



Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2017-2021

Annual Report Summary

1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

2020/21 Achievements



Complete



Good progress/ongoing



Needs attention

Vision:

Community working together for an environmentally sustainable future.

Role of Council in environmental sustainability:

For Council to lead by example and support the community in transitioning to environmental sustainability.



Environmentally accountable council

An additional 30 kgs of soft plastics has been collected from our offices and recycled through REDcycle, with a total of 120 kg. Waste management stations continue to reduce office waste by offering various recycling options. ...

Energy efficient hand dryers installed in 50% of office bathrooms, reducing paper towel waste. These office bathrooms predominantly use solar power. ✓

Staff survey conducted shows an average annual saving of 1.76 tonnes of CO₂-e per staff member due to reduction in work commute during lockdowns, equating to 151.44 tonnes across the organisation. ✓

Staff inductions include waste management and Green Team introduction. Staff starter pack includes reusable and recycled items. Staff participation in Plastic Free July promoted and encouraged. ...

Catering pack for staff use and BBQ stocked with compostable single use items. ✓

Environmental sustainability embedded in Council's procurement policy and guidelines. ✓

Environmental sustainability featured in Council Plan 2021-2025 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025. ✓

Environmental Working Group continued to discuss environmental sustainability across Council departments. ...

Sustainability team working with Operations, Planning and Assets to improve plans from an energy efficiency perspective and minimise harm to wildlife and vegetation. ...

Concrete and old asphalt is crushed and used as road base under sealed roads and new shed pads. Recycled rubber tyres and rubber asphalt is used in 80% of sealed roads. Recycled concrete and granite also used on unsealed roads. ...

Recycled products are continually sourced for parks and gardens where possible including seats, tables, bollards, board walks, signage frames and mulch. ...

Internal staff Green Team continued to be active during lockdowns with educational tip sheets, indoor plant propagation and participation in Plastic Free July. Internal newsletters have replaced meetings and markets. ...

Moira Shire branded products for new staff and community events include metal water bottle, 100% recycled note books, reusable bag and reusable glass coffee cups. ...

Insulated stainless steel water bottles supplied to outdoor workers to reduce single-use plastic. ✓

Old uniforms rehomed or recycled. ✓



Community engagement

Moira school involvement includes working with sustainability leaders to reduce waste and increase recycling. Assisting with bin selection and education sessions. ✓

Distribution of 'Loving Moira's Natives' to various schools and daycares to include in end of year packs. Also promoted in lockdowns for families to download. ✓

Yarrowonga Lioness, Country Women's Association (CWA), Wilby Social Club and Friends of Chinaman's Island Nature Reserve (FOCINR) recycling information sessions held. ✓

Distributed around 1,000 Broken Boosey Catchment Management Network (BBCMN) calendars and various conservation booklets to Moira schools and community groups. ✓

Continued to provide financial support to BBCMN and Goulburn Broken Stormwater Education Project. ...

Environmental Upgrade Agreements uptake by local businesses continue to increase, including several large solar installations. ...

Active in Nature activity for month of April encouraging the community to get out and get active in our nature reserves. ✓

School tree day celebrated with the distribution of 2,000 seedlings to 10 schools and preschools across Moira. Preschool tree planting day at Colgan Park, Cobram with nearly 400 seedlings planted. ✓

Informative signage designed and installed at Station Street Wetland including wetland birds and native flora and fauna. Signs attached to upcycled Redgum sleepers. ✓

Bird identification posters installed in bird hides at Kinnairds Wetland. ✓

Free mulch offered to residents biannually using green waste deposited at transfer stations. Also offered to community groups. ...

Regular use of social media, intranet, community, staff and councillor newsletters and print media to increase awareness of environmental achievements, ideas and issues. Community newsletter has an Environment section. ...

Partnerships

Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) have been unable to meet due to lockdown restrictions. ...

Continued to investigate options for external funding and partnership opportunities. Roadside Weed control program (\$75,000) from the state government. ✓

Signed MOU between Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) and MSC for the BBCMN. ...

Broken Boosey Catchment Management Network (BBCMN), Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group (GBLBRG), Municipal Catchment Coordinator (MCC), Wetland Management Group, Goulburn Murray Landcare Network Meetings, Friends of Chinaman's Island Nature Reserve, Yarrowonga Urban Landcare Group, Nathalia District Flora & Fauna Group, Goulburn Valley Environment Group, Friends of Small Reserves, Corellas Numurkah Working Group, Goulburn Region Water Quality Meeting, Barmah Ramsar Coordinating Committee - Development of the Management Plan, Goulburn Broken Partnership Team, Friends of Koonoomoo Reserve, Numurkah Urban Landcare Group, Yarrowonga Mulwala Cricket Club, RWMP Water Quality Working Group, Goulburn Valley Waste Resource Recovery Group. ...

