



Householder's Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

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HOPE Enews Bulletin 2015 #2 --- 20 February 2015

The following items have been gathered from various e-newsletters received by HOPE in recent times; and/or prepared specifically by HOPE members and supporters. If you have any news to contribute, please forward to office@hopeaustralia.org.au.

Deadline for articles is 15th day of the month. If you would like to discuss news items displayed or have letters for the editor please contact the office or [newsletter editor - hotlink](mailto:newsletter_editor_hotlink)>

Editorial

Hi everyone.

I hope this issue finds you well and healthy. We have been busy promoting our social media side the last month and would like to know your feedback. We are attempting to fix the glitches which are currently blocking you from adding comments to our Facebook page and will hopefully have good news by the next edition. We also have a twitter account now @HOPE_Australia_ which is being promoted and followed by other like-minded groups such as Energy Australia and UQ. We are also working on our Instagram account. By no means will this reduce the readership base or remove our interest in helping the environment. We are merely attempting to get our message out to a wider and varied audience. Once again, we do value your feedback so feel free to contact Frank (details below) if you have any comments to make and we can add these to the next edition.

Happy composting and living healthily everyone.

Charmaine Atkinson, Newsletter Editor – HOPE Inc. office@hopeaustralia.org.au

(Frank Ondrus, Office Manager – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135, office@hopeaustralia.org.au)

Calendar of events

Search the [national environmental events calendar](#) and/or [national community calendar](#) for any events that might interest you.

International Year of Light - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Year_of_Light

International Year of Soils - <http://www.fao.org/soils-2015/en/>

WORLD WETLANDS DAY: WETLANDS FOR OUR FUTURE – DO WE HAVE ANY REPORTING ABOUT THIS EVENT WHICH WE COULD ADD IN THIS ISSUE OR NEXT?

BUSINESS CLEAN UP DAY

24/02/2015, Australia

SCHOOLS CLEAN UP DAY

27/02/2015, Australia

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

01/03/2015, Australia

Office News Report

Good afternoon folks,

Another busy month for us here at the office.

Nationally, we've written to all federal parliamentarians about keeping the RET (Renewable Energy Target) program (5 Feb). A big thanks to Joseph Mula, HOPE Member, for preparing this statement. Joseph has also drafted a more streamlined Business Plan for the committee's consideration (see Ordinary Meeting agenda, 14 March noted further down)

Locally, we have commenced our monthly Community Forum program with Dave Grubb and Pam Pittaway speaking on "Organics – more than growing food" (7 February). Our guest speaker for the 7 March forum is Mrs Rachel Smith, Senior Transport Planner with AECOM who will speak to her recently launched book "Decongestion – 7 steps for Mayors and other City Leaders to cut traffic congestion, without the expense of new roads or annoyed residents". (see Toowoomba News section for further information)

The office also submitted a composite equipment grant application to the Queensland State Government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) on 23 January. Fingers crossed we get all the funding we asked for!

Energy Efficiency workshop program for Darling Downs and South-West Queensland

For several months now, the office has been investigating the possibility of staging a series of "free" Energy Efficiency workshops for NGOs, schools and churches located in centres west of Toowoomba.

To date, we have been liaising with Ecomplish Consulting (<http://www.ecomplish.com.au/>) and Excel Solar (<http://www.excel solar.com.au/>) about providing *Smart Living* and *Going Solar* presentations respectively; and seeking partnership and/or funding or both from National Energy Efficiency Network (NEEN - <http://neen.org.au/>) and Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC - <http://www.qmdc.org.au/>).

We hope to submit a formal application to NEEN and QMDC in coming weeks.

Meeting Notice – Ordinary Meeting, Saturday 14 March 2015

HOPE's next quarterly Ordinary Meeting is to be held on Saturday 14 March 2015 at the 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba, Qld.

Current agenda items include:

- Annual Survey feedback
- T-shirt Logo Competition report
- Report on 1st Community Forum
- Report on 2nd Community Forum
- Feedback on Membership Fees proposal
- Feedback on draft Business Plan (Ver. 4.2 – prepared by Joseph Mula, Feb 2015)
- Feedback on 2015 Proposed and Planned Activities
- Income - Advertising rates; Annual Pledge facility; and Sponsorship program
- Other business – if you have any items to add, please contact the office by 11 March.

Frank Ondrus, Office Manager, ph 07 4639 2135

Office Hours

HOPE's office is open every Monday from 9am to 5pm; with the library resources available at the same time. Other times by appointment only.

Phone the office on 07 4639 2135 to signal your interest in coming along for a chat or to access the library.

