

## HEPBURN SHIRE CARBON FREE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

### Trentham Community - 8 June 2017

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

1. Hepburn Shire to join the More Australian Solar Home initiative, which allows for bulk buying of solar panels, and free community solar panels for community assets such as the Trentham school, after the purchase of 100 number of panels.
2. Improving infrastructure of bicycles and walking to reduce the number of cars making short trips in town.
3. Increase north facing housing as a part of shire planning.
4. Free green recycling / bio energy, waste to energy systems.
5. Micro solar power grid
6. Networking and learning visit to Newstead to learn from their experiences and initiatives.
7. Encourage the use of appropriate heat pump hot water systems to save on energy bills.
8. Bulk purchasing of solar units using \$0 up front costs from organisations such as ARENA.
9. Energy audits of houses
10. Retrofitting of older houses to be more energy efficient, including subsidies or a bank loan system for lower economic households.
11. Increase awareness of economic benefits for households
12. Change council planning regulations to favour energy efficiency, housing orientation, and aspire to higher energy ratings.

The issues that received the most votes were:

1. Bulk buying solar panels and joining with the More Australian Solar Home initiative.
2. Change council planning regulations to favour more energy efficient households
3. Waste to energy initiatives

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. Bulk buying of solar panels**

Suggestions included:

- Join with the More Australian Solar Homes Initiative
- Chase \$0 up front options for solar panel installation
- Look to Solar Cities for a model
- Discuss with ARENA and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to consider the whole community for a bulk purchase.

Action: Jurgen \*\*\* to hold discussions with ARENA and CEFC and report back to the group by the end of July.

#### **Topic 2. Change Council Planning**

Suggestions included:

- Relevant professional development for council staff
- Incorporate council planning changes to the Trentham Strategic Plan

- Incorporate the orientation of new housing, roof strength for solar panels and energy efficiency ratings into council planning processes
- Encourage people to aspire to higher energy ratings.

Action: to advocate for changes to council planning into all planning documents, such as the township structure plan, and work with other sustainability groups for changes to building standards at a State level.

### **Topic 3. Waste to energy initiatives**

Suggestions included:

- Major potential for heating water at community facilities, such as the health services and the school, using direct combustion from woody waste.
- Encourage people to drop off green waste that can be used in a combustible heat system.
- Encourage job opportunities at a transfer station to sort green waste from woody waste and create kindling.

Action: the local community to work with Council to do a feasibility study into a waste to energy project.