

CCBR

President's Annual Report 2013-14

Australia's stance on Climate Change has undergone a serious reversal in the past year, in particular since the federal election last September. Despite setbacks in policy however, there have been encouraging advances in some areas, in particular the continued growth of domestic solar PV installations. The election results appear to have galvanised community involvement, and newly active members of CCBR have launched several new local projects focussed on practical ways of reducing carbon emissions, to complement CCBR's more traditional activities in political advocacy.

Last August we had a stall at the Leichhardt Council Footprints EcoFestival –sharing the spot with BZE, and also promoting the 100percent Renewables campaign, its offshoot Solar Citizens, and the recently-formed Renewable Energy Inner West. In fact there were more campaigns than helpers at the stall!

Early in October, following the election, CCBR held a “back-to-the-drawing-board” workshop meeting at Balmain Town Hall, with about 15 participants. Capably facilitated by CCBR's president Jenny Curtis, the meeting turned out to have more appetite for local projects than for national campaigns, and subsequent meetings identified Waste, Greening, Transport, Energy and Water as project areas, setting a timetable for the next few months to come up with projects and goals and deliver them. Gavin Gilchrist emerged as the driver behind this agenda, and the group adopted the idea of “local action, national leadership” to place these projects in a broader context.

Three projects emerged and have continued over the subsequent months: Food & Food Waste (led by Angela Michaelis), Solar PV (led by Michael Johnson) and Transport (Andrew Fraser).

Food and Food Waste Group

The Greening group started by looking at bush care, tree planting, community gardens and food and food waste composting, and ultimately merged with the Waste group to concentrate on food composting. A survey of cafes and food stores in the Leichhardt LGA revealed much support for the idea of recycling waste but cost and space were common barriers. After researching what LMC and other councils are currently doing, and investigating a range of solutions, the group focussed on three recommendations: individual compost bins, on-site processing, and larger-scale off-site processing using *aerobic digestion*. An informative brochure would be produced and distributed to all food businesses in the area. CCBR successfully applied for a Community Grant of \$2,500 from Leichhardt Council to assist with printing and other costs, (which was finally paid to CCBR in August.).

Energy & Solar PV

The group shared views on "what success would look like" for the project, in an attempt to better define project scope and schedule. Common desired outcomes were:

1. Doubling the current SPV numbers for the inner west within 18 months.
2. Build a separate brand to market the project to residents, govt and possible financial partners
3. Launch a "call to action" website under this new branding (linked to CCBR pages) as a "one-stop shop" for public surveys, signing members, posting SPV information.
4. Build a survey to gauge public attitudes, concerns, knowledge, requirements, etc around SPV.



5. Take the survey to local markets, door to door in some chosen streets, and post on website.
6. Explore setting up a Solar cooperative to build membership and collect funds.

By the end of the second meeting the focus was on 1) building the brand and logo (which I see is done), 2) writing up the surveys, and 3) planning a meeting to hear from some people with experience in setting up co-operatives.

Transport

We estimated that if 10,000 Leichhardt LGA residents were to switch from using their car to Light Rail for their daily commute, about 6,000 tonnes of CO₂ per annum would be saved. However, this requires a comprehensive Light Rail network providing a Light Rail stop within 800m of people's homes. CCBR has adopted the view that to achieve this goal, the NSW government would need to provide at least three Light Rail networks serving the LGA: the Barangaroo-Gladstone Park line, the Dulwich Hill line with extension to Gladstone Park and a line along Parramatta Road to the City. While Andrew Fraser has taken this view to all relevant public forums, we have not campaigned any more actively.

Climate Change Advocacy

Meanwhile CCBR has continued to pursue action on Climate Change as before. We took part in GetUp's Climate Action day in November (in torrential rain), and in the March in March (in torrential rain). We had a stall at the Leichhardt Council Sustainable Living Forum demonstrating LED lighting, food composting, and low carbon food, and facilitated a film night at Leichhardt Town Hall together with the *Our Land Our Water Our Future* movement – which has gone on to form a “Defenders” group based in the Inner West. We provided comments on Leichhardt Council's Draft Climate Change Plan, and have restarted attending Council's Environment Committee as well as its (now discontinued) Climate Change Task Force.

Most of these activities have been undertaken by a handful of active members, a number increased considerably from a year ago. Our wider supporters are kept up to date with regular e-newsletters (13 over the year) and Facebook updates looked after by Dominic Case, and a constant stream of news on the website thanks to Derek Bolton with some other website input by Dominic. As well, the low carbon recipes provided (and cooked and served) by Kate Marcus have proved a tasty way in which we can all be more carbon-conscious.

During the year, the committee expanded to include Gavin Gilchrist and Angela Michaelis, while Koko Clark and Janet Simpson have been regular and reliable members of the inner-core team. As president, Jenny Curtis has played the important role of being there for occasional counsel, and has provided a valuable storage place for our banners, clipboards and other paraphernalia.

Jenny Curtis

President, CCBR 2013-2014