

# Judge Report

## CLEAN BEACHES 2013

*Holdfast Bay, South Australia*



**Keep Australia Beautiful National Association**

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*“In all of the five finalists, it was obvious that a special spirit emerges where a community has a strong and enduring connection to its local environment”.*

## Introduction

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### Overall

The work of the City of Holdfast Bay Council to care for their coastal region is impressive, in particular their efforts to managing the impacts of stormwater run-off from a heavily urbanised area. Similarly, the Council's approach to encouraging residents to recycle is innovative and effective. The Glenelg foreshore area attracts large crowds, and comes with significant management challenges, such as those associated with the dynamic and shifting sand environment. The Council's efforts to maintain and protect the beach for the benefit of the local community and the many visitors to the area are outstanding. Further work could be done to demonstrate that the Holdfast Bay community's voice is key to informing the Council's activities, to extend partnership work to local community and business leaders, and to build programs that engage and empower local young people so that they will play leading roles in beach protection and management into the future.

### Date judged

16 September 2013

### Population

34, 605

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## Community Action & Partnerships

Since 2001 the City Of Holdfast Bay Council has been strategically planning for environmental management and improvement. The Council has:

- A City Of Holdfast Bay Community Plan 2012-15 which commits Council to “Create a Sustainable Environment, a place that values its Natural Environment and manages its environmental impacts.” an Eco City Plan 2012-15 (Environmental Plan) that aims to implement the environmental management goals and has a number of actions to accomplish this in the areas of Leadership, Climate Change, Water, Biodiversity, Coast and Waste.
- A Climate Change Policy (committing to a Greenhouse Neutral Goal by 2019), a Waste Management Policy (to provide a successful 3 bin system) and a Procurement Policy (to consider the environmental lifecycle when purchasing goods or services).

For over 5 years Council has been coordinating community events along the coastline such as National Tree Day and Clean Up Australia Day and has participated in Earth Hour. National Tree Day events attract approximately 50 community members, volunteers, school groups and local businesses each year to help rehabilitate the coastal ecosystem by planting approximately 1500 indigenous coastal trees and shrubs in the dune system.

The Council has an active volunteer program, including local schools, run through the Holdfast Bay Environmental Volunteers. Volunteers participate in community events such as National Tree Day, planting days and weeding days along the sand dunes, and undertake approximately 1900 hours of sensitive bush care and indigenous coastal garden maintenance in the coastal natural areas. Council also uses these sessions to educate the students about the coastal ecosystem, beach amenity, coastal protection, climate change and the value of biodiversity. Each year the Holdfast Bay Environmental Volunteers.

Council and NRM have been working with Minda Inc. to develop a partnered, holistic approach to weed control and rehabilitation of the Minda Dunes, one of the last remaining remnant dune systems in metropolitan Adelaide. Council and NRM and Minda Inc. are also exploring the potential to educate Minda Inc. staff on bush care, dune conservation, seed collection and plant propagation and the possibility to provide indigenous locally sourced plants to the Holdfast Bay community.

CHB and NRM are also members of the Metropolitan Seaside Councils Committee where the purpose is to connect and collaborate on relevant coastal projects. The City Of Holdfast Bay also maintains a strong working relationship with Natural Resources Management, Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges on the following:

- CHB has successfully hosted the NRM Metropolitan – Coast, Estuarine & Marine Officer position since May 2009. This officer position works closely with CHB Coast & Biodiversity Officer on Minda Dunes, Kingston Park Cliff Face and Barton Gully weed management and Re-vegetation programs.
- CHB also actively involved in NRM strategy and action planning for plans such the Metropolitan NRM Plan and Natural Resources Management AMLR Strategic Plan and MANCAP Review.
- Brighton and Somerton Surf Life Saving Clubs, NRM and Nursery & Garden Industry Association have established 2 coastal native garden displays at both Clubs, including interpretive signage and coastal garden workshops.
- The Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board's Coastal Ambassadors training program provides the community with the knowledge and practical skills required to care for, monitor and protect the regions unique coast and marine environments. Scheduled field trips, workshops, activities and events get the community actively involved and connected to the diverse Coastal Ambassadors network. Members of the Somerton and Brighton SLSCs have participated in this training program and been involved in the development of the coastal display gardens at these clubs.

