



Our Environment

Edition 1 – Autumn 2019

Welcome to the first edition of Baw Baw Shire Council's Our Environment newsletter.

Stay informed

Interested to receive further updates? Sign up here www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/OurEnvironment

Have a question? We're here to help.

Contact our enviro team

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Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2018-2022

Did you know Council has an Environmental Sustainability Strategy?

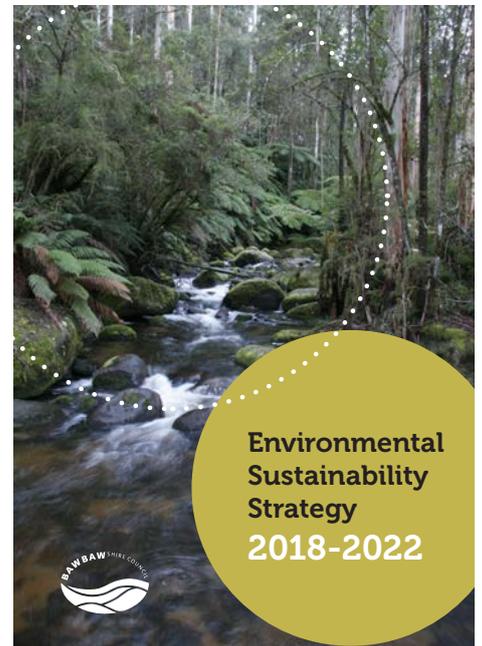
The 2018-2022 strategy was developed by Council's Environment Sustainability team to guide work for the next four years. The Strategy provides scope of what are some of Council's key challenges and achievements in protecting and enhancing the local environment. Throughout Council's extensive community consultation, many environmental issues were consistently raised including; the need for Council to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment; address the issues and concerns around climate change and to develop techniques to ensure future sustainable development. The Strategy has been

structured to focus on three key environmental sustainability pillars, including:

1. **Natural Environment**
2. **Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation**
3. **Sustainable Development.**

The Strategy also details a comprehensive Action Plan at the back which demonstrates actions the team aim to achieve over the next four years.

To obtain a copy of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2018-2022, please visit <http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/Resident-Information/Rubbish-and-Environment/Environment/Environmental-Sustainability-Strategy-2018-2022>



Solar Savings!

Huge savings have been made with the installation of solar panels on Council-owned facilities, including those that are used by the community.

To date, Council has installed solar on 15 Council-owned facilities, totalling 242 kW and over 800 panels!

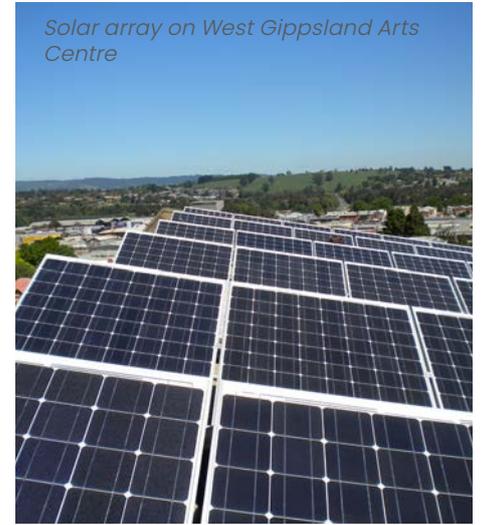
Many community halls and buildings, including a public toilet, have also had solar installed. These solar installations have been made possible with a mix of external grants and internal Council funds.

Solar installations on Council-owned

buildings include the West Gippsland Arts Centre, Warragul Depot, Drouin Civic Centre, the Maternal and Child Health Services, Logan Park, and the Warragul Senior Citizens, just to name a few.

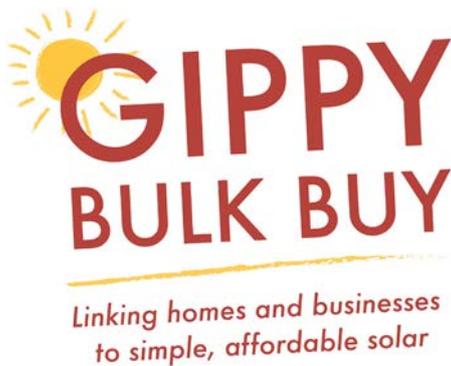
To date, the installations have generated electricity savings of \$90,000 in just 2017/18 alone. It has also resulted in the generation of income to Council of approximately \$30,000, for which a portion of this will be reinvested into further energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

Solar array on West Gippsland Arts Centre



Gippy Bulk Buy

The Gippy Bulk Buy program is a renewable energy initiative as part of the State Government's Latrobe Valley Community Power Hub. Gippy Bulk Buy is supported by Baw Baw Shire



Council, Wellington Shire Council and Latrobe City Council, and is committed to supporting local solar installers to install solar or solar hot water for residents and businesses.

