



## **Sustainable Cities 2012 –Victoria**

**Recipient: City of Boroondara**

**Population: approximately 159,000 people**

**Location: 6 km east of Melbourne**

### **Category: Community Action and Partnerships**

The City of Boroondara strives to provide a tidy, well maintained city. The Council works closely with the community in all aspects of the strategic development of the natural and built environments. Supported by the Community Engagement Policy, 2010 Council creates many opportunities for active community participation in decision-forming processes to ensure the current and future needs of the community are met. Council offers Boroondara residents a diverse range and practical and informative workshops and events relating to the natural environment and sustainable living.

Key initiatives and programs include:

- A cross departmental and trader Public Realm Action Group was established to promote economic vitality and liveability and ensure Boroondara's streetscape assets are well maintained. Regular site inspections of over 45 shopping centres, parks and other assets are undertaken to identify maintenance issues and opportunities for improvements.
- The Surrey Hills Progress Association worked with Council, Metro Trains and the Department of Transport to plant over 600 plants and improve the appearance of Union Road shopping centre and Surrey Hills train station.
- Building relationships with local groups, such as Lighter Footprints and Boroondara Sustainability Network which allow for meaningful dialogue between the Council and the local community on sustainability issues.
- Council actively undertakes community workshops and educational programs including festivals with a local focus or themes such as "Sustainability" or "Health and Lifestyle" to connect with the community.
- Council encourages graffiti to be reported. Graffiti is removed from Council property within 24 hours and private property owners are assisted with free paint or free environmentally friendly, biodegradable graffiti removal kits.
- Projects such as Kew Junction and Glenferrie Precinct Walkability studies aim to improve the quality, amenity and safety of the pedestrian environment. To date, the studies have resulted in 8 raised crosswalks, wayfinding signage and reduced speed limits. The use of existing bins in the Hawthorn West Shopping Centre is also being trialed to display signage regarding local amenities and estimated walking times.
- Council seeks to ensure a best practice approach to providing access to public facilities wherever possible. This is supported by Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, 2008.

### **Category: 'Dame Phyllis Frost' Litter Prevention**

Council has adopted a Waste Minimisation and Recycling Strategy (2011-2016) and participates in the Lower Yarra Litter Strategy (LYLS) committee.

Actions implemented to manage litter include:

- Approximately 450 bins (50/50 rubbish/recycling) installed in commercial centres.
- Approximately 100 bins (50/50 rubbish/recycling) installed in public parks.
- An unlimited supply of recycling bins on offer to sporting clubs.
- Use of distinctive bin colours/designs to support effective bin use.
- Development of new recycling bin directional signage for high use playing fields.
- Servicing the majority of Council's public bins daily (cleaning and emptying).
- Heightened levels of street sweeping in key shopping centres.
- Cigarette butt bins have been successfully trialled at the Glenferrie, Kew and Ashburton shopping centres leading to new installations in the Camberwell activity centre.
- Council assistance empowers community groups, e.g. friends groups, rotary clubs etc. to be involved in Clean up Australia Day annually. Support is provided to the groups by providing staff members (2-3 depending on how many groups/sites are involved), rubbish pick up and promotion.
- Council's transfer station is fully contained by fences and two staff members are allocated the responsibility of cleanup activities onsite throughout the day, including sweeping and manual pick up.
- Council have conducted a number of assessments using the Clean Community Assessment Tool which provides an assessment of litter prevention performance

Council provides litter education and awareness by:

- Exploring a range of regional education and engagement opportunities (through LYLS).
- Engaging the environmental education performance troupe 'The Connies' to craft educative yarns and a 24 piece swap card series for the Lower Yarra catchment.
- Supporting a regional project across the Cities of Stonington, Yarra and Melbourne to engage local traders in effective waste management and the protection of waterways. The project will be evaluated and considered for roll out to other areas including Boroondara.
- Facilitating the development of effective waste management skills with local schools, including through support of the 'Waste' module in the Resource Smart AuSSIVic framework.
- Developing a 'Recycle right, feel good' campaign kit for local sporting clubs. This program supports suitable containment of recycling and waste at sporting matches. These materials will be adapted soon for use within Council and local schools.
- Supporting the installation of signage designed by local school students in Ashburton Shopping Centre.

### **Category: Resources Recovery and Waste Management**

Council's Waste Minimisation and Recycling Strategy (2011-2016) sets out objectives and actions for community waste generation, improved waste diversion from landfill, benchmarking of services, expanding community education and improvements to services.

Programs and initiatives include:

- Boroondara's award winning Recycling and Waste Centre (RWC) provides its community the ability to recycle such items as paper, cardboard, commingled recyclables, e-waste, polystyrene, light globes, gas cylinders, paints, car and dry cell batteries, motor and cooking oils, oil filters, mattresses, green waste, concrete, bricks, building rubble, soils, metals, timber and tyres. Recovered cooking oil is used to create biodiesel and used in Council's waste collection vehicles. The centre boasts innovative colour directional signage to direct residents to the correct disposal point and its education centre.
- Council has an ongoing program to provide public place recycling in all shopping centres, parks and sporting facilities and is part of a program targeting improved waste management by traders.
- To encourage residents to recycle Council, provides a weekly commingled recycling collection, hosts the 'Follow your Waste' annual tour and produces an A-Z Recycling Guide.

