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Bendigo Sustainability Group



COMMUNITY POWER HUB BENDIGO

Bendigo Sustainability Group

Parliamentary Inquiry into Tackling Climate Change in Victorian Communities



19 September 2019





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Agenda

- Bendigo Sustainability Group overview
- Community Power Hub Program
- What can Government do?



BENDIGO SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL
Saturday May 4, 2019
Bendigo Town Hall & Library Gardens









Bendigo Sustainability Group

- NFP incorporated community group - founded in 2007
- Multiple / many Action Groups
- 2016 Winner Premiers Sustainability Regional Achievement Award
- BSG long history in solar PV
 - Residential bulk buys
 - 650+ systems (2 MW)
 - Community scale & owned
 - 6 x systems



Communities Tackling Climate Change

The Bendigo Sustainability Group has set its focus for tackling Climate change on:

- Implementing renewable energy projects, including community owned, individually owned and business owned models
- Reducing food waste going to landfill
- Community engagement and education including small and large events
 - Sustainable Housing, Sustainable Living Festival, Electric vehicles, Repair Café, Boomerang Bags Bendigo, Bike Bendigo, Solar and Battery talks, Docs for Difference and Sustainability at the Pub.



Communities Tackling Climate Change: Food Waste

- Food waste is the third highest priority in the Drawdown report on tackling Climate Change
- Food rescue for food relief reduces food waste
- Bendigo Foodshare is a local community charity actively tackling climate change and by redirecting food waste to improve food security



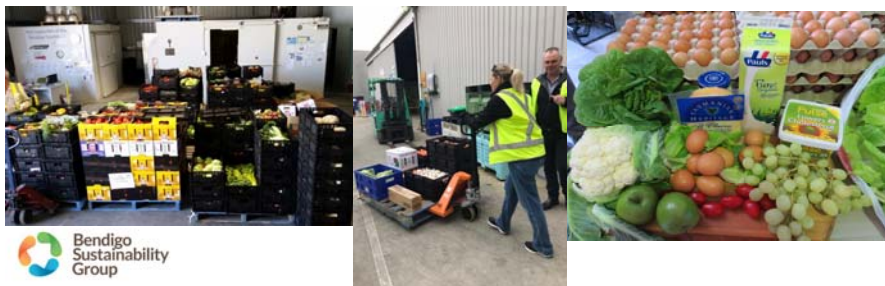
Food Waste

- Around 120 volunteers help divert food waste from landfill in Central Victoria
- Over 2000 people in communities in the 100km radius around Bendigo are actively reducing food waste



Food Waste

- System is in place, sustainable and rapidly expandable
- Bendigo: 615,000 kgs food pa diverted from landfill - with more warehouse space, this could be over 1,000,000 kgs pa.
- Currently 4 regional community owned foodshares diverting 1.1M kgs food waste pa.
- With Neighbourhood house model-5 regions, \$350k pa = 2.6Mkgs or 5.51 Mkgs CO₂ -e pa (<https://watchmywaste.com.au/food-waste-greenhouse-gas-calculator/>)



Communities Tackling Climate Change: Community Engagement and Education

BSG has a strong community engagement & education programs for tackling Climate Change:

- Annual Sustainable House Day – 150 to 250 people
- Sustainable Living Festival attended by 1,000+ people
- Electric vehicle showcases – 300+ people
- Monthly Solar and Battery talks – 30 to 70 people
- Docos for Difference & Sustainability at the Pub - 20 to 50 people



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Action Groups

The Ironbark Gully Friends

This project aims to construct a shared path along the full length of the Ironbark Gully and to convert some of the gully into wild spaces. It will also be est...

Contact: **Jacky**
 Phone: [04134](tel:04134)
 Email: ironbark@bsg.org.au

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Bendigo Family Nature Club

Provides fun in the bush for kids and families, with guided adventures and exploration of local...

Contact: **Loretta Kingston Brown or Leanne James**
 Phone:
 Email: loretta@ecaswitchboards.com.au or lgjames@gmail.com


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Docos for Difference

Meet in The Old Church on the Hill where you can chill out on a Sofa, partake in nibbles and short discussion...