Advertising Rates

HOPE is keen to raise some much needed revenue through the introduction of paid advertising in our newsletter.

At this stage, we are offering business card sized adverts for \$30 + \$3 GST per edition; OR \$300 + \$30 GST for a full year.

If interested, please send your advert to office@hopeaustrlia.org.au and your payment to HOPE Inc., PO Box 6118 – Clifford Gardens, Toowoomba QLD 4350.

(Direct debit banking details available on request.)

Bouquets & Brickbats

Congratulations to:

NSW signs up to global climate group --The Baird government has moved to burnish its climate change credentials, becoming Australia's first conservative government to sign up to The Climate Group. <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/nsw-signs-up-to-global-climate-group-20150131-13301u.html>

The City of Sydney for winning the European Solar Prize 2014 award for excellence and innovation for their Renewable Energy Master Plan (which can be found at <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/vision/towards-2030/sustainability/carbon-reduction/renewable-energy>)

Sunshine Coast Council for its proposal to build a solar farm to offset its entire electricity consumption (<http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/sitePage.cfm?code=solar-farm>)

Canada's Call2Recycle (<http://www.call2recycle.org/>) for "recycling 2 million kilograms of batteries in 2014 through their product stewardship program." It's a pity that battery companies in Australia are dragging the chain!

Mirvac (<http://www.mirvac.com/Sustainability/Overview/>) for their "commitment to investing in a new Sustainability Strategy to become net resource positive by 2030".

Sustainability Victoria for releasing its draft Victorian Organics Recovery Strategy (<http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/our-priorities/integrated-waste-management/waste-strategy-statewide-planning/victorian-organics-strategy>)

Brickbats to:

Businesses who illegally move waste interstate to avoid landfill levies.

The Federal Government for moving too slowly in developing workable product stewardship programs for e-waste; batteries, tyres and the like.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Welcome to 2015, a year already shaping up to be the most important yet for saving the climate.

We are increasingly seeing the language of Beyond Zero Emissions (<http://bze.org.au/>) being used by respected international organisations such as the UN Environment Program, OECD and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Our work is getting traction overseas with Naomi Klein referencing us in her recent book *This Changes Everything*.

One of our objectives this year is to share our research internationally in the lead up to the Paris conference in December, to highlight to influential people and organisations that going beyond zero emissions is not only necessary to limit warming to 2 degrees by 2100, but is technically and economically feasible. With reports now covering energy, buildings, high speed rail, and land use, we are uniquely placed to show how this can be done sector by sector. With research underway on electric vehicles and coal exports, there will be more strings to our bow in the coming months.

2015 will also be a year of partnering with organisations, councils, and businesses to implement our research. We are also ramping up our training to communicate and share the findings of our research with BZE followers and other NGOs to support their campaigns.

If you are interested in any of these initiatives please don't hesitate to contact me.

Stephen Bygrave, CEO – Beyond Zero Emissions, info@bze.org.au



Dear Editor,

On behalf of everyone at the Australian Earth Laws Alliance, I hope that you've had a wonderful start to 2015. I'm writing to you from beautiful Florida, home of the manatee and other delightful members of the Earth community. I'm very pleased to have joined the team at the [Center for Earth Jurisprudence](#) (CEJ) at the [Barry University Law School](#) in Orlando, for the Spring Semester (January to early May 2015). I'm working with Pat Siemen, Jane Goddard, Jane Marsden and Judith Koons, to teach Earth Jurisprudence and build new opportunities for AELA and the CEJ to work together in the future. I'll also be connecting with our many friends and colleagues who are part of the [Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature](#) here in the USA.

Meanwhile, in Australia, AELA's growing team of Project Managers are busily working on a range of new and ongoing initiatives, many of which are listed below.

We hope you can connect with our many initiatives during 2015, and as always, if you have ideas about how you'd like to contribute to the growing Earth Laws movement, please get in touch anytime. (www.earthlaws.org.au)

All the best from the lovely land of manatees

Michelle Maloney, National Convenor – Australian Earth Laws Alliance
convenor@earthlaws.org.au

Feature Articles

Permaculture Ethics - Central to permaculture are the three ethics

The ethics **E**arth care, **P**eople care and **F**air share form the foundation for permaculture design and are also found in most traditional societies.

Ethics are culturally evolved mechanisms that regulate self-interest, giving us a better understanding of good and bad outcomes. The greater the power of humans, the more critical ethics become for long-term cultural and biological survival.