Nathalia Integrated Water Management plan complete. ...

Installation of four additional hydration stations in Wunghnu, Picola, Strathmerton and Yarroweyah in a joint project with Goulburn Valley Water and the local community. This project now has 7 hydration stations across Moira. ✓

Agreements to undertake and manage controlled burns between DELWP, Parks Victoria, FFMV, CFA, RRV and MSC. ...

Managed Kinnairds Wetland in collaboration with Goulburn-Murray Water and GBCMA including the delivery of environmental water, managing saplings encroaching on grasslands, clearing fallen timber from tracks, repair of tracks and removal of wasps from bird hides. ...

Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Off-grid solar systems at transfer stations include: Two 4 kW roof mounted solar systems with 5kW lithium battery storage. One 5 kW roof mounted solar systems with 12 kW gel battery storage. ✓

Council are sourcing 100% of its electricity from renewable energy generated from wind farms in Victoria in a joint project with 45 other Victorian councils. This has ensured our greenhouse gas emissions will drop by 47%, exceeding our 2020-21 target of a 35% reduction since 2008/09. ...

Community grants available for solar and energy efficiency projects. ...

Conservation of biodiversity

Currently 1,541ha of land is protected by a Conservation Covenant and Biodiversity Management Agreement in Moira. In total 146.2ha of freehold land was entered into a conservation agreement in 2020/2021. See figure 4. ...

The Ground Storey booklet launch promoted with an education session with outdoor staff as well as the annual GBCMA calendar. ✓

Minimised impact on native vegetation by council works and secured offsets when native vegetation loss was unavoidable. ...

Working with Friends of Small Reserves, Goulburn Valley Environment Group, CFA and GBCMA to improve the condition of a grassland community along Three Chain Road, Tungamah. A low intensity burn occurred Autumn 2021. Fence line built to protect the grassland from vehicles and livestock. Weeds along roadside spot sprayed. ...

Supported the Drought Employment Program delivered by GBCMA to remove woody weeds on roadsides and support tree planting activities at various Moira Shire managed native reserves including tree plantings and watering. ✓

Planted approximately 10,000 native seedlings over 20ha. ✓

Managed 1,498kms of roadside across Moira for weeds and pest animals. ...

Managing Kinnairds Wetland and Yabba, offset sites for council projects that result in the loss of biodiversity. ...

8 planning permits granted for the removal of 3.6ha of native vegetation. While most landholders and contractors are conscientious when it comes to dealing with native vegetation, there were still incidents of illegal native vegetation clearance where enforcement action was undertaken. ✓

Sustainable management of water

Participate in the Goulburn Broken and North East Integrated Water Management forums. Identified suitable projects in our region to attract external funding. ...

Development of preliminary plans for alternative water supply for Victoria Park, Yarrowonga. ...

Continued to support the Goulburn Broken Stormwater Project ...

Potable water use continually reported. See figure 5. ...

Audit continued on Councils rural water pumps and motors. ...

Audit of water use at Council's recreation reserves. ...

Sustainable management of waste

Implementation of the Waste Management and Services Strategy 2018-2027. ...

Kerbside waste audit conducted June 2021 to identify key issues and work on educating community. ✓

Working with Murray River Councils and Sustainability Victoria regarding waste education and illegal dumping. ...

Recycling stations in our four main towns to provide additional recycling options to community members that are unavailable through kerbside recycling. Additional station for office use. ✓

Kerbside collection guide included in all rates notices. See figure 6 for kerbside data. ✓

Waste Info App continued promotion. ...