## ***Dame Phyllis Frost Litter Prevention***

Being at the end of Adelaide's drainage systems means that litter, cigarette butts and chemicals that people dispose of incorrectly often make their way to the Holdfast Bay area. In response to this issue, the City of Holdfast Bay conducts a thorough foreshore and beach cleansing program which includes:

- Litter pick up
- An active in-house graffiti crew, supported by volunteers
- Levelling of beach sand for safety and events (volleyball tournaments, Rescue 2012 etc.)
- General inspectors regularly patrol the beaches educating beach goers and also enforcing littering laws.
- Recently the City of Holdfast Bay put in place a trial of the first smoke free public space at Moseley Square at Glenelg.

The City of Holdfast Bay has nine kilometres of beach front to manage. Key to managing stormwater impacts in the area is maintenance of the area's seven Gross Pollutant Traps and extensive street sweeping. The City of Holdfast Bay currently has seven traps in place, which remove, on average, 428 tonnes of litter per year. In addition to the traps, the former Patawalonga Catchment Water Management Board has also contributed to the installation of trash racks within the City. An example of this can be seen at the top of the Patawalonga Lake and along the Sturt River.

The City Of Holdfast Bay actively involves the community in various litter management initiatives and education activities. Education programs are run in local schools and kindergartens, where children are taught how to recycle and manage waste in a manner that will reduce the impact on the environment. The community are encouraged to prevent litter and manage waste correctly through fact sheets and website information, and community workshops are held each year with a focus on waste management and how to appropriately recycle and reduce waste.

The City of Holdfast Bay runs a Clean-up Australia Day event every year encouraging the community to participate in cleaning up the beaches. We also support other groups who are cleaning up sites within the council area by providing collection services. In 2013 Clean Up Australia Day groups from Glenelg to Seacliff collected approximately 50 bags of litter from the beaches, dunes and under the Glenelg jetty.

It was also noteworthy that the day before the site inspection, a large marathon event, attracting over 20,000 visitors to the area, was held. Despite the significant amount of waste generated by this event, the next day, the site was clean and free of litter.

## **Resource Recovery & Waste Management**

The City of Holdfast Bay runs many initiatives to assist the community in reducing waste to landfill and improving the recycling of resources. Illegal dumping of waste is monitored across the city, education and enforcement by General Inspectors is carried out to dissuade future incidents.

The Council's innovative Recycle Right Campaigns have reduced litter escapes and contamination of business and residential recycling bins at both Glenelg and Brighton. The campaign involves officers inspecting recycling bins and an education campaign. In 2013 the Jetty Road Brighton campaign reported:

- 49% of bins were contaminated in week 1 which decreased to 11.4% of bins by week 7
- The weight of recycling increased dramatically, at the highest measurement it had increased by 43%.
- Audits showed that the contamination dropped from 14.75% in week one to 4.99% by the end of the campaign.
- 100% of feedback surveys indicated that the Recycle Right Campaign had helped them better understand what can and cannot be recycled.

A city wide Recycling Jackpot has helped to reduce contamination of recycling through inspections or randomly selected streets and a jackpot prize. In 2012-2013, 3846.22 tonnes of recyclables and 3673.02 tonnes of organic material were collected; 7738.86 tonnes of general waste were also collected although this will be reduced in future through the new food to greens program. Council recently secured a \$250,000 matched grant from Zero Waste SA to roll out a kitchen organics basket to every residential property to support residents in the diversion of food scraps into the organic stream, diverting 12290.40 tonnes over 10 years.