Permaculture ethics are distilled from research into community ethics, learning from cultures that have existed in relative balance with their environment for much longer than more recent civilizations. This does not mean that we should ignore the great teachings of modern times, but in the transition to a sustainable future, we need to consider values and concepts outside the current social norm.

Earth Care

The Earth is the very thing that sustains us, it provides us with all the essentials that keeps us alive – air, water, food, shelter – and it is the **only** source of these essentials, we can't get them from anywhere else! We depend on the Earth and all the living systems on the planet (which, incidentally, are all interconnected in a complicated, interdependent web of life) for our survival.

Taking care of the Earth's systems that keep us alive would logically be seen as "enlightened self-interest", doing what is right to ensure one's own survival – not polluting the air we breathe, not poisoning the water we drink, and not destroying the land which provides our sustenance.

"Earth Care" includes all living and non-living things, such as animals, plants, land, water and air. It includes all of them because, as science shows us through ecology and biology, all of them are interconnected and interdependent. When one is affected, all are affected.

Earth Care means caring for the soil, which is a living ecosystem, on which plant life depends, and therefore, our source of food. It means caring for our forests, which are the lungs of the planet, ensuring a supply of clean air. Forests are also inextricably linked into the process of rain formation and the water cycle, and therefore play a key role in ensuring our supply of fresh water. It means caring for our rivers, which are the veins of our planet, circulating the water which all life depends on.

People Care

All living things are interdependent on each other, including people. In reality as the saying goes, "*no man is an island*", humans by their very nature are communal and social animals, and just like the rest nature, of which they are a part of, are cooperative in nature.

If you doubt the veracity of this statement, then cast your mind back past the industrialised society in which we find ourselves in and look at history. Traditionally, the punishment for serious wrongdoers in ancient societies was banishment or exile, being forced out of the community to fend for oneself. This was equivalent to a death sentence, or at least a cruel, lonely and unsafe life of severe hardship. Beyond just physical interdependency, humans psychologically **need** community, modern studies have shown that having community is beneficial to the mental health of an individual, and lack of community is clearly detrimental. The ancients knew that humans needed community, hence the nature of the punishment.

Self-sufficiency is a myth, and a harmful one too!

"People care" is about promoting self-reliance and responsibility towards the greater community. It is importance to point out that we are talking about *self-reliance* and *not* self-sufficiency here. As mentioned before, "*no man is an island*", one person cannot do everything, and it is ridiculous to expect any one person to do so in any lifestyle other than the most primitive. Self-sufficiency is a myth, and a harmful one too! As Bill Mollison once stated, "*I might grow food, but I don't want to have to make my own shoes, I can trade food I've grown with someone who makes shoes...*". That's the essence of community! It's about sharing and supporting each other.

So what is promoting self-reliance about? It is about taking responsibility for more than one's own future, and looking to help one's community by sharing knowledge and experience, to skill people up so that they can provide for some of their basic needs. The essence of this is captured by the expression "*give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he'll eat for ever*". It is about a collaborative effort to bring change to one's own life and that of others.

When people collaborate to support each other, and to meet their needs, both physical and non-physical, this creates a bond which builds a stable, supportive, and emotionally healthy community which prospers.

“People care” importantly has to begin with the person closest to us, our self! It’s hard to care for others when we can’t care for ourselves, and there’s no point in caring for others while neglecting oneself. Such martyrdom is unconstructive, because if we are interested in helping others, then it is in our best interests that we are in an optimum state to be helpful to others. Beyond ourselves, “Care for People” then extends to the next closest circle of people in our lives, our families, then our neighbours, our local community and then the greater community, and ultimately, all of humanity.

Fair Share

This is also described as the ethical principle of “*Return of surplus to Earth and people*”.

No matter how you look at it, the world’s resources are definitely finite, so logically it follows that there is a finite and measurable share of resources available to each person on the planet to support them.

If all the resources produced were a metaphorical “pie”, and each person has their “slice of the pie”, what happens when someone wants more than their fair share, when someone wants more than one “slice of the pie”? Simply put, someone else goes without.

Our society is driven by the unsustainable economic ideology of Consumer Capitalism, which incessantly chants the mantra of “*continuous growth*”, which in effect, implies continuously increasing consumption. This is a rather interesting concept, the idea of continuous growth in a finite system, for this clearly defies the laws of physics, and also the laws of common sense. It is a truly delusional principle of a flawed ideology, for it has no basis in ecology or any other science. If anyone for even the briefest moment stops to think of how you could possibly have continuous growth, and for that matter, continuously increasing consumption, on a planet of fixed size with finite (and diminishing) resources, then the nonsensical nature of this concept is clearly evident.