Over the duration of the Gippy Bulk Buy program, the Yarra Energy Foundation (YEF) acts as a coordinator on behalf of residents to ensure they are offered the highest quality products at the best possible price. After a vigorous due diligence process, Eko Solarw were appointed the solar supplier, who then contract the installation out to Gippsland local installers. The Gippy Bulk Buy program encourages local economic growth, energy savings and carbon reduction right here in Baw Baw.

The 'bulk buy' aspect of the project encourages local residents to work together and purchase solar at bulk. This will ensure lower costs for top product and Clean Energy Council approved installs.

Eko Solar will donate 1kW for every 50 kW's installed over the program and residents will be able to nominate a local community building to receive a solar PV system.

If you're interested, spread the word and get the whole community on board! For more details <http://www.gippybulkbuy.com.au/> or call Yarra Energy Foundation on 1300 866 634.

Solar Victoria

The Victorian State Government is providing eligible households with a rebate up to \$2,225 on the cost of a solar PV system or a \$1,000 rebate for the replacement of hot water systems with solar hot water.

To be eligible for a rebate, you must be able to answer 'Yes' to the following:

- Do you have a combined household taxable income of less than \$180,000 per annum? (based on the 2016-17 or 2017-18 tax assessment notices for home owners or alternative proof of income for the 2016-17 or 2017-18 financial year. For example, proof of pension received)



- Are you the owner-occupier of the home?
- I don't have solar PV on my property OR I am replacing my solar PV system that was installed before 1 November 2009.

- Is the home valued at under \$3 million?

For further information, please visit Solar Victoria at <https://www.solar.vic.gov.au/Solar-rebates/Solar-Panel-Rebate>



Environmental Upgrade Agreement (EUA) program

Environmental Upgrade Agreements (EUA) are a growing form of fixed interest finance for businesses to fund commercial building upgrades. The upgrades can reduce operating costs through improved energy, waste or water efficiency as well as increase the renewable energy generated on a site. EUA finance is secured against the property rather than the property owner, with repayments collected by Council for distribution to the finance provider. EUAs can fund any improvements to a building that improves energy, water or waste efficiency or increase renewable energy. These improvements can include:

- Solar panels
- LED lighting or motion sensors
- Weather proofing/draught sealing
- Improvements to heaters, coolers and ventilation
- Refrigerator/chiller upgrades
- Waste management

Environmental upgrades to a commercial property can improve energy, water and waste efficiency. This can result in reduced bills, improved building value and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

To get involved contact Better Building Finance

P (03) 9658 8740

E info@betterbuildingfinance.com.au

Complete a building upgrade assessment at

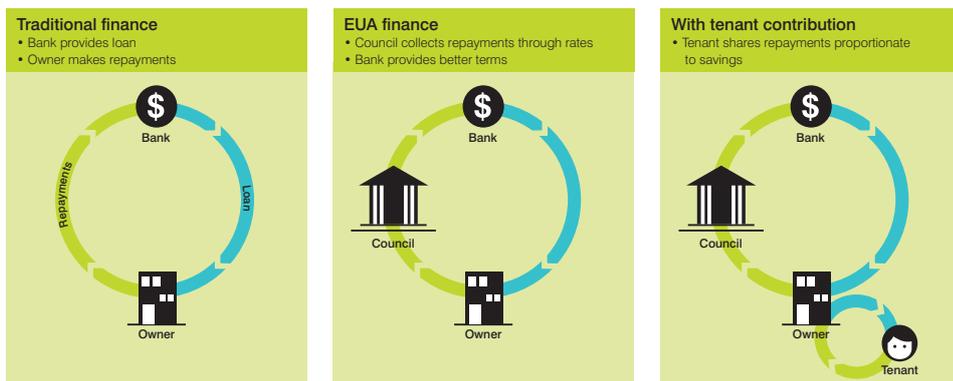
www.betterbuildingfinance.com.au

Or visit Councils website at <http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/EUA>

