street lighting	Implement an energy efficient street lighting pilot project in Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale.		Officer time +cost	
	Evaluate and report to Council on the impact and future direction of the Council's energy efficient street lighting pilot program.		Officer time	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Increase Council use of recycled or 'green' products.	Maximise the use of recycled or 'green' paper products.	Current/ongoing	Officer time	
	Review Council's procurement and report to Council on the priority products and costs associated with incorporating these into a 'green procurement' program.	Current/ongoing	Officer time	
Reduce the level of carbon pollution associated with Council's vehicle fleet.	Review, identify baseline data and report on the level of carbon pollution associated with Council's vehicle fleet.		Officer time	
	Improve the energy efficiency and reduce carbon pollution associated with Council's vehicle fleet.	Current/ongoing	Officer time	
	Review offset programs	2011	Officer time	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Key Result Area 3: Reduce the level of carbon emissions in the Borough of Queenscliffe.

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Develop Carbon Neutral Action Plan for Council by 2013 and community by 2020 to move towards carbon neutrality.	Determine best approach to achieve priority action: a) Engage independent consultant to develop a Carbon Neutral Greenhouse Action Plan specific to the Borough of Queenscliffe's needs at a cost of approximately \$21000 + GST b) Invite Deakin University Research Students to provide input into the report	6-9 months	a) \$19760+gst b) staff time	Partially already allocated?
Encourage community involvement in programs that aim to achieve energy efficient homes and provide access to products that enhance sustainability.	Encourage resident to participate in 'home energy use audit' programs and surveys. eg ACF Green Homes program or equivalent	2011 ongoing	Officer time +\$2500	
	Increase community awareness and uptake of Federal and State Government sponsored or supported home energy efficiency programs or grants. eg Sustainable Home day, Climate communities	Ongoing as information becomes available	Officer time +\$1500	
	Increase community awareness of bulk purchase schemes designed to reduce carbon pollution.	ongoing	Officer time	
	Facilitate public information sessions to increase community awareness and facilitate 'take up' of 'sustainability products'.	current ongoing	See above	
	Identify 'best practice' suppliers of 'sustainability products'.	current ongoing	Officer time	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Encourage community organisations to incorporate environmental design principles when undertaking the renewal and upgrade of existing facilities or building new facilities.	Develop 'best practice' guidelines for retrofitting existing and designing new community facilities.	3 months	Officer time +\$4,000 graphics/ printing	
	Play a proactive role in encouraging community organisations to design building using 'best practice' guidelines.	ongoing	Officer time	
	Promote good examples of 'best practice' to community organisations.	ongoing	Officer time	
	Develop an incentives/ grant scheme to promote best practice uptake	2011 3months	Officer time	
Investigate options for an alternative power source	Source and secure State Government funding for this objective		Officer time	
	Facilitate possible inclusion into Sustainability Victorias Zero Emissions Neighbourhood (ZEN) pilot program for establishing an appropriate alternative energy source.	Assessing viability/ liaise with SV	Officer time	
Advocate for improved public bus services and encourage greater use of public transport.	Advocate for improved public transport provision from Queenscliff to Geelong and Queenscliff to community facilities in Ocean Grove.	current 12-18 months	Officer time +\$1,000	
	Work with the Department of Transport to improve community awareness of public transport options through better timetable information at bus stops and improved public information campaign.	Current ongoing	Officer time	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
	Seek funding opportunities to implement continuing improvements to public bus stops.	3 months	Officer time	
	Consult community and report to Council on the audit and standard of existing paths and trails. Develop a plan of existing paths and trails	3-6 months	Officer time +\$5,000 printing/graphics	
	Prepare a report to Council that ranks and costs the upgrade of paths and trails in the Borough and surrounds and includes Ocean Grove to Point Lonsdale and the Bellarine Rail Trail.	3 months	Officer time	

Borough of Queenscliffe
Sustainable Living Action Plan

Key Result Area 4: Increase the amount of recycling and reduce landfill.

Action	Tasks & Comments	Timeline	Cost	2010-2011 priorities
Support community's efforts to be 'Plastic Bag Free'.	Work with local traders and community groups to promote awareness of and involvement in the 'Plastic Bag Free' campaign in Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale.	Current 12 months support	Officer time +\$1,000	\$1000.00
	Support local 'champions' as lead advocates for the campaign.	ongoing	Officer time	
Play a proactive role in applying regional 'Waste Wise' program initiatives in the Borough of Queenscliffe and continue to keep certification current.	Work in partnership with Barwon Region Waste Management Group and the G21 Councils to facilitate and support the implementation of 'Waste Wise' programs in the Borough.	ongoing	Officer time +\$2,000	\$2000.00
	Increase the level of community awareness of home and business based actions that can increase the level of recycling. Develop and distribute information brochure.	3-6 months	Officer time \$3,000 graphics/ printing	SKM education fund
	Investigate and report to Council on the options for and costs of establishing a local drop off point for recycling and effective disposal of non standard waste.	3 months	Officer time	
	Following consultation with the community present a report to Council on the options and costs associated with expanding green waste collection in the Borough- pros and cons.	3 months	Officer time	