

A wooden birdhouse with a circular entrance hole is mounted on the trunk of a large, old tree with rough, textured bark. The background shows a clear blue sky and some green foliage.

Annual Report on actions undertaken in 2018/19 to implement the East Gippsland Shire Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy

OUR VISION

East Gippsland will retain its unique environment. We are all learning how we can tread a little more lightly in our environment. We want to make changes that will help us do our job in the best way we can. By doing this, Council aspires to help all East Gippslanders to live more sustainably. Together we can make a difference.

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East Gippsland Shire Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy

This strategy outlines East Gippsland Shire Council's position on issues relating to the protection, preservation and enhancement of our environment and provides a framework towards a more sustainable future.

Council has a role in maintaining, protecting and enhancing the region's natural environment. We can do this by using our resources more efficiently, by reducing our everyday impacts, and encouraging the people of East Gippsland to do the same. The Environmental Sustainability Strategy Annual Report 2018-19 outlines the major achievements, project highlights and key performance indicators achieved by Council.

This annual report monitors and reports on the environmental actions from both Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy, and the revised Council Plan 2017-21



Photo: National Tree Day along the banks of the Mitchell River organised by BULG with help from scouts.

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Business as usual Environmental Sustainability Strategy actions:

The following is an outline of what is considered 'business as usual' in respect to environmental sustainability:

- A shift in the direction towards an improved culture of sustainability across the organisation.
- Implement community awareness and behavioural change programs to encourage and support reduced use of energy and resources.
- Undertake projects to reduce the Shire's resource and energy consumption as an organisation.
- Lobby state and federal government for funding and legislative support in relation to environmental sustainability policies, legislation and programs.
- Build on existing and create new partnerships that effectively deliver environmental sustainability outcomes.
- Provide expert advice and guidance on policy development for Environmental Planning.
- Support local environment groups by providing them with information relating to funding opportunity as well as promoting the Sustainability Gippsland website.
- Support the Environment and Sustainability stream of the East Gippsland Shire Community Grants program and participate in the selection process for the environment stream.
- Develop and provide environmental sustainability information to the East Gippsland community through website, media, social media and Council publications.
- Support the ResourceSmart Schools Program, which is an initiative that helps schools embed sustainability and take action to minimise waste, save energy and water, promote biodiversity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Strengthen and develop new relationships with agencies and authorities to ensure a coordinated approach towards environmental sustainability i.e. East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (EGCMA), Regional Catchment Strategy.
- Support and enhance existing Natural Resource Management programs and activities.

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- Implementation of policies and strategies that support and encourage the protection and management of remnant native vegetation and revegetation.
- Keep informed of native vegetation regulations and promote best practice within Shire operations and to the broader community.
- Promotion, active involvement and connections to sustainability environmental programs and activities developed by other organisations /agencies /authorities.
- Maintain active membership of key conservation management networks, steering committees and work groups, working with partner agencies and community involved in sustainable natural resource management planning and works.
- Support local groups that focus on sustainable land management and facilitate stewardship.
- Provide efficient and environmentally sensitive waste services across the municipality.
- Work with business and industry to find solutions and consider the benefits environmental sustainability can have to their operations (e.g. reduced costs, improved image).
- Advocate for and implement land use policies, plans and standards that guide land use development and promote sustainable design, development and heritage conservation. Supported through continual reviews and improvements to the East Gippsland Planning Scheme.

How did we go in 2018-19?

A range of projects and programs from the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Council Plan have been implemented. Highlights for 2018-19 include:

- Council progressed strategic planning and review into electric vehicles, including joining in a Gippsland wide electric vehicle feasibility study.
- Council was involved in 8 school waste education sessions and council events across the community with an estimated reach of 250 people.
- Continued facilitation of the Sustainability Victoria funded ResourceSmart Schools program.
- Undertook the business cases for the second stage of the Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project: East Gippsland Shire Solar Bulk Buy; Multi-site Feasibility Study and Energy Info Hub.
- Installation of grid connected solar on the:

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- Lakes Entrance Aquadome, at 46 kW it is the biggest installation on an East Gippsland Shire Council building
- Bairnsdale City Oval, had a 10.5 kW solar system installed with 15kW inverter (funded in conjunction with Sustainability Victoria)
- Undertook streams 1 and 2 of the *Local Government Energy Saver* program (LGES) and applied for stream 3. The aim of the program is to help eligible regional Local Governments identify, prioritise and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades on buildings.
 - *Stream 1: Establish Local Government Corporate Emissions Profile and Reduction Plan* was submitted in late 2018, costing only in-kind data gathering.
 - *Stream 2: Local Government Owned Facility Energy Audits*. Energy audits were undertaken by consultants from Ironbark Sustainability (\$25,000) and submitted in January 2019, on eight high energy using facilities.
 - Applied for *Stream 3: Implementation of Retrofit Work*. Lodged a (successful) funding application seeking \$100,000 from Sustainability Victoria, using matched EGSC funds of \$100,000 (allocated in 2018/19 and 2019/20 capital works project for energy efficiency upgrades).
 - The Local Government Energy Saver Program is delivered by Sustainability Victoria (SV) as part of the implementation of the Victorian Government's Climate Change Framework.
- A [Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Control Plan](#) was funded by the Victorian Government for 2018-19. This funding and in-kind contribution from Council staff resulted in over 480 km of roadside weeds treated in 2018-19.
- In total 453 km of Regionally Controlled Weeds and 27 km of Regionally Prohibited Weeds were treated under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.
- Council's operations were responsible for 6,548 tonnes of CO₂ –e (equivalent) emissions, a decline of 1,052 tonnes compared to the baseline in 2014/15. This excludes landfill emissions, or emissions from contractors or refrigerants.
- Despite using less energy, the cost has risen and increased by \$48,032 for electricity in Council buildings and facilities, and \$53,561 for residential streetlights compared to the year before. Mains gas used 5,188GJ at a cost of \$84,857 combined from the BARC, Paynesville service centre, Bairnsdale library and gas lights at BRHS memorial gardens – a saving of \$32,150 compared to the year before (due to the cogen system not being used during the BARC pool upgrade). Bottled gas at the Lakes Aquadome used 1,597GJ at a cost of \$77,155 (an increase of \$6,340 despite a decrease in consumption of 59GJ compared to the year before). Water use was 130,532kL at a cost \$280,652, similar to the year before.