Contact: **fe**

... might be repairable or ...
 ... p - more details



Wolstencroft Group


Help preserve the someone to "take...

Contact: **Adrian**
 Phone: [54435244](tel:54435244) and leave a message
 Email: hello@bsg.org.au

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Contact: **Maddy Landsberg**
 Phone:
 Email: madeline.landsberg@outlook.com

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Action Groups

Pumped Hydro Energy Storage

Provide info concerning...

Contact: **Ken**
 Phone: [0427148270](tel:0427148270)
 Email: ken@bsg.org.au

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Docos for Difference

Meet in The Old Church on the Hill where you can chill out on a Sofa, partake in nibbles and...

Sustainability at the Pub

Talk about sustainability and connect with like-minded people, share ideas and change the...

Contact: **Maddy Landsberg**
 Phone:
 Email: madeline.landsberg@outlook.com



Electric Infrastructure

The aim is to plug in electric infrastructure...

Contact: **Chris Corr**
 Phone: [0427148270](tel:0427148270)
 Email: chrisc@bsg.org.au

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Contact: **Maddy Landsberg**
 Phone:
 Email: madeline.landsberg@outlook.com

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BIKE BENDIGO INC.

Community Farmers'

tion of a Farmers market

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g.org.au

Energy Efficiency Group

Promotes energy efficiency and reduces energy use by running free information sessions, expos and Sustainable House Day

Contact: TBC
Phone: 5443 5244
Email: hello@bsg.org.au

Bendigo Community FARMERS MARKET

BENDIGO SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL

Saturday May 4, 2019

Bendigo Town Hall & Library Gardens

Bendigo Sustainability Group

COMMUNITY POWER HUB BENDIGO

Communities Tackling Climate Change

- Sustainable community action is reducing Global Warming
- With a relatively small amount of government financial support, the impact can be multiplied many times over
 - Covering administration resource and support costs very beneficial
- As in the early days of the development of Neighbourhood Houses, we are on the cusp of a truly sustainable community led revolution
 - This time we must reduce Global Warming & adapt communities



Communities Tackling Climate Change: Renewable Energy



Community Power Hubs

- State Government Funding
 - Sustainability Victoria
- Three locations nominated:
 - Ballarat
 - **Bendigo**
 - Latrobe Valley
- Two year program until June 2019
- Promote and work out how to do Community Owned Renewable Energy for community benefit




BSG / CPH Vision

- Repower Bendigo with:
 - 100% renewably generated energy
 - 100% community owned renewable energy (CORE)
- **\$150+ million** per year spent on electricity in urban Bendigo
 - Households & business
- CORE = Keep money and benefits local




BSG Community Scale / Owned Systems

- Local BSG led projects
 - 2015 Bendigo Library 20 kW crowd funded BSG owned
 - 2016 Discovery Centre 11 kW crowd funded
 - 2017 Bendigo Tramways 50 kW CFCV funded
 - 2017 Bendigo Archives 31 kW BSG funded BSG owned
 - 2018 *Eaglehawk Stadium* 31 kW crowd funded BSG owned
 - 2018 *8 x social housing units* 31 kW crowd funded BSG owned
 - Total 6 large solar PV systems 174 kW




• Over say a 25 year period these systems will keep over **\$1.5 million** here in Bendigo (& Central Victoria)

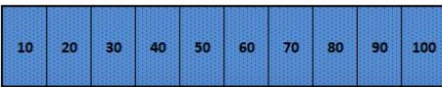


Current Donation Projects


Eaglehawk Badminton & Table Tennis Stadium




Fundraising Status	Progress	107%
Total \$ raised	Total Panels funded	No of donors
\$ 32,300 of \$ 30,000	107 of 100	52






