

Beechworth Sustainability

In October 2007, Beechworth Landcare started the “Beechworth Breakfast Blogs” – a regular, informal discussion group for all Beechworth Landcare members and friends. Discussion topics ranged from climate change, water-wise gardening, growing vegies, to community gardening, getting rid of pests (environmental ones!) and a range of other topics

Interest quickly developed beyond informal conversation. When the first public forum was organised by Beechworth Landcare in April 2008, in partnership with Indigo Shire Council, the local community showed enormous interest in the fledgling Beechworth Sustainability Group (BSG). 100+ people attended. The shape/structure of the group was not decided at this first meeting, but it was promoted as a new model of climate change action: a citizens’ action group of partnership and forward thinking.

Beechworth Landcare and Beechworth Sustainability Group then worked towards the Kerferd Oration delivered in July by Tim Flannery and presented a number of meetings leading up to it.

- In May Mike Hill spoke about ‘Global issues: what they mean for your community’. Mike described the effective community action models already in place, how you get a whole community to take action and how you harness the energy – ie use the four sectors (householders, business, institutions and legislators).
- In June, there was a meeting to discuss energy-auditing the town.
- A round table meeting followed the Kerferd Oration to decide how the community would like to develop the BSG.

In August 2008 Beechworth Sustainability held its inaugural Roundtable in the Neighbourhood Centre to discuss with the community how they would like to develop Beechworth Sustainability. Seventy people attended and four groups were formed: food, water and relocalisation, energy machines, energy audits and legislation and regulation. The functions of the first three groups were largely taken over by the Indigo Environmental Advisory Committee (2009). The Beechworth Sustainability’s food, water and relocalisation group continued to run successful events, under the auspice of Beechworth Landcare, who provide insurance and public liability cover for our events, as well as the structure to ensure good governance for a community organisation.