- The Victorian Local Government Annual Survey 2011/12 survey shows Council's total diversion from landfill has improved to 53.6%.
- Effective waste management skills are developed within local schools by providing:
  - Phone advice to teachers and parents.
  - Teacher Environment Network meetings.
  - Access to Council's recycling service.
  - Mentoring opportunities between schools.
  - Links to other services e.g. soft plastic recycling.
- In partnership with the Gould League and with a grant from the Metropolitan Waste Management Group, an innovative waste minimisation and recycling program will begin in January 2013 to gauge the potential for supported schools to be 'gateways to community behaviour change on waste'.
- Council has developed a 'Recycle right, feel good' campaign kit for local sporting clubs. This kit will be adapted for use by other groups including schools.
- Council office waste audits are carried out on a regular basis. The 2011 audit revealed an extremely low contamination rate (3%) within the co-mingled recycling stream.

### **Category: Environmental Innovation and Protection**

Council have developed innovative approaches to increase the uptake of sustainability actions locally due to Boroondara residents having one of the highest ecological footprints in Australia yet they have identified environmental sustainability and community connectedness as two long term strategic issues.

Key programs and initiatives by Council to reduce the ecological footprint include:

- A combination of workshops, practical activities and best practice behaviour change approaches led to a reduction in residents' ecological footprint. In 2011/2012, 16 workshops were held, with 530 participants and a 97% satisfaction rate.
- Council's biennial Sustainable Living Festival celebrates and supports community sustainability. The 2012 event featured vibrant school-created banners as signage for interactive stalls featuring hands-on activities and giveaways, community groups and entertainment. Event feedback was sensational and more than 2500 residents attended.
- Council holds annual Sustainability Awards to reward and showcase behaviour change actions in the community. Support is provided to community-led forums and the development of community gardens. A recent collaboration supports a local group to create a 'food forest' in a local park.

Implementation of the Council's Biodiversity Strategy (2003) has led to substantial outcomes including:

- An inventory of indigenous flora and fauna.
- Identification, protection and enhancement of 58 sites of biological significance.
- Implementation of a Biodiversity Corridors Plan.
- Planting of approximately 30,000 indigenous plants annually.
- Interpretive signage at key sites.
- An active 'Friends of' network.
- Promotion of an environmental weeds guide.

Community engagement activities offered in support of the Biodiversity Strategy innovative, include:

- A Backyard Biodiversity booklet with inspiring ideas and stories.
- A Backyard Biodiversity project engaging a total of 90 residents living near biodiversity corridors in planting 4,000 indigenous plants in their gardens and reserves.
- Spring Walk and Talk program and Maranoa Festival to engage residents in biodiversity and habitat gardening.
- The first Connies' biodiversity poster and swap cards for use at community events and with schools.

### **Category: Water Conservation**

The City of Boroondara is committed to reducing water consumption and has adopted a Stormwater Environmental Management Plan (2003) and Water Strategy (2004) to improve water management, reduce water usage and improve stormwater management. Council are updating and combining their Water Strategy and Stormwater Environmental Management Plan to integrate innovative water management activities, set targets, detail future actions and help further embed WSUD as business-as-usual.

Highlights of their initiatives include:

- Council's 2011/12 water consumption decreased by 49.5% from 1998/99 due to conversion of all playing fields to warm season grasses, installation of 90 rainwater tanks and installation of water efficient fittings/irrigation.
- The adoption of the Sustainable Buildings Policy in 2010 resulted in water efficiency measures becoming standard practice. The Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre (HALC) redevelopment, for example, includes:
  - Harvesting and treating 1.18ML of rainwater to meet 40% of pool backwash requirements.
  - Harvesting and recycling 2ML of grey water to meet 100% of the toilet flushing requirement
  - Installation of water efficient fittings.
  - Pool shading and pool blanket.
- Improved stormwater management has delivered a number of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) initiatives, including: tanks, raingardens, bio-filtration pits, wetlands, and green roofs
- A partnership between Melbourne Water, Council and Stockland Property Group, the Glen Iris Wetlands, showcases WSUD principles filtering stormwater to reduce nitrogen, phosphorous, suspended sediment and pollutants entering Gardiners Creek.
- The Glenferrie Water Management Plan (in progress) will harvest and treat stormwater through a wetland with storage in underground tanks to provide a water supply to irrigate Grace Park, Glenferrie Oval and tennis courts, and flush toilets in two facilities.
- Council encourages sustainable water use community-wide and a 'hands-on' raingardens event resulted in a raingarden being built at the Balwyn Community Centre (sponsored by Melbourne Water)..
- Council partners with Yarra Valley Water to deliver the Showerhead Exchange and Drink Tap programs.