Community Housing Limited - Golden Square Units



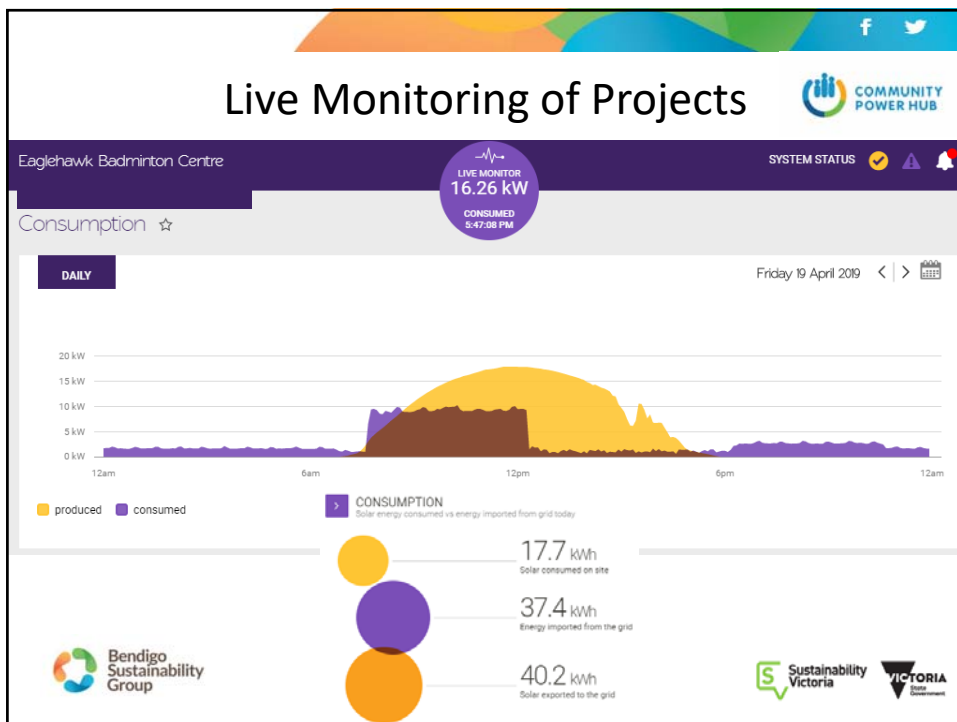
Fundraising Status	Progress	100%
Total \$ raised	Total Panels funded	No of donors
\$ 30,277 of \$ 30,000	100 of 100	69