All our basic needs are met by the Earth herself, and our next higher needs are met through community with each other.

What we fail to see through the haze of non-stop shopping, wide screen televisions and a myriad of electronic consumer gadgets is that ***nature keeps us alive for free***, as she has since we first walked the Earth! All our basic needs are met by the Earth herself, and our next higher needs are met through community with each other. It’s only in this 200 year old experiment we call “industrialised society” that we have become disconnected from nature, and forgotten how to tend to our own needs through the resources provided to us freely by nature. Yes, admittedly, a life sustained directly by nature is much simpler and more fuss-free, which is probably why many people are opting to leave the cities, leave the rat-race far behind them, and move out into the country to lead a more balanced and harmonious life...

The point about nature supporting us is that when we live closer to nature, we realise without doubt that nature does provides us with what we need, as long as we respect it and only take what we need to survive. In traditional societies, hunters knew about sustainable harvests, they took what game they needed to feed their tribes, if they took all the game in a single season, firstly, they wouldn’t be able to use all the food, it would be clearly wasteful, and secondly, they would starve to death fairly soon afterwards.

To put our current world situation into perspective, imagine a village with an orchard of fruit trees, the yields are plentiful, the villagers can harvest fruit as they feel hungry, they take what they can eat, and they return day after day to harvest fruit for the whole season. Nature provides their needs, all for free.

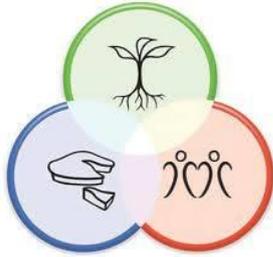
Now consider this situation – imagine one greedy villager arrives early in the season, picks all the fruit, and does not let anyone else have any. He cannot possibly eat all the fruit himself, and it would naturally spoil in a very short period of time. He tells the other villagers that they can have fruit if they give him articles of personal property in exchange. He accumulates all manner of personal possessions, more than he needs, and the villagers get the fruit.

Now, both situations are identical as far as resources go, the only difference being in the distribution of the resources. The first example is collaborative, everyone receives their fair share for free, in the second example, where one individual is driven by greed and selfish self-interest, and this resembles the consumer capitalist model of our modern world. I hope this illustrates the value of the system of “fair share” and also puts into perspective what is so wrong with our society currently.

If we overcome the incredibly irrational human preoccupation of amassing possessions, which is typified by the empty and life-devoid philosophy of “*the one with the most toys at the end wins...*”, and the frenzied resource-grab than ensues, we can take some responsibility in how much we resources we consume in our lifetimes. We can live sustainably, and avoid destroying the Earth’s living systems that sustain our lives. This “exploitation mentality” is not normal, we are brought up with it, it is learned, and can be “unlearned”.

Furthermore, when we share our surplus produce, when we share our skills, knowledge and experience, these actions build bonds between people which all works to foster a sense of stable collaborative community.

So what's the point of "Fair Share"? If we take only our fair share, then there is enough for everybody, and there will continue to be in the future too.



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Turning idleness into action: 7 steps to help create healthy and active communities across Queensland, by Rachel Smith, Senior Transport Planner - AECOM

Queensland towns and cities are in an inactivity crisis. One in 10 cars trips in South East Queensland are less than 1 kilometre in length, 90 percent of vehicle trips on the Gold Coast have 1 person per vehicle, and more than two thirds of children are driven to school. Add skyrocketing obesity rates, the fact Aussie kids are among the least active in the world and that the average Aussie family spends more time sat in the car than around the dining table, and it's clear our communities - new and long established - are unhealthy and inactive.

It wasn't always like this.

When I was growing up, kids played in the street after school, Dads rode their bikes to work and Mums walked to the grocery store. In today's Britain, some Planners have introduced policies whereby communities can apply to have their street closed to traffic for up to three hours a week for children to play, a phenomenon Naomi Fuller from not-for-profit Playing Out says leads to streets coming alive "with scooting and cycling and hopscotch and chalk". It's an indictment on how much many communities have lost focus on healthy and active lifestyles, but also shows there is hope for the future.

Right now there are multiple opportunities for public and private sector planners to influence the creation of healthy and active communities as part of the planning process for new and infill developments. Through looking at the three common misunderstandings preventing new and infill developments from being healthy and active communities – and linking them with seven steps to help planners to create healthier and more active communities across Queensland – we can turn idleness into action.