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- Four quarterly [Environment Connect](#) newsletters were developed and distributed electronically with hardcopies made available in all service centres and libraries. There was an average open rate of 37%, which is 13% higher than the industry average.
- The following community small grant projects with environmental outcomes, received funding in 2018/19:

Round 1

- Anglican Earth Care Gippsland Inc: **Bush Learning Program Pilot** \$2,440
Development and delivery of a bush learning pilot program in partnership with The Abbey, the newly formed Bush Learning Playgroup, interested parents and community representatives - to run an outdoor environmental education program.
- Swifts Creek Ensay Landcare Group: **A Poet's Walk – A Story in Stone** \$5,000
Collaborative project, the Poet's Walk Working Group plans to restore, build and complete historical stone cairns and set a poem in stone for the wider community to celebrate.
- Great Alpine Gallery Inc: **Living River** \$4,000
Living River is working in partnership with the Poets' Walk project in Swifts Creek. Creation of ephemeral sculptures using biodegradable local plant materials and eco-dyed paper to raise awareness of the health of the Tambo River and engender community ownership in caring for it by involving local community groups and schools. A parade and celebration took place in May 2019.



Photo by Anne Richardson.

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Round 2

- Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCE Gippsland): **East Gippsland Sustainable Schools Expo** \$2,800
An Expo for all school aged students across East Gippsland to learn about sustainability, to share knowledge and learn about the theme of Biodiversity - Safeguarding the Future.
- Marine Mammal Foundation: **Marine Champions - Inspiring tomorrow's change-makers!** \$4,469
Marine Champions is MMF's exciting youth engagement program. It will provide 10 young people with practical opportunities and learning experiences, allowing them to strengthen their understanding of marine science and sustainability through interactive workshops, field trips and education activities.
- Bairnsdale Recycling Enterprise Inc: **Reducing landfill - mattress pick up** \$4,750
Purchase of equipment to allow the pickup of mattresses from Lakes Entrance and potentially further afield for deconstruction and on selling.

Challenges

There were significant challenges during 2018/19 most notably the drought in East Gippsland being declared due to a one in 20 year rainfall deficiency. Farmers faced the third failed spring in a row and many spent thousands of dollars a week to feed stock. As a result of low rainfall the Orbost phytocapping revegetation project was severely impacted with big losses onsite of about 70% of 2,000 plants. However, the council parks and gardens crew planted more succulent varieties in streetscapes as a result. The low rainfall also meant less freshwater inflows into the Gippsland Lakes than previous years.

Other challenges related to waste, resulting from global changes to the recycling industry. Principally when China stopped taking Australia's recyclable plastics at the beginning of 2018, it became apparent how dependent the industry was on shipping waste overseas.

The implementation of sustainability initiatives is also reliant on external funding. Whilst some funding was attracted during the year there were also unfortunately some unsuccessful funding applications:

- \$50,000 to the Renewable Community Program for solar and energy efficiency on various community facilities (submitted Sept 2018)
- Community Climate Change Adaptation grants (3CA) (submitted March 2019 but informed of outcome in Sept 2019):

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- \$75,000 for climate change indicators on Boole Poole peninsula
- \$75,000 for stress testing and vulnerability of infrastructure
- \$47,000 for Collaborative Council Grant to develop a Gippsland wide community emissions profile (with Gippsland local government partners)

This either delayed or prevented the implementation of these initiatives.

Strong communities

GOAL: East Gippsland communities plan for their future.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Increase community participation in engagement activities to plan for their future by 10 per cent by 2019.

STRATEGY 6: Engage communities to develop plans and participate in decision making for their community.

STRATEGY 7: Build communities' capacity to plan for their future.

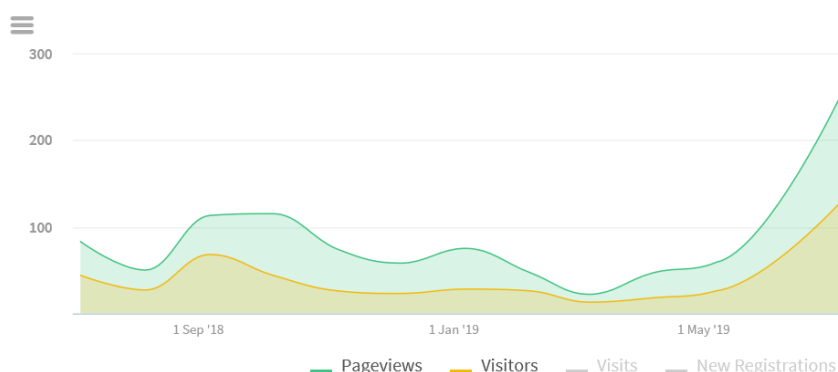
- Community feedback opportunities were established via the creation of on-line Your Say pages:
 - **Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project**
<https://yoursay.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/bright-futures-renewable-energy-project>

During 2018-19 the Your Say page had 581 total visits. Here is a summary:

Visitors Summary

Your Say East Gippsland from 01 Jul'18 to 30 Jun'19

DAILY MONTHLY



Highlights

TOTAL VISITS	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	NEW REGISTRATIONS
581	24	0
ENGAGED VISITORS	INFORMED VISITORS	AWARE VISITORS
0	159	369

Based on the top three documents downloaded:

- 144 people downloaded the Technical Report

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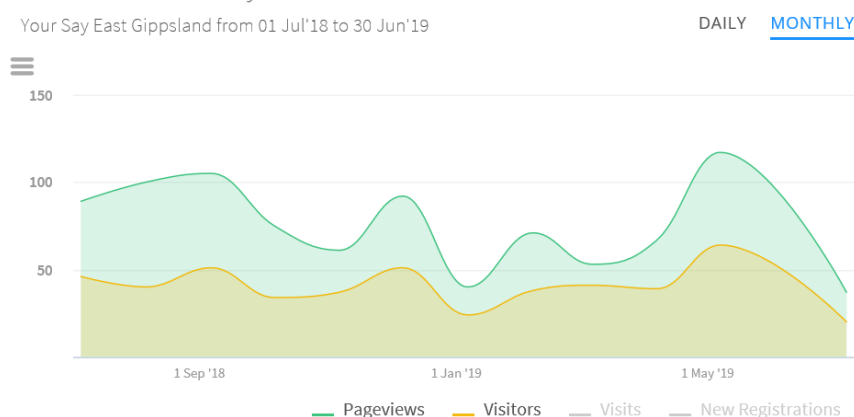
- 37 people downloaded the community solar donation application form
- 45 people downloaded the Summary Bright Futures flyer

• Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy

<https://yoursay.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/legas>

The Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy Infrastructure Workshop in January 2019 involved confirming critical infrastructure systems in Lakes Entrance, identifying the sensitivity of different systems to flooding and considered initial adaptation ideas that could mitigate the impacts on each asset. The Your Say page had 529 visits. Summary:

Visitors Summary



Highlights

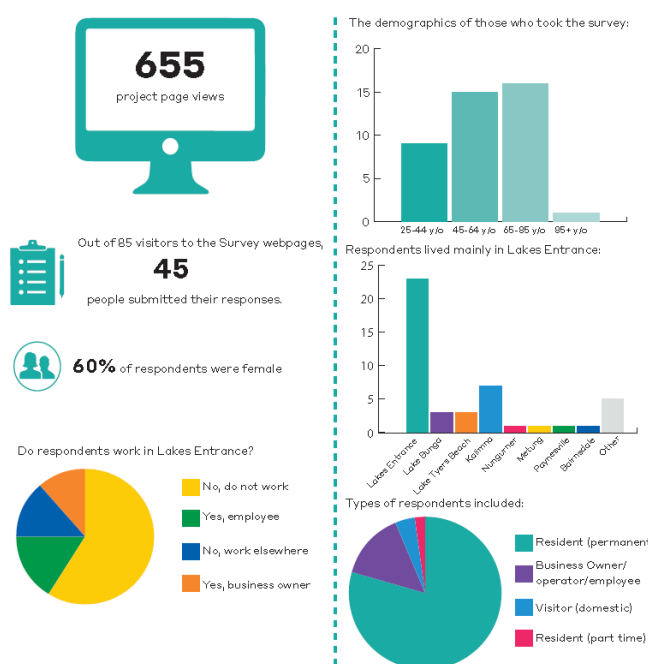
TOTAL VISITS	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	NEW REGISTRATION
529	15	2
ENGAGED VISITORS	INFORMED VISITORS	AWARE VISITORS
1	118	395

The Lakes Entrance Growth & Adaptation Strategy Engagement Summary Report was completed and uploaded to Your Say (see graphic on right).

Based on the top three documents downloads:

- 45 people downloaded the project bulletin #1
- 10 people downloaded the community panel terms of reference
- 7 people downloaded the engagement summary

Survey and Web Results



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Environment Connect

- Four editions of the [Environment Connect](#) newsletter were released electronically and hard copies available (on display) in each service centre and library:

	Winter 2018	Spring 2018	Summer 2019	Autumn 2019
Email deliveries	348 (↑ 148)	345 (↓ 2)	351 (↑ 6)	345 (↓ 6)
Opens	136 (↑ 54)	540 (↑ 404)	923 (↑ 383)	503 (↓ 420)
Clicks	53	52	51	42

- The industry average (for Government) has an open rate of 24%. Environment Connect this year had an average open rate of 37%.
- Electronic copies were loaded onto the shires' environment landing page.
- Subscribers increased by 45 this year.



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A liveable region

GOAL: We have safe, accessible, vibrant and well utilised public spaces and built environments that reflect the priorities of our community.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: By 2021, decrease the infrastructure renewal gap through increase expenditure on renewal projects.

Strategy 18: Develop and maintain high quality infrastructure assets that service future generations at minimum cost and are fit for purpose.

Implement Energy & Water Efficiencies

- Submitted three grants for \$175,000 to improve energy savings (solar and energy efficiency) in Council facilities, by leveraging the existing capital budget allocation of \$100,000 for 2018/19:
 - Unsuccessful for \$50,000 to the 'Renewable Communities Program' (DELWP) to install 47kW on seven community managed facilities (December 2018)
 - Successful for \$25,000 in stream two (energy audits) and \$100,000 for stream three (implementing energy audits) in the Local Government Energy Saver Program (delivered by Sustainability Victoria as part of the implementation of the Victorian Government's Climate Change Framework).
- Continued with leak detection alerts for six biggest water using sites, and established login's for site managers for the annual Iota water monitoring subscription at:
 - Lakes Aqua dome, 43 Palmers Rd, Lakes Entrance
 - Bairnsdale Aquatic and Recreation Centre, 80 McKean St, Bairnsdale
 - Sale Yards, 11 Sale Yards Rd, Bairnsdale
 - Mallacoota Caravan Park, Allan Drive, Mallacoota
 - Bairnsdale Outdoor Pool, 49 Turnbull St, Bairnsdale
 - Orbost Pool, 3 Sylvia St, Orbost
- Sustainability Officer completed the 'Organisational Carbon Accounting for Local Governments' course run by Sustainability Victoria, for global standards around reporting corporate emissions.

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STRATEGY 19: Ensure all new and renewed infrastructure incorporates best practice design, including: universal access, technology and sustainability elements

Develop Community Infrastructure Projects in Bairnsdale

Two major wetland projects in East Bairnsdale were progressed:

1. Crooke Street drainage reserve: geotechnical and geochemical investigations were undertaken, and detailed design progressed.
2. Jones Bay McMillan Street wetland: detailed design and tender documentation was developed, and the funding agency negotiated a project extension with construction planned for 2019/20.

In addition, stage two of the Bairnsdale City Oval irrigation project to connect stormwater supply from the saleyards to new tanks (which saw 219,100 litres of rainwater tanks installed in stage one) was continued.

Participate in Integrated Water Management collaborative approaches

The East Gippsland Integrated Water Management Forum Strategic Directions Statement has been approved by the Minister for Water. A presentation occurred from East Gippsland Water and discussion on the Integrated Water Management project at Bairnsdale Livestock Exchange and Bairnsdale City Oval for a Stormwater Reuse Study.

Participation has continued, with three priority projects identified in the East Gippsland Integrated Water Management Forum Strategic Directions Statement being developed into Expressions of Interest for funding under the DELWP Resilient and Liveable Cities and Towns Program – Regional Integrated Water Management Co-Investment Grant.

Design Water Sensitive Urban wetlands for Lakes Entrance Northern Growth Area

A Consultant was engaged, and the project re-scoped to consider climate change modelling in the wetland design. Progressed the actions including desktop review and completion of climate change assessment. Second stage is being refocussed based on the outcomes of the assessment, and to link with Strategic Planning and Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy.

Undertake projects and programs to support Council and Community's ability to plan for and understand sustainable adaptation to changing environmental conditions

- The review of the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan will be incorporated into the Environmental Sustainability Strategy Review. Two project applications have been submitted for the DELWP Community and Climate Change Adaptation grants; the outcomes would support the objective of addressing climate change adaptation in East Gippsland.