Council also supports residents and community groups in the adoption of alternative waste management initiatives such as composting and worm farms through subsidised kits and Greening Our Community Grants, and is in the process of establishing a Zero Waste Events Strategy. Surf Life Saving SA won grant funds from Keep Australia Beautiful to install recycling bins between the Red and Yellow Flags as part of the 2012 Surf Lifesaving World Championships (Rescue 2012). A team of committed 'Ecosurf' volunteers placed and retrieved the bins on each of the 10 days of competition. Around 6000 competitors took part in the event and over 10,000 spectators and community were involved and exposed to the bins, recycling



and considering their own personal waste/litter management. Smokers were also encouraged to use KESAB Butt Bins which were placed around the event site at appropriate locations.

## Environmental Protection & Innovation

Council has been actively reinstating and improving Holdfast Bay's coastal ecosystems since 2001. By 2013, Council had revegetated its coastal sites with an additional 7867 indigenous plants. The revegetation of sites such as the Seacliff to Brighton Dunes increases habitat for native animals, strengthens and stabilises the dune system against climate change and increased storm events, and helps control invasive weeds and pest animals such as rabbits.

Each year, Council undertakes weed control and sensitive bush care programs across 129,765m<sup>2</sup> of natural area. In the past 12 months Council has supported 134,708m<sup>2</sup> (346 hours contractor labour) weed control at Minda Dunes, Barton Gully and Kingston Park funded by NRM in 2012/13. This work will continue in 2013/14.

The Council's Green Living Program is now in its third year and consists of Green Living Workshops and Kits, and Greening Our Community Grants. As part of the 'Green Living' project, Council hosts free community workshops which teach the community about various ways they can lessen their impact on the environment at home, as well as improving biodiversity and providing habitat. These workshops appear very popular, and are complemented by subsidised kits for homes use including worm farm starter kits, indigenous coastal plant seedlings and energy efficiency kits. Over the past three years Council has built.

In 2013, Council propagated approximately 1000 indigenous coastal plants for the first time, to increase its efficiency in revegetation programs and provide extra plants for schools and community groups. Other activities include:

- CHB plants approximately 2500 indigenous dune plants in the sand dunes each year with environmental volunteers, school groups, community members and local businesses.
- The CHB works closely with Adelaide's Living Beaches on the coast and assists in the delivery and stabilisation of sand which is transferred via the sand pipeline. Sand Transfer pumping station translocating sand, funded through State Government including the NRM Levy which contributes \$2.4 million each year to beach maintenance.
- Sand drift fencing is an important component in the stabilization of wind-blown sand. Each year Council installs approximately 150m of sand drift fence on the fore dune to

develop a buffer against storm surges and rising sea level. The sand drift fence is also beneficial for colonizing dune plants once the dune becomes stable.

- Installation of over 20 habitat boxes in trees within the city to increase nesting sites for birds, possums and bats.

NRM along with the City of Holdfast Bay supports efforts by the South Australian Research and Development Institute, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and Flinders University with developing seagrass rehabilitation techniques off the metropolitan coast. NRM also fund reef fish monitoring off Seacliff reef and also fund Reefwatch monitoring at Broken Bottom Reef off Glenelg.

An initiative of the cities of Holdfast Bay, Marion, Mitcham and Onkaparinga, the Resilient South project is about what we can do in the Southern Region to make sure businesses, communities, and environments can tackle the challenges of climate change. The Resilient South project is supported by the South Australian and Australian Governments, and NRM are actively involved in the development of the project. The project will produce a Climate Change Adaptation Plan for the whole region, with input from government, business and community organisations.

## Water Conservation

The Council's Water Sensitive Urban Design provides for the sustainable use and re-use within developments of water from various sources, including rainwater, stormwater, groundwater, mains water and wastewater (including 'greywater' and 'blackwater'). Residential, commercial and industrial developments and buildings can all apply Water Sensitive Urban Design measures.