TAKE2

TAKE2 is the Victoria's collective climate change program developed by Sustainability Victoria, that supports individuals, government, businesses and other organisations to help our state achieve 'net zero' emissions by 2050 and keep global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius. Council is committed to tackling climate change and has subsequently pledged to the TAKE2 program. This pledge details a range of actions to be achieved by 2020, which consist of reducing carbon emissions through energy efficiency measures and renewable energy, as well as investigating and investing in new technology and arising opportunities. Council values engaging with the

community through support and education activities regarding sustainability and waste, as well as with new and existing developments, Council operations, services and initiatives. For further information on Council's TAKE2 pledge, please visit Sustainability Victoria's website <https://pledge.take2.vic.gov.au/pledges/?profileid=48391c85-44ad-e611-80f2-1458d05a586c>



Free hard rubbish collection

Residents can book one free annual 'at call' kerbside collection per financial year, of up to two cubic metres of hard waste which can be placed on the nature strip (conditions apply). This service is available to residents living at the property, whether owner or tenant (commercial, industrial and vacant land excluded).

Residents also have the option to exchange their free kerbside hard waste collection for a 'do it yourself' delivery to Council's transfer stations of up to two cubic metres of hard waste or green waste.

To book this service call WM Waste Management Services on 1800 969 278 or book online at www.hardrubbishmelbourne.com.au





ESD in subdivisions

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) is an extremely important aspect within homes, neighbourhoods and subdivisions. ESD helps to ensure quality of life for our community, to assist in being more resilient to future climate conditions and to use resources more efficiently. The aim of ESD is to use resources more effectively so that the needs of today's communities are met, while ensuring that these same resources remain available to meet the needs of future generations.

How can we incorporate ESD into our homes and subdivisions to assist our community and environment?

Council has a unique opportunity to respond to changing climate conditions and ensure that newly constructed subdivisions are more efficient, given that new subdivisions that are built now will still be present in many years to come. Baw Baw's forecast climatic trends also have implications when considering future energy and water efficiency, as well as the thermal comfort of housing. Planning for more extreme weather events needs to occur to ensure the resilience and health of our community is maintained or improved.

ESD Proof of Concept and Cost Benefit Analysis

To integrate these ESD opportunities into our subdivisions and homes, Council seeks to ensure that achieving this standard of living is financially achievable for developers and builders and has minimal impact on housing affordability for the community.

To determine this, Council has recently participated in an Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) study for new subdivisions in Regional Victoria with seven other Victorian regional Councils. The



project undertook a Proof of Concept study and a Cost Benefit Analysis, that identified 'best practice' principles and elements in new subdivisions and within homes. These 'best practice' principles include:

- Optimising site potential – orientation and site layout
- Reduce footprint – water, energy and waste
- Create places for people – diversity, local economy and connectivity

- Enhance ecology – local ecology
- Adaptable and encourages innovation – emerging trends and technologies.

Modelling was also undertaken as part of the project for energy and water interventions for Baw Baw Shire's climate zone (climate zone 7). The table below details the payback periods for dwellings that undertake energy and water interventions.



Dwelling based energy and water interventions	Payback (approx. years)
Enhanced insulation	5
Enhanced shading	14
Enhanced glazing	14
Solar panels	4
Solar with battery storage	11
Heat recovery ventilation	12
Rainwater tank plumbed to washing machine	10



Clean Up Australia Day

Council participates in the annual Clean Up Australia Day events. Last year, Council in conjunction with Warragul Scout Group, undertook a Clean Up Australia Day event at Hazel Creek – Rotary Park, Warragul. The event saw over 40 volunteers who collected 22 bags of waste and

recycling, a shopping trolley, 2 tyres and lawnmower parts.

The day was a fun and successful community event, involving the cleaning up of our beautiful landscapes and a sausage sizzle run by Council for the volunteers.



Litter collected at 2018 Clean Up Australia Day event and sausage sizzle. Pictured right: Council officer Jessie Ablett, Jacinta Anderson and Max Richards from Warragul Scouts.

Did you know an E-waste ban is coming? – commencing 1 July 2019

WHAT IS E-WASTE?