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- Three East Gippsland Shire Council officers (Manager Place and Community Strategy, Project Engineer and the Sustainability Project Planner) attended the 27th NSW Coastal Conference which provided an opportunity to hear from coastal managers, practitioners and the community on issues and challenges on the long term sustainable management of our coast. The conference was split across the themes of science and innovation, coastal planning, development, engineering and changing coasts. Practical examples of communities adapting to changing coastal environments were presented. Coasts are proving to be dynamic with broad implications and risks to communities along the Australian coastline, including East Gippsland.



- Sustainability advice was provided to the development of the Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy; the Community Panel discussions; and at the Lakes Entrance Growth and Adaptation Strategy Infrastructure Workshop in January 2019. The workshop involved confirming critical infrastructure systems in Lakes Entrance, identifying the sensitivity of different systems to flooding and considered initial adaptation ideas that could mitigate the impacts on each asset.

Support projects and initiatives that improve our open spaces and built environment for present and future generations, while mitigating effects on the environment.

Strive to enhance the natural and built environments of East Gippsland.

- Gardens in high profile locations such as Esplanade in Lakes Entrance have been planted with new drought tolerant species.
- Difficult grass areas have been changed to mulched areas.
- A boardwalk in Metung was constructed connecting residents to their local waterways (the \$1.015 million project is funded by council and the Victorian and

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Australian governments and was identified as a high priority in the Metung Nungurner Community Plan). Llewelyn Court planted with more appropriate street tree species.

- Aeration of playing surfaces has occurred. This will result in easier water access to the sub soil, reduce compaction and hardness of playing surfaces with less run off.
- Staff input into landscape plans for Twin River streetscapes to retain and protect remnant trees.
- Council supported National Tree Day events in July 2018, of which many occurred on Council managed land, for example:
 - [Tambo Bluff Landcare Coastcare](#) at Jacaranda Gully near Broadlands, see [photos](#).
 - Bairnsdale Urban Landcare Group (BULG) again had scouts and families helping to plant hundreds of seedlings along the north bank of the Mitchell



River walking track.

- Funding opportunities were provided to the community via the quarterly [Environment Connect](#) newsletters.



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GOAL: Sustainable planning and growth supports thriving townships, while maintaining our commitment to sustainability and protecting our natural environment.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Reduce Council's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by 2021.

STRATEGY 21: Work with communities to be resource smart and invest in innovative programs and projects to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions

Develop Community Infrastructure Projects Shire wide

Applied and completed streams 1 and 2 of the *Local Government Energy Saver* program (LGES) and applied for stream 3. The aim of the program is to help eligible regional Local Governments identify, prioritise and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades on buildings:

- Stream 1: *Establish Local Government Corporate Emissions Profile and Reduction Plan* was submitted in late 2018, costing only in-kind data gathering.
- Stream 2: *Local Government Owned Facility Energy Audits*. Energy audits were undertaken by consultants from Ironbark Sustainability (\$26,328) on the following high energy using facilities:
 - Corporate Centre and Council Chambers
 - Lakes Entrance Aquadome
 - Bairnsdale Aquatic and Recreation Centre (BARC) and Forge Theatre
 - East Gippsland Art Gallery
 - Bairnsdale City Oval
 - AJ Freeman Reserve, Paynesville
 - Orbost Service Centre and library
 - Paynesville Service Centre and library
- The energy audit reports were completed in January 2019 to the value of \$26,328 funded by Sustainability Victoria (\$25,000) and East Gippsland Shire Council (\$1,328). Audits identified 2,340 GJ of potential on-going annual energy reduction actions from eight facilities and informed the application to the next stream for \$100,000 (in matched funding).
- Applied for *Stream 3: Implementation of Retrofit Work*. Lodged a (successful) funding application seeking \$100,000 from Sustainability Victoria, using matched East Gippsland Shire Council funds of \$100,000 (allocated in 2018/19 and 2019/20 capital works project for energy efficiency upgrades).

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The funding application for stream three required quotes for each energy efficiency and renewable action identified in the audits to be submitted up to the value of \$200,000, which have a pay back of 4-5 years through reduced energy costs.

Unsuccessful in a joint Gippsland wide grant application to the Victorian Governments 'Collaborative Council Sustainability Fund Partnerships' round 9 in February 2019. The project would have involved developing community emissions profiles for each municipality, as well as for Gippsland as a whole, and use these profiles to understand the key sectors and potential for greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

- **Committees reduce their impact**

Volunteer committees of management have been busy reducing their utility bills and footprint. As the cost of utilities become an increasing burden, many volunteer committees are finding clever ways to be energy efficient, from solar hot water, timers on tea & coffee boilers, to reducing the number of energy guzzling fridges.

Recent examples:

- Omeo recreation reserve recently undertook an LED lighting upgrade to reduce electricity impacts. This included swapping the 1,500 watt netball lights to 200 watt LED globes, as well as fluorescent tubes inside and outside the building. The cost to supply and install was approximately \$6,000. Estimated annual savings are \$600 a year, 1,595 kWh and 2 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent emissions.
- Solar was recently installed at The Hub using Victorian Government funding which coincided with the 'Energy for Seniors' seminar organised by Rhonda James, the Shire's Community Projects and Research Officer.
- Bike racks were installed at the Howitt Park reserve in Bairnsdale.

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ResourceSmart Schools 2018-19

It was another great year for ResourceSmart Schools. Highlights included:

- A new school was recruited, East Gippsland Specialist School and they were assisted to receive a \$5,000 Stephanie Alexander grant for their garden program.
- Lakes Entrance Secondary College created a new vegetable garden program.
- The ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator delivered biodiversity training to 80 grade three and four students from Bairnsdale Primary School, and the local Landcare Facilitator delivered erosion training at the school's bush block.
- Visited the Green Team at Gippsland Grammar, we talked about developing an action plan for the year. The group had recorded a stop-motion video of pea and bean seedlings moving towards the sunlight, which led to a discussion about phototropism and gravitropism.
- Nine school visits during term three alone, for example: a biodiversity audit of the school grounds with 15 students at the East Gippsland Specialist School; two visits to Paynesville Primary School where a school yard litter audit was undertaken, and a 'War on Waste' bin audit with the school's environment group.