One example can be seen along the Esplanade Hove where the coast park includes gardens beds that receive road run off. This approach reduces the amount of stormwater that runs off roads into the ocean, reduces pollution loads reaching the ocean and grows a new native garden (without demanding mains potable water). This also reduces the heat island effect associated with sealed dark surfaces and improved amenity.

Below is a list of initiatives that the City of Holdfast Bay have implemented recently regarding the sustainable use of water within the community:

- \$23 Million flood plan – upgrading drainage, improving water quality and re-use of storm water (35sq km coastal catchment)
- Recycle water used on all Glenelg foreshore reserves
- Recycled water used to water Council trees and garden beds
- Stormwater re-direction
- Installation of push-style water saving shower taps in all new showers, with another five to be replaced this financial year
- Installation of push-style water fountains
- Engineering of infrastructure to re-direct storm water away from the ocean and on to the lawns along the costal frontage conserving large amounts of water
- Residential Storm water –re-direction
- Pilot tested a residents stormwater watering vegetation
- Water sensitive Urban design (WSUD) around the Norfolk pines in the Holdfast Bay area
- Use of rainwater tanks at the Brighton Civic Centre, Brighton Caravan Park and Depot
- Recycled water used in the amusement fountain in the square
- Councils two award-winning indigenous gardens, Yurlo Wirra and Civic Centre do not use irrigation, and survive purely on rainfall. The aim of these garden beds is to showcase water-wise plants that can be used in home gardens in our City.
- Currently undertaking an investigation into installing a Class A water pipe to deliver treated sewerage to a majority of our parks and reserves. This would reduce mains water use and significantly reduce nutrient loads on our delicate Gulf waters.

## Energy Innovation

A range of actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change have taken place within the Council over the last five years, including changes to the procurement policy, purchasing 20 per cent green power for all facilities (including Council-run facilities along the beachfront), purchasing vehicle offsets for 2009-10 and purchasing less carbon dioxide emitting vehicles. The council has also joined C3 Online an online tool for recording and reporting energy and water use data.

The Council's Building Energy Efficiency Program has already provided for removal of redundant fluorescent globes and installation of motion activated sensors throughout Brighton Civic Centre, timers on wall mounted urns, replacement of inefficient lights at the Bay Discovery Centre and the installation of MirrorLux reflectors on fluorescent lights at the Glenelg and Brighton Libraries.

In 2010-11 a large 30kilowatt (kW) solar electricity photovoltaic system was installed on the roof of the City of Holdfast Bay Depot at Somerton Park. This system generates enough electricity to fully cover that used by the depot and feeds extra electricity back into the grid. It represents approximately 45 tonnes of carbon emissions saved annually and through electricity use savings and generation the council will gain approximately \$20,000 per year, paying for itself in five years (possibly less if electricity prices rise). To date this has saved saving \$26,500 and 60 tonnes CO2.

In late 2011 the council commissioned an energy audit and recommendation report for the Civic Centre, Brighton which resulted in a large scale lighting retrofit and installation of a Building Management System (BMS). Additionally 46kW of solar electricity photovoltaics has recently been installed on the Civic Centre. This will provide enough power for the base load of electricity use for the Civic Centre and Brighton Library. To date these projects have saved approximately \$15,000 on electricity, 101,893 kWh of electricity and 80 tonnes of CO2.

While the State Government provides the majority of public transport services, Council works to assist with this and complement these where possible. Over the last couple of years Council has worked with the State Government to widen and repave Coast Park (Glenelg to Brighton) and in 2011/12 Council extended the Cliff St bike lane to connect with the City of Marion's bike lane. In 2011/12 Council assisted the State Government to install the Greenways Bikeway System (along Noarlunga train line) and associated directional signage. As an organisation the Councils culture supports staff to walk, cycle, car pool and use public transport wherever

possible. This includes supplying shower facilities for riding commuters, a pool bike for use at work and public transport tickets for work related journeys.