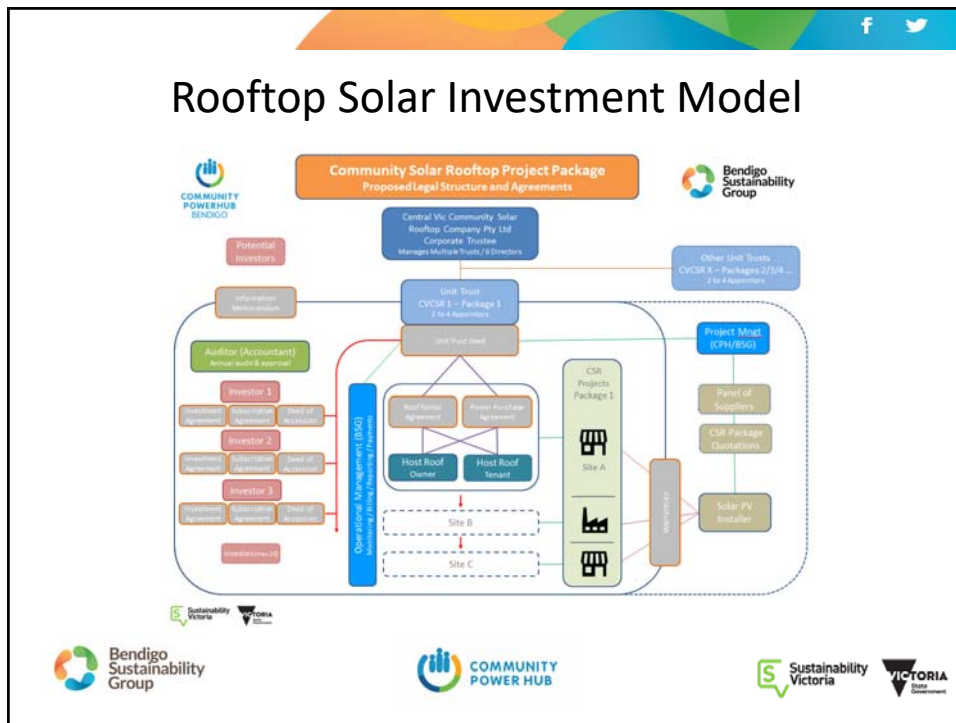


FULLY FUNDED - THANKYOU!







Government Schools

- Working with local primary and secondary schools
- Each site will have between 60 and 99 kW of solar PV
- Up to \$1.2 million in local community investment will be needed
- Savings over 25 yrs – \$8m and 38,000 tonnes of CO²-e
- Potential for Statewide roll out via CPHs

Primary Schools	Secondary Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Axedale Primary School • Eaglehawk North Primary School • Epsom Primary School • Goornong Primary School • Spring Gully Primary School • White Hills Primary School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bendigo Senior Secondary College • Ulumbarra Theatre Bendigo (BSSC) • Bendigo South East College • Crusoe Secondary College • Eaglehawk Secondary College • Weeroona Secondary College

COMMUNITY POWER HUB

Community Solar Farm

- 2 MWp DC solar farm (possibly plus additional solar & battery storage)
 - \$4 - 5 million in local community investment would be needed
 - Will shortly be making offers on land from the public (approx 6 ha)

Bendigo Sustainability Group

COMMUNITY POWER HUB

✓ Pilot Community Power Hub achievements

15 Community energy projects built	1.35MW Renewable energy installed	1,705MWH Renewable energy generated per year
\$364k In bill savings per annum	\$9.1m In bill savings over 25 year lifecycle	1,839tCO2 Carbon emissions abated per year

- 12,425 hours of voluntary labour worth at least \$496,990
- \$446,350 of value derived from utilising community networks and relationships to drive communications and community engagement

Sustainability Victoria

Bendigo Sustainability Group




COMMUNITY POWER HUB

✓ Pilot Community Power Hub achievements

<p>\$14.5m Of value generated within the 2-year pilot period</p> <p>20k+ Connections made in community</p>	<p>13-1 leverage on government investment</p> <p>114 Meetings and public events held</p>	<p>\$23.3m Lifecycle value of projects completed during pilot</p> <p>200 Businesses and organisations engaged</p>
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Should the pipeline projects actualise: increase in leverage of government investment to 72-1

COMMUNITY POWER HUB

✓ Recommendations from the evaluation

1. It is recommended that the CPH Program be continued, including continuing to support the three existing CPHs.
2. To improve the performance of the existing CPH Program, it is recommended that a range of learnings be implemented.
3. It is recommended that the CPH model is rolled out across other regions of Victoria.

Key considerations:



- Scale: expand to 6 around the state to have a regional approach
- Resourcing: increase funding and hire staff to mitigate volunteer burn out
- Length: extend the program to 4 years
- Model: Host organisation, Project Control Group & Roundtable model is an effective model to replicate
- Role of SV: The multi-faceted support role of SV is pivotal and beneficial to the programs success

Smart Energy Communities Program

a. *Scale up the regional Community Power Hub Pilot*
Deploy 6 x Community Power Hubs in each DELWP region to the value of \$10m over 4 years.

b. *Deploy strategic community energy grant funding*
\$13m over 4 years, split into:

- first projects stream for small-scale and replicable projects (~\$30k per group)
- mid-scale community renewables stream for development phase milestone-based grants for community renewables (~\$150k per grant)





What can Government Do?