ACCEPTABLE ITEMS

- Computer hard drives (internal and CD drives)
- Computer mice
- Web camera's
- USB's
- iPads
- Notepads
- Palmtops
- Television
- Camera
- Phone chargers
- Scanners
- Faxes
- Multi-adapter plugs
- Keyboard
- Refrigerator
- Washing machine
- Dryer
- Fluorescent tubes
- Light bulbs

THE YOUNG TO A BETTER PLACE

www.ewaste.vic.gov.au

The Victorian State Government is implementing an e-waste ban

1 July 2019. E-waste refers to unwanted and discarded electrical and electronic products – essentially anything powered by batteries or an electrical cord and plug. Electronic waste (e-waste) can be recycled. E-waste items that are currently accepted at Council drop off centres include TVs, phones, computers, batteries, light bulbs and their accessories. This means e-waste is not permitted to go in any of the kerbside waste bins. E-waste contains valuable materials that can be recycled, as well as hazardous materials that are important to keep out of landfill sites. E-waste can also be very dangerous, causing fires in bins, trucks and in recycling facilities. Contact Council to find out what you can recycle, and your nearest recycling drop off centre.

E-waste will be banned from landfill sites commencing 1 July 2019.



Significant Tree Register

Council has established a Shire-wide Baw Baw Significant Tree Register for identifying valuable and important trees. With assistance from the Committee for Drouin's Assets Subcommittee (now Friends of Drouin Trees), development of the Register has been endorsed by Council and now includes significant trees on public land identified by Friends of Drouin Trees for the township of Drouin.

The Register includes an approved tree assessment methodology that provides clear and consistent criteria for community groups to identify and nominate trees on public land in other townships that are deemed 'significant'. The criteria include; environmental, historical, cultural, aesthetic and scientific values.

The Baw Baw community were recently invited to provide input and feedback on the Significant Tree Register project. Feedback regarding the development of the Register was extremely positive.

Central Ward Councillor Joe Gauci who was Mayor at the time the Register was endorsed, said there is a growing awareness of the key role that trees play in our environment, for

both our health and for recognition of our heritage.

"Many townships within our Shire owe much of their character to the presence of significant or iconic trees in streets, parks, reserves and public spaces. These trees may be remnants of the original forests, plantings by the early settlers, commemorative plantings dedicated to important people or marking significant historical events".

"Establishing a formal register for our local significant trees will provide opportunities to promote, value and protect trees of considerable size and age. We also want to increase awareness about the environmental and ecological benefits of trees and the positive impact they have on our local biodiversity and wildlife".

"We want to empower other community groups to follow the great example set by the Friends of Drouin Trees and take ownership of this project in their respective towns, with support from Council".

To learn more about the Baw Baw Significant Tree Register and Drouin's significant trees, their history and location, please visit Council's website.



200-year-old, 'Grandfather Tree', Drouin Civic Park

Council also encourages any community groups who are interested in identifying significant trees within their townships on public land for inclusion on the Register to contact the Environmental Sustainability Team on 5624 2411.



Members of Friends of Drouin's Trees; Judy Farmer, Wes Dobson, Jeff Smythe and Rob Stewart standing at The Settlement Giant.



Want to know more about common weeds, indigenous vegetation and wildlife of Baw Baw Shire?

Council offers a range of booklets to assist the community in understanding and identifying what are weeds, as well as what are our indigenous vegetation and wildlife. The booklets provide landholders with information on:

- How to appropriately manage your property
- How to convert problem wet areas into valuable habitat
- How to enhance your farm dam
- How to manage landslips and erosion
- How to create practical shelterbelts using native plants
- How to develop a woodlot for fuel and for wildlife habitat
- How to protect and enhance remnant native vegetation.

To obtain your free copy today, please contact the Natural Environment team on 5624 2599 or Natural.Reserves@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au



Rural Tree Grants

The Rural Tree Grants program aims to provide community groups and individuals with funds for tree planting projects. Native plantings will help landowners enhance the biodiversity and sustainability of their property and contribute to the rural environment in Baw Baw Shire. Council will provide grants for the purchase and planting of native plants that are indigenous to the area and/or tree guards to protect them. Applicants will need to supply labour for site preparation, planting, weed control and on-going maintenance of the site. Funding doesn't cover garden plants or amenity planting.

Successful applicants will be notified by telephone or mail. Applicant's will be responsible for plant collection from selected nurseries.

Grants available can vary from \$50-\$200, to find out more visit Council's website at <http://www.bawbawshire.vic.gov.au/Resident-Information/Rubbish-and-Environment/Environment/Environmental-Grants-and-Rebates/Rural-Tree-Grants-and-Rebates> or contact Council's Natural Environment Team on 5624 2599 or Natural.Reserves@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au