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- Organised Environment Education Victoria (EEV) to facilitate a FREE teacher professional development day at Nagle College:



- The fun [Aussie Backyard Bird Count](#) was on from 22 – 28 October and advertised as part of Children's Week. The ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator undertook this activity with the three schools: Buchan Primary School, Buchan Kinder and Gippsland Grammar during this week. Schools were encouraged to participate in this national citizen science monitoring program, and to quickly increase students' knowledge of local birds.
- ResourceSmart Schools helped promote the kids Whale Tail show which visited Bairnsdale in April 2019. A Whale's Tale is a playful environmental tale to warm the heart, with reflections about the consequences of our actions. It has been forecast that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the sea than fish. The Whale's Tale was a journey for all ages, leaving audiences wanting to make a difference.

Electric Vehicle Project

East Gippsland Shire Council is partnering with Gippsland local governments to plan for the roll out of electric vehicles (EVs). South Gippsland Shire Council successfully applied for a \$30,000 grant to lead a study into electric vehicle charging infrastructure for participating Gippsland councils. The study is funded under the Collaborative Councils Sustainability Fund Partnerships program by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), with contributions from local governments (EGSC contributed \$5,000).

- This project will look at EV charging from a whole of Gippsland perspective with consideration given to infrastructure and planning requirements.

ResourceSmart Schools

Free Training for Teachers

PASSIONATE about quality sustainability education?
EXCITED by fun, practical experiences and life-skills?
COMMITTED to helping your school be resource smart?
IMAGINE your students as leaders in sustainability!

Join Environment Education Victoria & ResourceSmart Schools Gippsland

- Thursday 18 October, 9.30 am to 3pm
- Nagle College, Hope Ave, Bairnsdale
- Full day training for Primary and Secondary teachers - free for one teacher per ResourceSmart School or discounted for others

To register visit www.gwrrg.vic.gov.au or contact RSS Coordinator Alison Taylor (03) 5633 3335

ResourceSmart Schools **Sustainability Victoria** **VICTORIA State Government**

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- Steps included data collation for input into the analysis and report for consultants, and discussions with AusNet – which have identified grid stability and EV charging infrastructure is likely to be a technical challenge in the future for locations north and east of Bairnsdale.

Overall the project will investigate the optimal location and preferred types of electric vehicle charging points across Gippsland, to ensure the most efficient and effective roll-out across the region. In addition, it will examine the planning and asset management implications and considerations resulting from the predicted demand for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.



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Implement Energy Efficiency & Solar on Council Facilities

The following buildings had a total 64 kW of solar (or 192 solar panels) installed in 2018-19:



Left: Bairnsdale City Oval had 10.5 kW of solar installed (32 panels) June 2019. Right: A 7kW solar system was installed (20 panels) in the courtyard at the Hub in Bairnsdale.



Photo: 46kW of solar was installed on the Lakes Aquadome, making it the biggest system on an EGSC facility so far. These systems combined will save on average 84 tonnes of CO₂ and \$9,000 a year.

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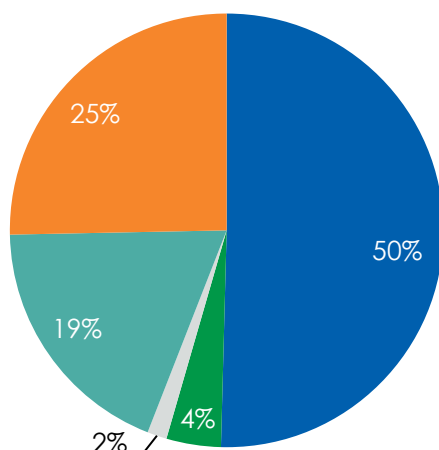
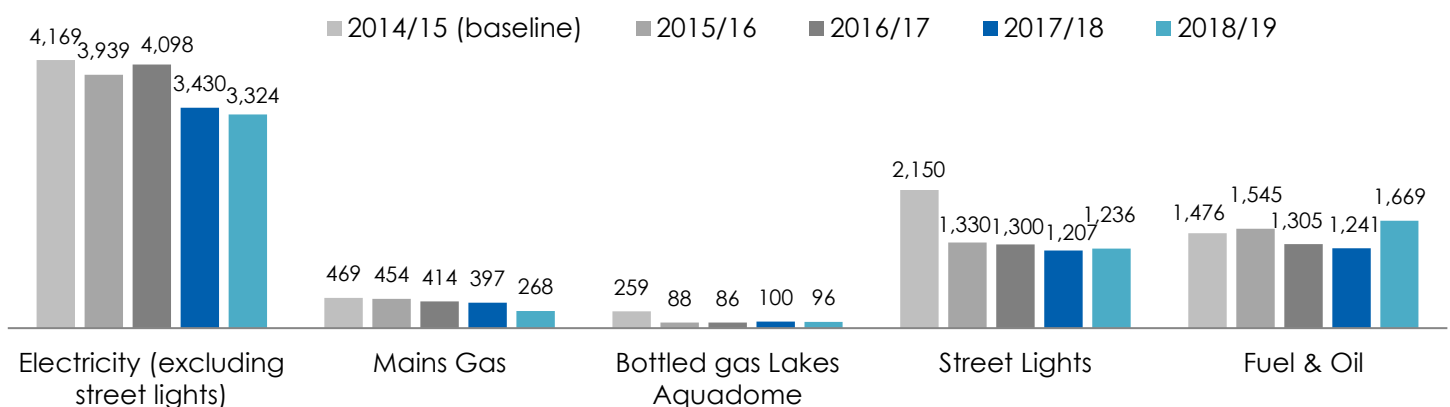
Major initiative 8 Improve streetscapes in Bairnsdale, Metung, Orbost and Lakes Entrance

Provide Smart Pedestrian Lighting options to VicRoads that meet Council objectives for the Lakes Entrance Foreshore.

A project between VicRoads, Council and Regional Roads Victoria was initiated to short list and consider options for smart lighting along the Lakes Entrance foreshore as part of the seawall and streetscape upgrade. A review meeting with VicRoads occurred in October 2018, and Regional Roads Victoria tendered for the supply of smart solar lighting to be installed within the trial area along the western end of the Lakes Entrance foreshore. Operations, ICT and Place and Community Strategy participated and provided feedback. Trial lighting will be installed in March 2019, with a community and technical review of lighting performance planned for August 2019. Balance of the lights will then be tendered with a view to install new lighting in November 2019.

Strategic Indicator: Reduce Council's energy use and carbon emissions.