Three common misunderstandings

1. The planned distances between origins and destinations are too long

Some planning policies and master plans describe trip distances of between 5km and 10km as a standard distance to travel by bicycle. In reality, though, 5km is too far in both distance and travel time for most 'normal' individuals and families to travel or, importantly, consider travelling.

The solution to the 'distance' problem is to plan trip lengths around more 'reasonable' travel times, and in minutes, not distance?

2. Alternatives to car travel are implemented too late

In the case of residential development, planning policies often don't require 'alternatives to the car' to be implemented until that development is complete, meaning car driving habits have been formed and are part of the community's culture by the time a bus or walking bus is available.

The solution is to ensure alternative modes of transport are in place before, or on, the first occupation of the first residential or commercial property.

3. There is no consistent provision of active transport infrastructure

Most local authorities have different design standards and criteria for implementing active transport. For example, some Queensland Councils provide both on-road and off-road cycle facilities along each route, while another council, in the same region, might have a preference for just providing wide off-road shared paths.

The solution might be to develop a standardisation guide that provides an agreed framework and guide for the planning, design, funding and construction of walking and cycling infrastructure across Queensland.

The 7 steps to help create healthy and active communities across Queensland

We don't need to question whether unhealthy or inactive communities exist or not. We all know that car dependency, sedentary lifestyles and obesity exists we see it everyday. It's what we do about it that's important. That's why I've suggested 7 steps to help planners create healthier and more active communities across Queensland.

1. Create some clarity

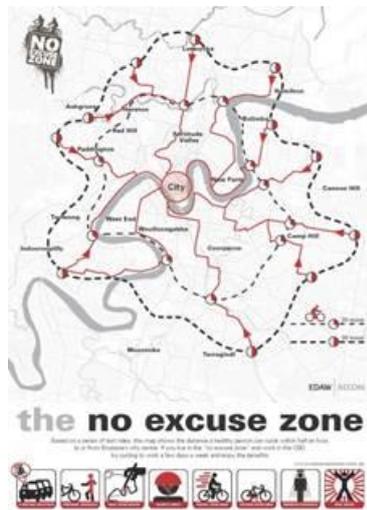
Create a specific vision – not a grand vision with motherhood statements – of what you really want your new or infill development to achieve. Ask yourself some realistic questions, such as:

*Can we reduce car trips if we build the shops and medical centre in the centre of the development?
Can we plan the development so that all homes are within 2 kilometres of the shopping centre?*

2. Understand travel times

Understand the actual distance and time that the 'average' person is prepared to walk, cycle or travel to public transport before any planning commences.

Will the average adult in full time employment with two kids, pets, household chores and children's after school activities have enough spare time to travel cycle 40 minutes (6km) to a train station each morning?



AECOM developed the 'No Excuse Zone' mapping technique more than five years ago, and the maps have since been produced for cities in Australia, New Zealand, Europe and the USA. Based on a series of 'test bicycle rides' at an average speed of 15 km per hour, the map outputs show the distance a normal healthy person of average fitness can travel in 20 minutes on a normal mainstream bicycle. The maps show an 'area of influence' or a zone where it would be feasible, viable and realistic to encourage people to ride a bicycle once or twice a week. The No Excuse Zone maps were created for various reasons but principally to test people's perceptions of travel time and distance. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the perception of distance varies from person to person. Whilst elite sports cyclists can easily cycle 30km in less than one hour, the average family riding bicycles to the local sports match at the weekend, or seniors cycling to the shops for gentle exercise, will travel less than 10km in one hour. Moreover, many people have an inaccurate perception of actual distances. Last year the AECOM team carried out a series of 20 minute 'test' bicycle rides from key destinations – schools, shopping centres and tourist attractions – on the Gold Coast. We found an average person of average fitness riding a standard bicycle on footpaths and stopping at intersections could travel 3.1km in 20 minutes. Our research, which included surveys with members of the general public, confirmed that 20 minutes is deemed to be 'reasonable' in terms of journey time and 3km in terms of distance for most adults, children and seniors of average health.

3. Produce reference materials for developers

A reference guide or an online resource library of good practice elements from healthy and active communities in Australia and overseas can help guide developers into planning, designing and constructing facilities that enable residents to walk and cycle on a regular basis.

Could you produce a 'How to provide cycle parking in inner urban apartment blocks' pocket guide, for example?

Studies with real estate agents in USA revealed bike paths led to increases in property selling prices. Similarly, home buyers confirmed active transport infrastructure was crucial in persuading them to buy a home in a new community.