Dog waste organic bin trial at 5 locations. Compostable dog waste bags now used at each bag dispenser, replacing plastic bags. ✓

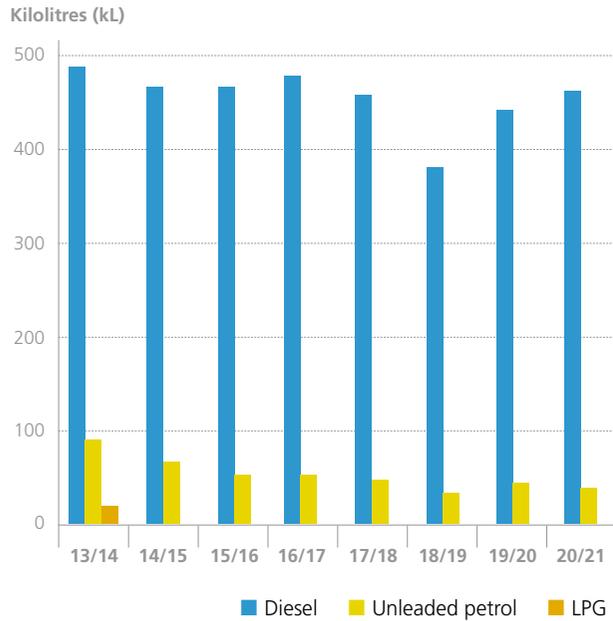
Glass recycling kerbside bin trail began. ✓

Promoting the use of the organics kerbside bin and kitchen caddy use. Waste audit has shown high amounts of food waste in general waste bin. ✓

Cloth nappy rebate scoped. ✓

Improved fluorescent tube and light globe collection options at all transfer stations and Cobram service centre through TOXFREE. ✓

Figure 1
Transport energy consumption

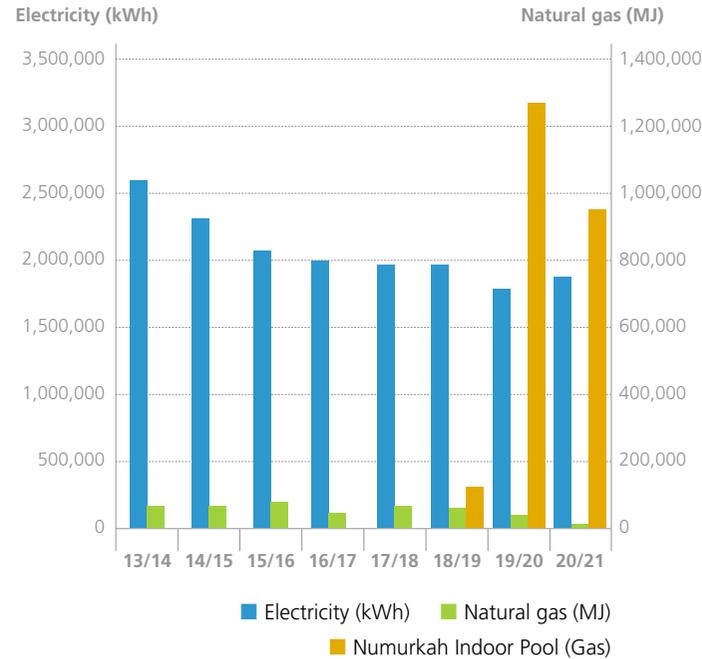


Transport energy is expressed in kilolitres (kL) and includes the consumption of all fuels used in vehicles and plant owned and operated by Council. This includes diesel, petrol and gas. This graph demonstrates that LPG fuelled vehicles are no longer in use while improved efficiencies within the vehicle market has reduced the consumption of unleaded petrol.

Councils diesel fuel consumption has increased by 5% since the previous financial year (444kL to 465kL). This has been due to an increase in construction works associated with the number capital works projects completed during the recent financial year. Councils unleaded fuel consumption has decreased by 10% since the previous financial year (90kL to 41kL). This can be contributed to the increase in Council staff working from home due to lockdown restrictions.

Overall, Councils fleet fuel consumption has increased by 3% from the previous financial year. Decreasing emissions from fleet in the coming years should be a priority.

