

HEPBURN SHIRE CARBON FREE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Clunes Community - 15 June, 2017

Each of the two table groups at the workshop developed a number of ideas as key solutions for a carbon neutral Clunes which included:

1. Generating power through pressure/solar pads on roads
2. Community owned and township wide integrated energy production, distribution and storage using solar and wind farms based on the Hepburn Wind Model
3. Using existing windmills to generate power rather than draw water and biodiesel production using wood waste
4. Bulk purchasing of solar panels and batteries
5. Storage of power using thermal energy systems including solar thermal, geo thermal and stored hydro
6. Reducing energy usage through home audits, door snakes ('we should talk about this with the Boomerang Bags group) and discounted heat pumps
7. Collective workspace using renewable energy
8. Community tree planting
9. Building efficiency through household assessments, education and incentives
10. Changes to building codes to be energy efficient
11. Biodiversity and changing agricultural practices including whole of town composting, weed control, tree planting
12. Water harvesting and common woodlots

Communication, education and consultation was seen as implicit in the process and the platform on which all projects needed to be built.

The topics that received the most votes were:

1. Generating community power including production, distribution and storage using integrated options (solar, wind, hydro, biofuel)
2. Energy efficient homes/building through assessments, appliances and building codes
3. Biodiversity

Discussions were held at the table groups on how the top three ideas could be actioned and what success might look like in three years.

Topic 1. Community/town wide power production, distribution and storage

Suggestions included:

- Investigate wind and solar farm options using the Hepburn Wind model
- Bulk buy solar and batteries to reduce costs and support community wide solar generation and those on low income
- Using existing windmills to generate power vs. drawing water
- Investigate storage options including solar thermal, stored hydro and geothermal
- Road pilot where solar and pressure panels generate energy and are stored with potential funding to come from truck tolls
- Collective workspace hub using renewable energy

Topic 2: Energy efficient buildings/homes

Suggestions

- Home audits and grants to support assessments
- Incentivising households to be energy efficient including subsidising energy efficient homes
- Changes to building codes to ensure greater construction efficiency including a 'Clunes Building Retrofitting Code'
- Community education on reducing energy
- Discounted heat pump schemes
- Insulation grants, door snake creation using the Boomerang Bag model

Topic 3: Biodiversity

Suggestions:

- Community tree planting
- Whole town composting
- Restore land and change agricultural practices plus weed control
- Water harvesting/catchment from homes and business for use
- Community woodlots