- Fund Community Power Hub Program
 - including the balance of 2019/20
- Properly fund grant programs
 - Substantial increase is required
- Don't run lots of small underfunded programs
- Reduce barriers and red tape to:
 - grant applications
 - delivery of projects

Grants


- 17_10 - COGB- Repair Cafe
- 17_12 - Climate Change Innovation
- > 18_02 - CoGB Community Grants
- > 18_02 - Microgrid Demo
- > 18_02 - New Energy Jobs Fund Round 3
- > 18_03 - LMIWRRG
- 18_03 Solar Communities Rnd 2
- 18_05 CFCV grants
- 18_05 CommunityEnterpriseFoundation
- 18_05 Lord Mayors Grant
- 18_05 Mens Sheds grants-only \$5k for equip
- > 18_05 Pick my Project grants
- 18_05 Social Impact Investment
- 18_05 Suez grants
- 18_06 Fosterville Gold Mine
- 18_08 CoGB Partnership Grant
- 18_08 COGB Small Grant-Michel Bauwens
- 18_08 On-Farm Energy
- > 18_09 Renewable Communities
- 18_09 Volunteer Grants
- 18_10 Arena
- > 18_10 Building Better Regions Fund
- 18_12 Ag Energy
- 19_01 Climate Change Adaption
- 19_02 RACV
- 19_03 Bank Aust Impact Grants



Example:

New Energy Jobs Fund – Round 3

- March 2018
- BSG application to seed a floating and sun-tracking solar manufacturing industry for Bendigo (money & jobs)
- 8 partnering organisations incl
 - City of Greater Bendigo
 - Deakin and Swinburne Universities
 - Coliban Water
 - Bendigo Manufacturing Group
 - Three local private companies
- Requested \$50,000
- **Result = great project, grant declined (not enough money)**



Example: Renewable Communities

- September 2018
- A total of \$1 million available Statewide
- Applicants can apply for up to \$1 million
- **BSG Result = great project, grant declined (not enough money)**
 - 9 projects awarded Statewide
- This program was created late in the piece and we understand money taken from the New Energy Jobs Fund budget
- Community groups likely spent in the order of a total of \$500,000 of in-kind time preparing submissions for only \$1 million in funds!



Example: Community Climate Change (3CA) Grants program

- Timing
 - Round 2 closed in March 2019
 - Outcome delayed by 3 – 4 months
 - Outcomes finally advised mid September 2019
- Funding
 - Over \$140 million in projects put forward by community
 - Only \$3 million funding made available in last 2 rounds (2%)
- 70 great community projects offered in Loddon Mallee Region
 - A very small handful awarded



What can Government Do?

- Don't spend so much Government money advertising, promoting and administering grant programs
- Grant writing has become an “*unpaid career*” for many
 - Who should be concentrating on delivering their projects for community benefit
 - Writing so many submissions and missing out lots of the time is demoralising, demotivating and highly inefficient for community



What can Government Do?

- Directly financially support ongoing existing community based organisations and programs that are already out there
 - Don't always keep creating new ones
 - Don't have State and Local Government employ more staff

“When you invite people from the grassroots to identify the solution in their own words, and to create the solution with their own hands - they own them”



What can Government Do?

- With State Government support for recurrent base costs
 - volunteer groups like Bendigo Sustainability Group, Bike Bendigo and Bendigo Foodshare can multiply many times over:
 - their impact on reducing global warming & adapting to climate change; and
 - the return on the Government's investment (for community)
- Simple models already exist for State support for sustainable community activity
 - e.g. Neighbourhood house coordination program
 - generate at least double the value of recurrent operational funding



What can Government Do?

- Put funding into perspective
 - Solar Homes - **\$545 million** in 2019/20 (\$1.3 billion over 10 years)
 - Recently increased by \$57 million for 2019/20
 - Community Climate Change grants = \$3m
 - Community Renewables = \$1m
- Projects: \$100 million may fund all worthy Community Climate Change Adaptation (C3A) community developed projects
- Support: \$10 million would fund 100 community energy / sustainability groups at \$100,000 per year each

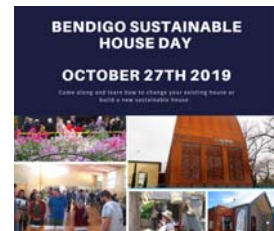




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Thankyou!



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