Figure 2
Stationary energy consumption

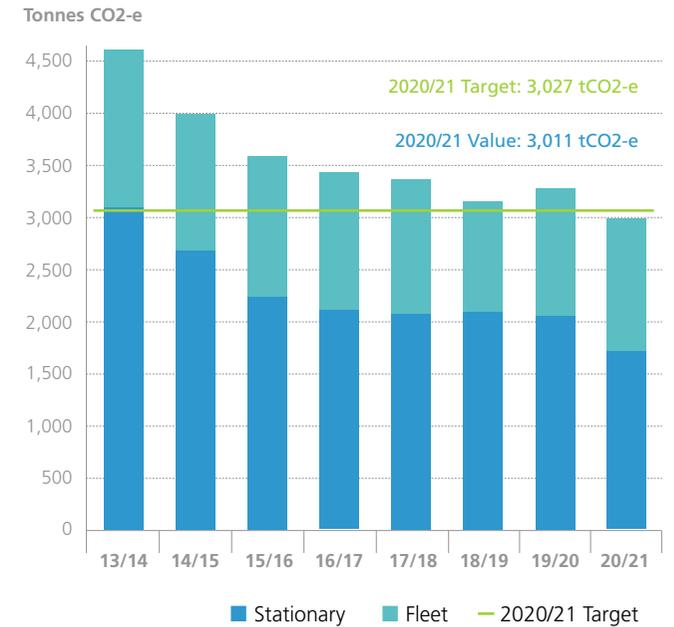


Stationary energy is expressed in kilo Watt hours (kWh) and Mega Joules (MJ) and includes the consumption of electricity (kWh) and natural gas (MJ) from all facilities that are paid for by Council. This excludes Committees of Management and some leased facilities. The significant reduction in electricity consumption from 2013-14 to 2018-19 can be attributed to the Watts Working Better project, Solar system installations (totalling 178.3kW) and LED Light upgrades with the Cobram office buildings.

The increase in gas consumption is due to the takeover of utilities on Councils YMCA managed buildings, specifically the Numurkah indoor pool. Councils electricity consumption has decreased by 2% since the previous financial year (1,810,420kWh to 1,769,550kWh). This has been due to the closure of Council buildings and an increase in staff working from home as a result of the States lockdown restrictions.

Councils gas consumption has decreased by 30% since the previous financial year. This decrease in gas consumption can be contributed to lockdown restrictions, specifically due to the Numurkah Aquatic Centre not fully operating due to restricted operating hours.

Figure 3
Corporate greenhouse emissions



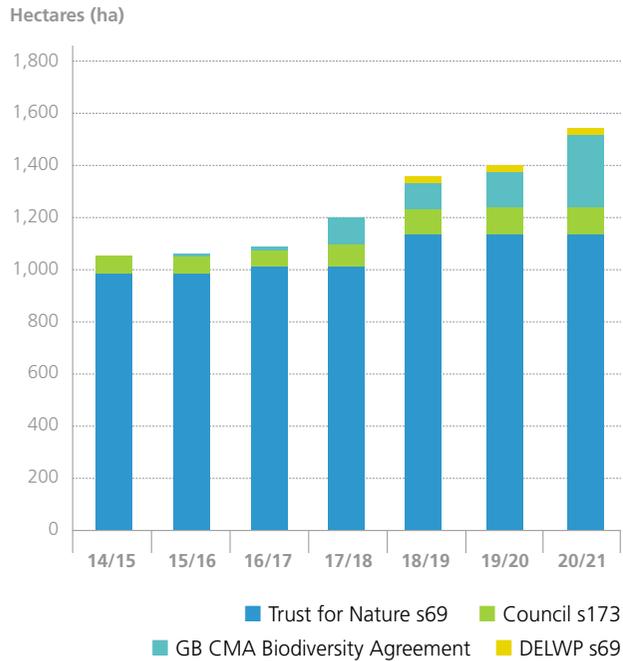
Total corporate greenhouse gas emissions relates to the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released from the operation of a Council's facilities and equipment. This generally includes the emissions from consuming fuel, electricity and water – emissions from burying organics in landfill isn't included as it is currently too difficult to measure. Emissions have been calculated using the Australian Government's National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting framework (NGER). The reduction in emissions can be attributed to the Watts Working Better project that was implemented in the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years. You will see fleet emissions have increased by 3.5% since last financial year (1,213 tCO2-e to 1,255 tCO2-e).

Station emissions (electricity & gas combined) have decreased by 14% since the previous financial year (2,056 tCO2-e to 1,757 tCO2-e)

This has resulted in an overall decrease of corporate emissions by 8% from the previous financial year. Reductions in energy use can be contributed to Government lockdowns (building & facilities not in full operation), combined with energy efficiency/reduction initiatives, such as solar & LED light upgrades.