Over a number of years and with assistance from the Coast Protection Board, the council begun work to adapt to climate change by increasing the coastal dunes to buffer infrastructure and urban areas against rising sea levels. In 2011-12 Barton Avenue Gully was identified as having experienced a large amount of erosion particularly in the lower areas which may be a result of increased storm events from climate change. In an effort to reduce the negative effects of this erosion and protect the gully from further climate change effects a rock chute was installed to slow water and reduce any detrimental effects.

Council is also a partner in the Resilient South program with Marion, Onkaparinga and Mitcham Council's to develop a long term strategy for climate change adaptation.

## Heritage & Culture

The Council acknowledges the Indigenous Kurna people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Holdfast Bay area. Work within Council has already been done to identify areas of special significance, such as the Tjilbruke springs. Council's plan for the next three years is to:

- Engage Kurna custodians in the development of projects and programs which have impacts upon their culture and honour the principles of the Kurna Tappa Iri Regional Agreement.
- Form a regional partnership with those associated with the Tjilbruke Trail to improve and preserve its cultural and natural integrity.
- Develop a long-term plan for the Tjilbruke Springs in conjunction with the Kurna custodians, incorporating on-ground works and cultural interpretation and preservation.
- Investigate the development of educational materials incorporating Kurna beliefs, cultural uses of plants, associations with the landscapes, and other appropriate components of indigenous culture (refer to Tulukudangk Report, 2000).

Recent achievements in Heritage & Culture include:

- Heritage and Character plan amended to add more properties and locations to the Council Heritage list
- Free Heritage advisory service to residents to help them preserve cultural history
- Publication of the book "Sea Change" promoting heritage in Holdfast Bay
- Native Garden workshop for Brighton Historical Society
- School Children and the community are educated about the Kurna people and their natural habitat
- Interpretive signage installed in community gardens and along the coastline educate the community about the Kurna language and traditional uses for plants
- Cultural Map – A guide to the sites of Kurna significance and historical landscapes in the City of Holdfast Bay. This project involved the work of the Kurna Warra Pintyandi group and the Land Service Group
- Kurna cultural walks as part of History Month in May 2013.

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## Young Legends

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Local Schools and Kindergartens have been funded for environmental projects as part of Council's Greening Our Community Grants Program over the last 2 years. This has resulted in education facilities improving their sustainability education tools, improving education in these areas. The 2013/14 grant round is just closing with up to \$20,000 available for not for profit groups.

Council has partnered with local school St Teresa's Parish School to develop an 'outdoor' classroom at the Brighton Dunes. The site is a 100m portion of the greater Seacliff to Brighton Dune system and remains mostly unmanaged from a conservation perspective. Through the partnership, St Teresa's students will undertake all facets of coastal ecosystem rehabilitation and conservation including weeding, planting, sand drift management, erosion control, Kauria learning and biodiversity management.

Also, in 2012-13, a collaboration between Council and Seacliff Primary school saw the development of an unused corner of Council land into a 'Biodiversity Corner'. Students were involved in the entire process of developing the biodiversity corner from the early stages of design to watering each of the 800 plants that were planted by all students. The concept of the biodiversity corner is to increase linkages between the fragmented biodiversity spots within the city, provide habitat for native animals, and showcase the use of indigenous, coastal, water wise plants to local residents and to provide the students with an area for outdoor learning about biodiversity.

Many schools and individual school children contact Council with ideas or need for support with environmental projects. For example, one high school student from Brighton Secondary School came up with the idea of simplifying the environment language used, so that the information can be taught to younger students. Council embraced the idea and provided the necessary support to assist in the Kids Teaching Kids program. Kids Teaching Kids is an education model that uses local environmental issues as a theme for learning. The younger children have consequently become more interested in protecting the natural environment and regularly participate in working bees and education sessions on the coast.

Surf Life Saving SA conducts annual leadership and development camps that are available to all members from the age 10 to 25. Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges staff



presented at the 2011 camp on a range of coastal topics and provided further training. This was delivered in conjunction with Whale and Dolphin Conservation Australasia to participants including youth from both the Somerton and Brighton SLSCs.