Tonnes of CO₂-e emissions



Emissions from Council operations in 2018/19

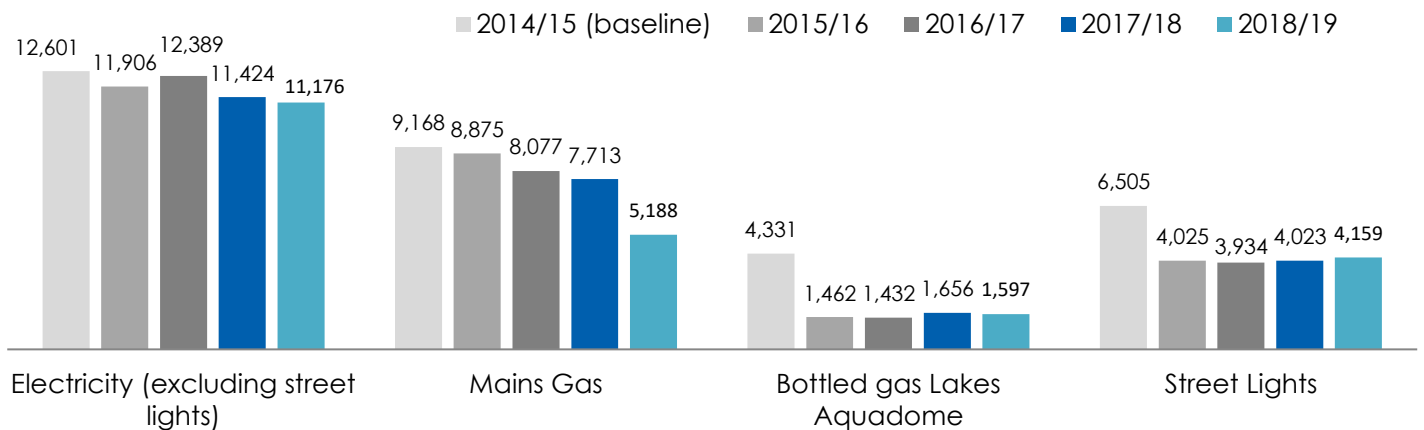
- Electricity
- Mains Gas
- Bottled gas (LARC)
- Street Lights
- Fuel & Oil

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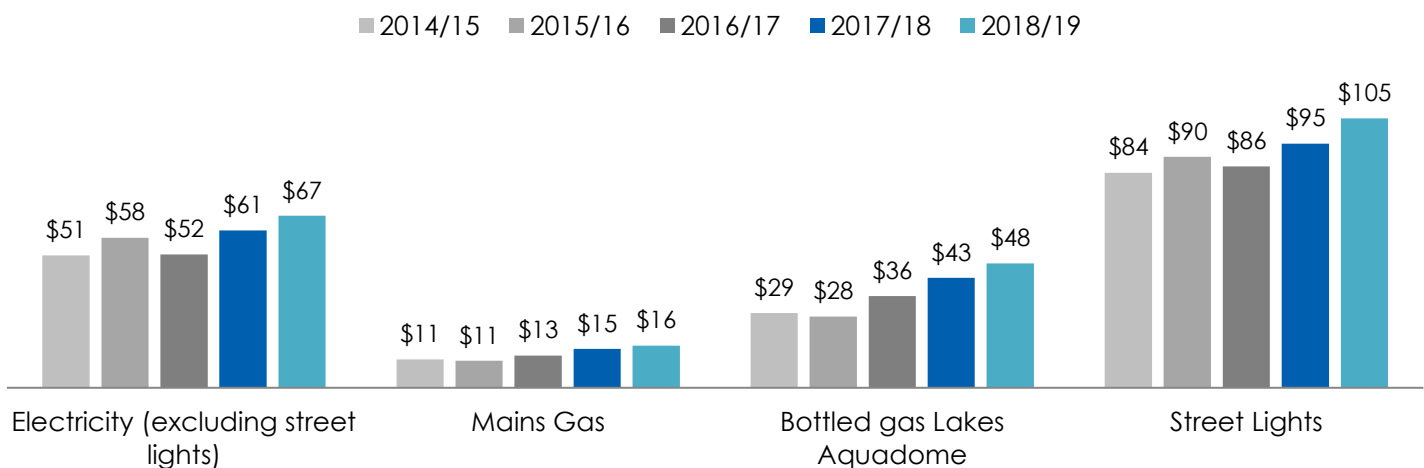
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Energy consumption in GJ



Unit cost per GJ



The unit cost of energy from all sources has again increased this year: electricity, mains gas, bottled gas and streetlights. (This value is calculated by dividing the GJ with the dollar price). An important point is while the organisation used less GJ of energy overall, savings from reduced use from previous energy upgrades are being lost by increased electricity costs.

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Major Initiative 9: Reduce waste going into landfill, through introduction of e-waste services, education and introducing new approaches to reusing waste.

E-waste ban

A comprehensive community awareness campaign took place informing the public as of 1 July 2019 e-waste will no longer be accepted in any bin (or landfill) across Victoria.

Any electrical items (with cords or batteries) must be taken to the closest dedicated e-waste drop-off point where it will be collected for recycling. The information campaign provided information about the ability to reuse 90% of materials from recycled phones, TVs and computers, and the problem of e-waste growing three times faster than general waste in Australia.

The following public information sessions took place:

Tuesday 11 June 2019

- Orbost Service Centre, 1 Ruskin Street at 9am
- Cann River Community Centre at 11.30am
- Mallacoota Mud Brick Pavilion at 2pm

Wednesday 12 June

- Metung Bowls Club, 109 Metung Road at 4pm
- Council office 55 Palmers Rd, Lakes Entrance at 6pm

Thursday 13 June

- Omeo Hall, 179 Day Avenue at 3pm
- Bruthen Hall at 5pm

Friday 14 June

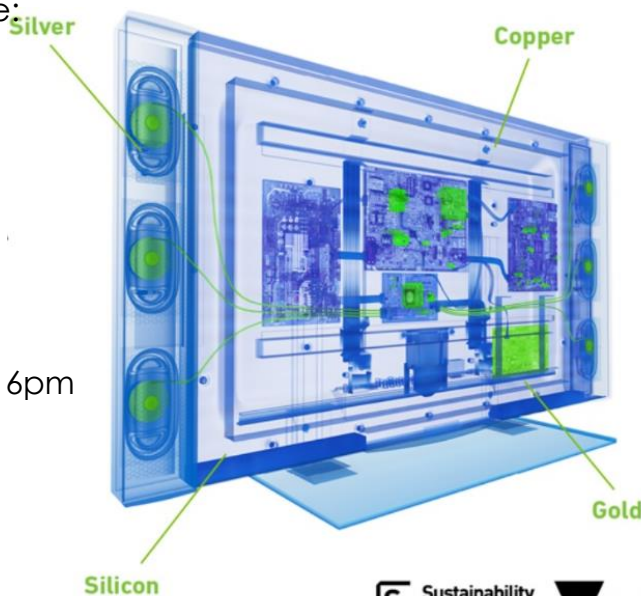
- Bairnsdale library, 22 Service St at 5pm
- Paynesville Service Centre, 55 The Esplanade at 7pm

The session at the Bairnsdale library was live streamed on Facebook, and the [recording](#) placed on the shire website. During June 2019 there was **no cost** to drop off e-waste for recycling.