**The electricity and gas data completeness within this report has been independently verified as being 93% and 97% respectively.*

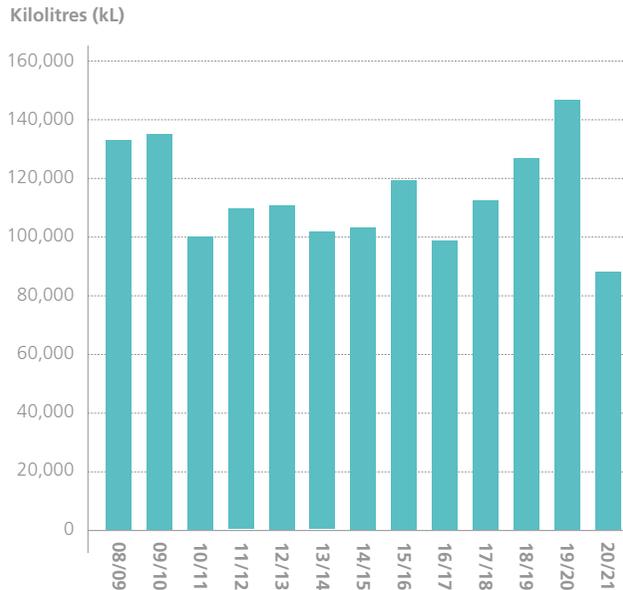
Figure 4
Conservation Covenants and Biodiversity Management Agreements



Total area of covenanted land includes private property within the local government area that have a 10 year Biodiversity Management Agreements with GBCMA (279.80ha); s69 Trust For Nature (TFN) conservation covenant (1132.57ha); s69 DELWP conservation covenant (25.32ha) and s173 Council conservation covenant (103.27ha). The s69 and s173 conservation covenants are registered on title providing permanent protect for native vegetation, including habitat for plants and wildlife.

The 10-year management agreements with GBCMA provide temporary protection and enhance the quality of native vegetation. On the conclusion of the 10 year management agreement landholders are encouraged to enter into another 10 agreement or s69 agreement with TFN or DELWP.

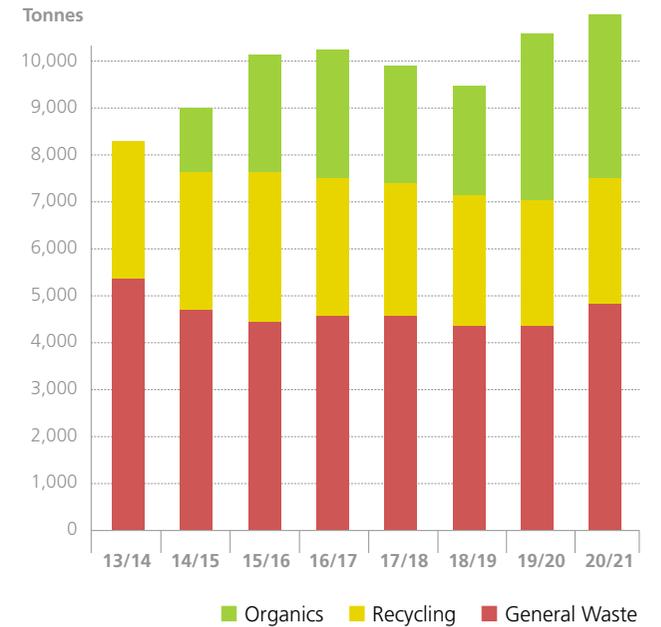
Figure 5
Potable water consumption



Potable water is expressed in kilolitres (kL) and includes all water consumed at a Council facility (excluding raw water). A Sustainable Water Use Plan was adopted in 2006 and then significant works were undertaken from 2006-2010 to upgrade infrastructure to more efficient systems – as seen in the graph. Council has added YMCA managed buildings, including pools, also contributing to the increase in water consumption, although this financial year has seen a decreased by 40% since the previous financial year (145,745kL to 87,449kL). The potential reason for this decrease may be due to the above average rainfall experienced in 2021 across the region during winter and spring. Councils aquatic centres and outdoor pools have also been operating with reduced hours due to lockdown restrictions.

**At the time that this data analysis occurred (22nd October 2021), only 85% completeness of the potable water invoices was available. The 2020/21 financial year potable water consumption figure may need to be adjusted next year, due to the reduced data availability at the time of reporting.*

Figure 6
Total kerbside waste



Total kerbside waste breakdown includes the general waste, recycling and organics from kerbside collection within the local government area. Recycling and organics are known as diversions from landfill and will be reprocessed into a useable commodity whereas general waste is buried in landfill.

This graph demonstrates a small reduction in kerbside waste to landfill as a result of the kerbside organics service that was introduced in December 2014. The increase of organic waste is due to an additional 3000 services being introduced in late 2019 and an increase in rainfall for 2021. There has also been an increase in both general waste and recycling, possibly due to more people working and schooling from home during lockdown restrictions.



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