Case study – Denmark: The Bicycle House of Orestad in Copenhagen (Bjark Ingles 8-House)

The 8 House designed by Bjark Ingles is a large mixed-use development built in the shape of a figure 8 on the southern perimeter of the new suburb of Ørestad in Copenhagen, Denmark. The development consists of three different types of residential housing as well as commercial and retail premises.

By stacking the various ingredients of the urban neighbourhood into layers and connecting each layer with a walking and cycling ramp – which loops around the complex – a sense of community was created because businesses and housing can interact and co-exist and because everyone can walk and cycle everywhere. The site is a less than a 2 minute walk from the metro station with regular trains to Copenhagen CBD.



(Photos: Rachel Smith 201)

4. Provide the appropriate solutions for the target audience

Walking and cycling infrastructure is often considered to be expensive when compared to levels of patronage. New and infill developments should ensure that funding is spent on infrastructure that can be used by the 'target audience'. For example, if the new development is targeted at young families, will there be safe walking and cycling routes to the local school? Bicycle lanes on arterial roads are an asset for experienced road cyclists but typically do not encourage young children and their parents/carers to cycle to school.

5. Ensure alternatives to using the car are attractive

Non-car modes of travel - walking, cycling and public transport - need to be attractive to use and competitive in terms of price, travel time and convenience. If walking to the bus, travelling by bus and walking to the final destination takes twice as long as travelling by car, and is more expensive, it won't be deemed as an 'alternative' means of travel.

Proposed demonstration project – UK: UK's first cycle friendly homes



The proposed transformation of the former Elizabeth Shaw chocolate factory warehouses in Bristol into a mixed-use scheme featuring commercial space, workspaces, loft apartments, open space and bicycle venue would allow hundreds of people to live, work and play in the same location. As part of the mixed use development and on a strip of land along the edge of the Bristol and bath cycle path, an innovative project would create the UK's first dedicated cycle-friendly housing - car free town houses with direct access onto the Sustrans National Cycle Network (Bristol City Council, Sustrans and Squarepeg, Bristol 2009)

Image: Cycle friendly townhouses. Image from Squarepeg website.

6. Sequencing

Driving a car a short distance to work, to school and to the shops is part of the Australian culture and an established habit. But what if we asked the crucial questions at the very start of the planning stage, the answers to which could inform the correct sequencing of alternatives?

Will cycle paths or safe routes to school be built and operational before the first occupation of the first house?

Will cycle paths only be funded as part of road schemes?

In the UK, national guidance requires planning applications with significant transport implications be accompanied by a travel plan. Residential travel plans, for new and infill developments, are negotiated and secured through the use of the planning system. As a result, developers are regularly required to provide walking and cycling infrastructure to school as part of 'Safer Routes to School' programmes, subsidies to the existing bus network or car-pooling initiatives. (Ref 2) At High Royds, a mixed use development with 541 homes, 2,354 sq m of office space and an assisted living centre on the outskirts of Leeds (UK), the developer was required to provide a free shuttle bus between the development and the nearest mainline rail station on the day of first occupation of the first homes.

7. Collect data

If we want healthy and active communities to be common place, more data is needed to show a direct correlation between providing active transport facilities and a respective development's economy. It is essential to collect transport data before, during and after the construction of a new community to justify and evaluate the benefits of providing for pedestrians and cyclists. For example, research by Alison Lee in Lygon Street, Melbourne showed that each square metre allocated to bike parking generates \$31 per hour, compared to \$6 generated for each square metre used for a car parking.

It all sounds simple, right?

We need to plan trip lengths around 'reasonable' travel times, ensure alternative modes of transport are in place before the first occupation of the first residential or commercial property, and develop an agreed framework and guide for the planning, design, funding and construction of walking and cycling infrastructure across Queensland.

With a clear vision, realistic land use planning, examples of good practice, appropriate infrastructure solutions, attractive alternatives to the car, well-sequenced facilities implementation and data to justify the benefits of providing for pedestrians and cyclists, Australia can also have streets alive with the sight and sound of children scooting and cycling. We can turn idleness into action.

References

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/children_shealth/10654330/Streets-are-alive-with-the-sound-of-children-playing.html

<http://travl.org/downloads/Publications/Useful%20Documents/Making%20Residential%20Travel%20Plans%20Work.pdf>

Rachel Smith is an Author, Blogger, Keynote Speaker and a Principal Transport Planner at AECOM in Brisbane. Her 1st book "Decongestion – 7 steps for Mayors and other City Leaders to cut traffic congestion, without the expense of new roads or annoyed residents" is due for release in January 2015.

