

HEPBURN SHIRE CARBON FREE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Creswick Community - 7 June, 2017

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

1. Community street program/ get neighbours talking/ create local networks/ grow into bigger energy efficiencies
2. Education. School to become eco-hubs and model good practice for low energy usage. Education to achieve mindset changes, working from students up to parents in the community.
3. Local energy systems. Help reduce wasted energy miles, develop jobs and eco-tourism opportunities.
4. Workshops on environmental efficiency measures. Develop community education activities. ('There is a lot of will, but people don't know how')
5. Incentives/rewards for sustainable behaviours
6. Solar community hub
7. Plantation/reafforestation. Timber to be used for household use and save native forest use, carbon offset, reclamation of land and turn waste to energy generation.
8. Encourage energy efficiency such as light globe replacements, water efficiency and draft reduction in houses.
9. Modify behaviours to align with renewable energy generation ('Make hay while the sun shines')
10. Remove solar barriers and lack of incentives to uptake of solar usage.

The top three ideas that received the most votes were:

1. Community street program
2. Education initiatives
3. Solar Hub

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.

Idea 1. Community street programs.

Suggestions included:

- Use community pressure to get better uptake or compliance
- Instigate excess fruit and vegetable boxes in streets
- Buy in bulk to achieve discounts (eg Insulation).
- Share tools and equipment communally
- Have an Open Sustainable House day to showcase good examples of sustainable houses in a community
- Community street gardens and use of public land for growing trees such as fruit trees or olive trees that can be a community food source
- Community loan scheme for purchasing sustainable materials
- Remove barriers to community farming.

Idea 2: Community and Schools Education

Suggestions

- Solar panels fitted to local school and use that as the basis for an education program on solar energy to be fed back up by teachers and students to parents in the community.
- Funding for solar panels may be sought by donations from the school community.
- Use the Council newsletter to increase community education on sustainability issues.
- Provide incentives for participating in community education events such as free energy audits and hold workshops on energy efficiency.

Idea 3: A solar community hub

Suggestions:

- Identify north-facing roofs that could accommodate solar panels
- Have discussions with Powercor about solar possibilities for the community
- Establish a cooperative
- In conjunction with a solar hub, develop a reforestation plantation to be a source of renewable fuel, remediate land and offset carbon emissions.

The workshop highlighted that community will is a strong asset in Creswick and existing networks such as Transition Creswick are valuable channels to reach the broader community. However, as was stated at the workshop, 'There is a lot of will, but people don't know how.'