New permanent e-waste drop off points have been set up at: Bairnsdale: 200 Johnstons Rd, Forge Creek; Orbost: 351 Bonang Rd; Bruthen: 109 Great Alpine Rd; Omeo: 18 Margetts St; Mallacoota: Betka Rd; and Lakes Entrance: 5 Thorpes Lane.

More information visit <https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/campaigns/ewaste>

A series of six media releases (one a week in the lead up to the ban), social media, public displays and workshops (nine) took place in the lead up to the ban.



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Silage Wrap Recycling Trial

East Gippsland and Wellington Shire Councils offered silage wrap recycling during a four-week trial from July to August 2018.

The drop-off point in East Gippsland was the Bairnsdale landfill at 200 Johnstons Road, Forge Creek. The cost was \$11 per bulk bag. It was a joint initiative with Wellington Shire.

Farmers were instructed to separate silage wrap, which can be recycled, from net wrap, which can't be recycled.

Silage wrap disposal was then made free at Bairnsdale, Orbost and Omeo sites from 1 April – 30 June 2019.

Results: while large volumes were dropped off by farmers, an issue emerged during the trial with locating an appropriate end market for the product, either internationally or locally.

Silage Wrap Recycling



Silage wrap recycling will start soon in Wellington and East Gippsland Shires.

The collection period is over 4 weeks, and farmers are encouraged to use this service to dispose of their wrap.

Please remember to separate silage wrap (can be recycled) from net wrap (cannot be recycled).

Burning silage wrap is illegal and it is better for the environment if the wrap is not buried or put into landfill.

Silage wrap drop off points:

Where: **Kilmany Transfer Station**
Princes Highway
Kilmany
Cash and card payments accepted

Yarram Transfer Station
Hyland Highway
Yarram
Cash only accepted

Bairnsdale Landfill
200 Johnstons Road
Forge Creek
Cash and card payments accepted

When: **Monday 16 July to Monday 13 August**
Cost: **\$11 per bulk bag**

How do I recycle?

- Silage wrap can be delivered in Bulka bags or Plastic bags
- No net wrap or bale twine
- Silage wrap needs to be shaken clean of silage, gravel and other contaminants
- If using Bulka bags, these must be able to be rolled off your vehicle or trailer at the site
- Payment is cash only at the Yarram Transfer Station

*Bulka bags are available for farmers, if required. Please contact the Wellington Shire Council Sustainability Projects Officer on 1300 366 244 for further information.



Clean Up Australia Day

East Gippsland Shire Council proudly supported Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 3 March 2019, with 21 groups registering including schools, community groups and businesses. Collected waste was organised to be taken to the closest landfill or transfer station at no cost.

Thank you to everyone who took part!



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Mayors Poster Challenge 2018

East Gippsland Shire Council Mayor (at the time), Cr Joe Rettino announced the winners of the Mayor's Poster Challenge for 2018, which encouraged young people to design a poster promoting recycling and waste management. The theme was 'creating less waste.' There was a diversity of waste issues explored by the posters. Council received almost **250 entries** making choosing the winner difficult.



Pictured: Students of Goongerah/Tubbut P-8 College presented with their School Prize.

Prizes included solar-powered gadgets, art supplies, bags and stainless-steel drink bottles were awarded to the winner and runner-up in each age group.

The Mayor's Poster Challenge School Prize of a 240 Litre Worms Down Under Worm Farm, was awarded to Goongerah/Tubbut P-8 College. The prize is given to a school showing a commitment to waste management throughout the year as well as entering the Mayors Poster Challenge.



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Major Initiative 10: Implement the Renewable Energy Feasibility Study priority projects for East Gippsland

The [East Gippsland Shire Council New Energy Technology Business Case](#) was completed this year. The business case found policy options exist for Council to assist consumers with energy pricing through a combination of market intervention and the provision of information services.

Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project



The Bright Futures Renewable Energy project is a council initiative to identify and investigate the opportunities for delivering long-term renewable energy solutions for the region. The aim of the project was to increase the use and production of renewable energy in East Gippsland.

The project received Victorian a *New Energy Jobs Fund* grant. The final business case report outlines the findings from the three prioritised pilot programs being:

1. The Multisite Feasibility Study (MSFS)
2. Solar Bulk Buy
3. Energy Information Hub

Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project is funded by the Victorian Government *Victorian Climate Change Grants* and *New Energy Jobs Fund*.



Document Library

- [Bright Futures Renewable East Gippsland Business Case \(9.72 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Summary Bright Futures 2017 \(3.17 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Technical Report Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project 2017 \(6.95 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project Fact Sheet \(171 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Prioritisation Report \(1.42 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Community Engagement Report Bright Futures Renewable Energy Project 2017 \(2.57 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Solar Bulk Buy flyer \(6.69 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)

The Business Case summarised the findings of the three successfully tested pilot programs run from July 2018 to March 2019:

1. Multisite Feasibility Study

Cost Benefit Ratio (CBR) was \$1: \$1.76. (Therefore every \$1 spent upfront resulted in \$1.76 being retained locally due to energy savings).

2. Solar Bulk Buy

Cost Benefit Ratio (CBR) was \$1: \$2.40. (Therefore every \$1 spent upfront resulted in \$2.40 being retained locally due to energy savings).

% of PV sales from the Solar Bulk Buy in East Gippsland was 14.4%

Estimated market price reduction on Solar PV due to Bulk Buy competition: 20%

3. Energy Information Hub

Number of events held: 24

Residents engaged: 270

Each of the three pilot program findings are described in more detail in the next section.