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Toowoomba News

Community Forum program

Venue: Dr Price Room, 6 Little St, Toowoomba

Time: 4pm – 6pm

DATE	SPEAKER	(PROPOSED) TOPIC
7 Feb	Dave Grubb & Pam Pittaway Lockyer Organic Group	Organics – more than growing food
7 Mar	Rachel Smith Senior Transport Planner – AECOM	Decongestion – 7 steps for Mayors and other City Leaders to cut traffic congestion, without the expense of new roads or annoyed residents
4 Apr		
2 May	Joanne Galea Designs for Creation Pty Ltd	A Brief Introduction to Building Biology
6 June		
4 July		
1 Aug		
5 Sept		
3 Oct		
7 Nov		

Date Claimers: Community Events which will be attended by HOPE

26 Feb USQ “O” Week Market Day – information display only
9-10 May Gardenfest (Toowoomba Showgrounds) – information display & demonstrations
9 Aug Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival – information display only
19 Aug U3A Seniors Expo (Humeridge Church, Hume St, Toowoomba) – Information display only
dd-dd Sept Youth Leading the World Congress (YLTW) – composite information display
dd Sept Sustainable House Day

- *A team of volunteers is required for each even. So, if can spare some time to transport equipment and materials to and from the event; or help staff the display – please contact the office on ph 4639 2135 or email office@hopeaustralia.org.au*

Wanted – Used Postage Stamps

HOPE collects used postage stamps and/or un-wanted stamp albums for community groups’ fund-raising purposes.

Please consider collecting used postage stamps from home and/or work, and forwarding a pack of used stamps to the HOPE (Householders’ Options to Protect the Environment) office, PO Box 6118 - Clifford Gardens, Toowoomba, QLD 4350; or drop them off at 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba..

Date Claimer:

12 April 2015 --- Felton Food Festival -- “Grow. Gather. Enjoy”

64 Bryce Rd, Felton East, www.feltonfoodfestival.org.au

- Featuring: Fresh produce & food stalls; Celebrity Chefs & Gardeners; Cooking Demonstrations & Tastings

National News

Places You Love Alliance

Nature 'stocktake' urges governments to start treating nature like it's precious – because it is.
(Media release February 2015)

Recently, as global experts converged on Sydney for the [World Parks Congress](#), a landmark report released by a coalition of 42 environment groups gave a sobering assessment of the health of nature in Australia.

The Australia We Love Report compiled recent relevant information about the state of Australia's rivers, climate, food, forests, waste and pollution, land management, oceans and reefs.

"Nature supports our lives, livelihoods and our quality of life – every single thing we need to live comes from nature – our rivers, climate, soils, oceans and forests," said Kelly O'Shanassy, CEO of the Australian Conservation Foundation and spokesperson for the *Places You Love Alliance*, a coalition of [42 Australian environment groups](#).

"Like similar studies from overseas this Australian report showed nature, our life support system, is in decline and we are using more of the earth's resources than can be replaced by nature every year.

"If nature was a bank account, we'd be eating through the capital, not the interest – and when we do that with our savings, eventually we go bankrupt.

"This is an issue for every Australian that depends on clean air and water – and that's all of us."

The report found:

The decline in nature affects our health

- More than 3,000 Australians die every year from air-pollution-related illness, more than twice the national road toll.
- The annual health cost of air pollution in Australia is estimated to be \$11.1 billion to \$24.3 billion.
- Since the 1970s, application of agricultural chemicals in Australia has steadily risen, contaminating water systems Australians rely on for drinking water

Australians consume more than is necessary for our lifestyles

- Each Australian family contributes enough rubbish each year to fill a three-bedroom house.
- Total consumption of natural resources per person in Australia is one of the highest in the world, and is projected to increase by up to 27% by 2030.
- By 2050, energy consumption in Australia is projected to increase by around 21%, with only 14% coming from renewable sources

Australia's natural infrastructure is in decline

- One million hectares of Australian native vegetation was cleared every year between 2000 and 2010.
- More than 85% of Australia's rivers have been modified by land clearing, irrigation, dams and weirs.
- Of the 68 zones of the Murray-Darling Basin, Australia's most significant agricultural region, only one zone is rated in good health.
- 1259 plants, 396 animals and 67 ecological communities are listed as threatened with extinction.
- Invasive species have significantly contributed to extinctions in most regions of Australia.
- Concentrations of CO₂ in the atmosphere are higher than any time in the last 800,000 years. We will likely see four degrees of warming by the end of this century.