### **Category: Energy Innovation**

Boroondara City Council has a commitment to achieving reductions in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions at a corporate and community level. Council's framework for achieving reductions is embedded in their Our Low Carbon Future Strategy, 2009 which sets a goal of 30-40% emissions reduction from 2007 levels by 2020. Corporate emissions have reduced by 3% between 2007 and 2011 without compromising amenity across facilities and services.

Key Council projects demonstrating their commitment include:

- Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) features and products are incorporated and used in all new buildings and renewals. Standard installed features include thermal insulation, smart luminaires and efficient appliances.
- 235kW gas-fired cogeneration and associated energy saving and renewable initiatives at the Ashburton Pool and Recreation Centre precinct. This collaboration between Council, YMCA and the Craig Family Centre, with financial support from Sustainability Victoria, was completed in late 2011. Annual greenhouse gas emissions will reduce by an estimated 1,247 tonnes (equivalent to 297 cars off the road).
- Installation of solar PV, including a 75 panel system on the Camberwell Civic Centre (annual saving of 40 tonnes, equivalent to 9 cars).
- Completion of the changeover of Council's ~7,500 residential street lights to efficient T5 luminaires during 2012/13 (annual savings 2,970 tonnes, equivalent to 707 cars).
- Use of biodiesel blend in Council's waste fleet (annual 3,331 tonnes, 793 cars).
- Installation of 100kW cogeneration at Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre (part of current centre re-construction).

- Warm asphalt, non-standard asphalt and recycled crushed concrete are used in resurfacing and shared-path construction works.
- Investigation of business case for cogeneration at remaining aquatic facilities. This partnership project is supported by the Victorian Sustainability Accord and is developing tools to support all Victorian councils to streamline assessment of co/tri-generation potential.

Key Council and community projects include:

- Council's involvement in community and business energy efficiency, renewable energy and carbon pricing workshops.
- Council's participation in the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action to deliver regional projects.
- Lending home energy meters through libraries.
- Installation of ESD features in community buildings.
- Inclusion of energy saving, efficiency and renewable at the biennial sustainability festival.

### **Category: Heritage and Culture**

The Boroondara City Council is committed to celebrating the City's history and ensuring historic places are protected for future generations. Council's Draft Heritage Action Plan (2012) prioritises a program of heritage studies and other projects to identify, protect, manage and promote the City's heritage. It provides Council with a clear plan for future heritage activities.

Key initiatives and programs include:

- The redevelopment of Kew Court House and Police Station (Court House) represents a successful projects to preserve local history; an outstanding example of community leadership and community government partnership. The community, through Kew Historical Society, raised \$500,000 to assist with the renovation of the Court House and conversion to a vibrant arts and cultural centre. Council provided much of the remaining funds, although grants were received from the Australian and Victorian Governments. The Court House provides a dynamic hub of activities including performances, workshops, exhibitions and displays.,
- The Court House is home to e.motion21 and Kew Historical Society. A variety of spaces can be hired for community performances, rehearsals and meetings.
- Council renovated the Kew East Maternal and Child Health Centre and is preserving the Michael Tuck Stand until a complete renovation can take place. Both sites are listed on the State Heritage Register.
- A number of historical societies are supported by Council.
- Council maintains a number of heritage gardens and the historical features within such as Canterbury Gardens - home to Carols by Candlelight since the 1940s, Maranoa Gardens - hosts an annual festival celebrating one of Australia's oldest native gardens (1901) and encouraging appreciation of local biodiversity.
- Council actively works with the Friends of Wurundjeri (part of the Hawthorn Historical Society) to re-establish indigenous plants and represent Aboriginal food plants/ materials. A Wurundjeri heritage walk and native food plants talk are included in Council's 'Walk and Talk' series.

### **Category: Young Legends**

Highlights include:

- The 'Tomorrow Makers' is a program for Year 10 students who want to make changes in their world, and have fun doing it.
- In 2011, the Tomorrow Makers supported Oxfam's 'Land is Life' national photographic exhibition; highlighting how climate change is impacting people living in the island nations of Tuvalu and Kiribati.
- Council, in partnership with the Tomorrow Makers, are looking for opportunities deliver local programs with the Australian Youth Climate Coalition. The Tomorrow Makers are also participating in the Million Acts of Kindness Campaign which has resulted in the group delivering material aid bags to the homeless.

- To capture greater involvement of local young people, their families and provide fresh inspiration to the wider community, the focus of Council's Sustainability Awards has changed from residential homes and gardens to schools. The Awards are an opportunity for schools to present their projects/achievements to the community and inspire others.
- To further support schools, Council employs a Sustainability Education Officer, facilitates a Teacher Environment Network (TEN) and has set up a schools webpage schools. TEN helps parents and teachers share stories and ideas to help facilitate a whole of school approach to sustainability.
- Council facilitates the Get2School Cool challenge; a sustainable travel competition for primary schools. On the day of the challenge, students travel by walking, riding or public transport. They record their travel mode and how many kilometres they travel; Schools travelling the highest number of kilometres/with highest level of participation win prizes. The 2011 challenge encouraged 5,325 students to travel over 3,252 kilometres sustainably.