1. Multisite Feasibility Study (MSFS)

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Ten businesses were identified across a range of industry groups and sizes to participate in this pilot. Industries included large scale food manufacturing, retail and sporting facilities. Each business received a technical report on the viability and design of a solar system for their business. In addition, where appropriate, recommendations were made to implement energy saving measures, such as the installation of LED lighting.

After being provided their individual technical report, the survey intentions found:

- 3 have invested / planned to invest in solar
- 3 have invested / planned to invest in energy efficiency
- 2 will not take further action
- 2 did not provide feedback.

SUMMARY

- 60% of businesses engaged in the MSFS have or planned to implement improvements to their procurement and / or use of energy based on the report recommendations.
- Those savings identified are significant with a Cost Benefit Ratio (CBR) of 1:1.76. This means that for every dollar invested by EGSC and project participants, \$1.76 was the return to the community (over the 20-year life of the project).
- Future success of the program is conditional on the implementation of the advice provided to East Gippsland businesses. It is unknown how many businesses in the future may wish to participate in a future MSFS if offered.

2. East Gippsland Shire Solar Bulk Buy

East Gippsland residents and businesses took advantage of bulk buying rates for solar technology through this new initiative with 62 systems sold, and eight batteries installed.



The East Gippsland Shire Solar Bulk Buy program was launched in June 2018 and aimed to increase the availability of solar and batteries in the region. In addition, for every system sold a percentage was donated to install solar on a local community facility.

A bulk buy offers discounted prices for respected solar brands, due to the volume of sales. Yarra Energy Foundation co-ordinated the rooftop solar installation (and battery storage).

A council requirement was to use local installers to install systems sold through the program. Solar energy has been recognised as an important way of reducing the impact of power prices while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Both are key council objectives.

While the program was launched late the previous financial year (with the first two information sessions taking place in Bairnsdale and Lakes Entrance), three two-hour information sessions took place this financial year: in Orbost (5 July at

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5pm); Omeo (17 July at 5pm); and a business session on 18 July at 5pm at the Bairnsdale Library. All six information sessions were popular, with approximately 150 people attending in total.

SUMMARY

- 62 small scale solar PV systems were installed totalling 322 kWh.
- 8 batteries 4.8 kWh in size (Redback) were installed totalling 38.4 kWh of battery storage.
- More than 316 local residents and/or businesses made direct inquiries.
- 14.4% of total solar sales in East Gippsland over the period were undertaken by the Solar Bulk Buy.
- A 20% price reduction on the price of solar PV was attributed to the bulk buy introducing more market competition and greater price transparency into the East Gippsland market.
- Systems installed will save **9,062 tonnes of CO₂** equivalent emissions over the 20-year life of the equipment.
- The most popular system size was between 5-6 kW, accounting for 32% of sales.

For every system sold a percentage was donated to install solar on a local community facility (see next).

Community solar donations – closed May 2019

East Gippsland Shire Council called for nominations from community organisations to receive a free fully installed 3 to 4kW grid connected solar system. The scheme was extremely popular with **31 applications** received.

Eligibility included not for profit organisations delivering services to an East Gippsland community, with power bills paid by the organisation (not a government authority).



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3. Energy Information Hub

Gippsland East Local Learning and Employment Network (GELLEN) were employed by EGSC to manage and implement the Energy Information Hub. The purpose of the Hub was to provide advice to residents about measures that could reduce energy use in their home and therefore power costs. It was an education and advisory service only.

During the period that the Energy Information ran, GELLEN advised of the following key outcomes delivered by the program:

- 270 people attended information sessions hosted by the HUB.
- 77 people directly received assistance accessing the Victorian Governments Compare Website resulting in \$50 payments to participants totaling \$3850.
- 24 people learnt to monitor their usage online via accessing their smart meter data.
- Savings of at least \$5770 for participants were directly attributed to the Energy Information Hub.

Considering future design of the Energy Information Hub project in East Gippsland, it is considered worthwhile to incorporate the following information gaps identified in the development of the New Energy Roadmap:

- Energy education services need to be delivered to the whole region and not centered around the Bairnsdale location for the Hub.
- Provision of educational services tailored at energy use for farmers, including dairy farmers, grazing and horticultural industries.
- Develop and publish guidelines for consumers that better identify system sizes and return on investment. (Standardise inputs for analysis purposes).
- Better connect with low income households including pensioners, isolated communities and single income households.
- Develop power bill interpretation and guidance.

More detailed findings are described in the [East Gippsland Shire Council New Energy Technology Business Case](#) from page 28. Some examples of workshops included:

• Household electricity advice

For three weeks residents or small businesses could drop in with their electricity bill to access independent advice and information. For example the public were assisted to claim the Victorian Government's \$50 power saving bonus <https://compare.energy.vic.gov.au/>; check to see if getting an energy concession if entitled; have questions answered about solar, hot water systems, how to read electricity bills, and tips around the house to be energy efficient. Drop in (2hr) sessions took place at The Hub, Bairnsdale on 31 August; 7 September and 14 September 2018. Thirty people attended these sessions.

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- **Energy for Seniors**

An 'Energy for Seniors' seminar organised with support from the Shire's Community Projects and Research Officer. Forty people attended the session in October 2018 and learnt many ways to save on household energy by Paul Guest, a local independent energy expert.



- **Refrigeration Efficiency Masterclass in Bairnsdale: attended by 14**

It is estimated there are over 65,000 walk-in cool rooms in Victoria, potentially using 1.22GWh per annum and wasting up to 25 per cent energy.

Sustainability Victoria ran a free training session on Thursday 25 October 2018 at The Hub, 27 Dalmahoy St, Bairnsdale. It equipped businesses with the knowledge and confidence to better manage their refrigeration systems. The range was scaled to cover small scale operators (e.g. café owners, butchers), medium users (e.g. supermarkets), and larger users (e.g. large food manufacturers and large-scale cold storage facilities).

Feedback by the delivery partner said "The Bairnsdale session went really well. We had 14 people turn out and they were really engaged and enthusiastic about the subject. The contacts in the food cluster were particularly valuable."

The webinar is now available online to [view](#).



Sustainability Victoria is running free Refrigeration Efficiency Masterclasses, to help businesses reduce costs, improve energy efficiency and get the best performance out of their walk-in cool rooms.

BAIRNSDALE MASTERCLASS

Thursday 25 October 2018
9.30 am to 1.00 pm



For further information please contact East Gippsland Shire Council

Telephone: (03) 5153 9500 **Email:** sustainability@egipps.vic.gov.au