The places Australians love are under threat

- Since 1985 more than half of the coral on the Great Barrier Reef has been lost, with remaining coral cover predicted to be lost with two degrees of warming through climate change.
- Two degrees of climate warming will likely mean the loss of 80% of freshwater wetlands from Kakadu National Park as well as Queensland's tropical forests

"We simply can't have healthy people if we don't care for nature," Ms. O'Shanassy said.

“The good news is that if governments invest in nature’s infrastructure, like we would for other infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and energy grids, this is completely possible.

We need to start treating nature like its precious, because it is! So many Australians from all walks of life are already working together for a better future.

The report included interviews with Australians who are driving change in their communities to look after nature. These everyday heroes prove the changes we need to make are not beyond our grasp.

It is time for a meaningful national conversation about the kind of Australia we want.

In 2015, *Places You Love* will host the [National Nature Conversation](#). We invite all Australians to get involved.”

View the full report: www.placesyoulove.org/AustraliaWeLove

Find out more about the National Nature Conversation:

www.placesyoulove.org/NationalNatureConversation #OzNatureConvo

Watch short interviews with everyday Australians taking action for nature:

www.placesyoulove.org/AustraliaWeLove

Media contact: Josh Meadows, mob: 0439 342 992

World News



Future Earth Strategic Research Agenda 2014 published

The Strategic Research Agenda 2014 calls for a step-change in research to address serious environmental, social and economic challenges.

The report is the outcome of a year-long global consultation on the priorities for global change research, and focuses on three themes: firstly, on understanding how the planet is changing; secondly, on addressing urgent sustainable development needs; and thirdly, on transforming development pathways to be more sustainable in the long term.

The document sets out priorities to transform the science agenda by taking a systems view of global environmental challenges, integrating social and natural sciences. It is the result of a consultation process with global environmental change research communities and stakeholders from business, government and civil society, as well as an open online survey,

launched in this newsletter, which received contributions from people in 74 countries worldwide.

[Read more and download the Strategic Research Agenda 2014 on our website.](#)

SDSN launches global consultation on "Indicators and a Monitoring Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"

Resources

Climate change booklet hopes to dispel confusion, misinformation

Australian Academy of Science (<https://www.science.org.au/>) - Australia's top scientific minds release a new publication to dispel confusion and misinformation about climate change and warn of dire consequences if no action is taken now.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-16/climate-change-is-happening-now-scientists-warn/6093724>

GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives)

The Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives is a global network that challenges polluting waste disposal methods and works to build an economy where all products are reused, repaired or recycled. The scale of what we trash and how fast we trash it is creating a worldwide crisis, with major health, environmental, and economic impacts for us all, and especially for low-income communities of colour. We support grassroots, community-led efforts to transform local waste systems, challenge harmful trash-burning, and advocate for better products and policies. Website: www.no-burn.org. Blog: www.zerowasteworld.org.

New caravan and camping e-book

The ATA's new *Solar Caravans and Eco-camping* e-book has a wealth of information on taking to the road sustainably. Learn about solar for RVs, off-grid appliances, inspiring projects, and products and gadgets for "on the road". Free to ATA members from the [Webshop](#), \$5 for non-members.

Sustainable Futures: Linking population, resources and the environment

(Paperback - December 2014; ISBN: 9781486301898 - AU \$ 39.95)

Sustainable Futures explores the links between population growth, diminishing resources and environmental challenges, and the implications for Australia's future. Written by leaders in their field, and based on presentations from the 2013 Fenner Conference on 'Population, Resources and Climate Change', this book is a timely insight into the intertwined challenges that we currently face, and what can be done to ensure a sustainable and viable future.

The book identifies the major areas of concern for Australia's future, including environmental, social and economic implications of population growth; mineral and natural resources; food, land and water issues; climate change; and the obstacles and opportunities for action.

Accessible, informative and authoritative, *Sustainable Futures* will be of interest to policy makers, students and professionals in the fields of sustainability and population growth.

[ChemSec report released on how companies "cry wolf" in the face of new environmental laws \(http://www.chemsec.org/\)](http://www.chemsec.org/)

Companies and trade organisations frequently tell politicians that stricter environmental legislation would harm the economy significantly – but such claims have repeatedly been proven wrong. This is shown in the ChemSec report Cry wolf.

The report reviews examples of past industry cost estimates of complying with suggested environmental regulations and compares them with the actual costs after the laws have entered into force. Industry systematically "cries wolf", saying that compliance costs would be considerable and jobs lost. But this is a false warning – research shows that it is not the case. Rather, the cost for industry to adapt to environmental policies has decreased since the 1990s, and industry has managed well with adjusting their operations to new regulations.
