

24.05.23 V4 - DRAFT

Cool-ER Changes workshop outcomes report

Macedon Ranges Shire Council

**LET ME
BE FRANK.** **Once upon tomorrow.**



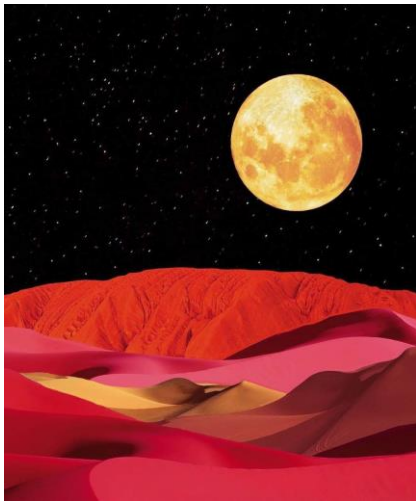


Image: 'Always' by Rachel Derum



This report was developed on Aboriginal lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, whose sovereignty was never ceded.

We recognise that First Nations people have deep knowledge and experience of resilience and sustainability that is critical to heal country, people, and communities. Despite the ongoing impacts of colonisation, First Nations people are still generously sharing knowledge and working towards reconciliation and treaty. For this, we pay our respects and deep thanks to First Nations elders past and present, and extend this to all First Nations people. We endeavour to learn from and lift up First Nations expertise in our work.

We live, work and play on Aboriginal land. 1% of our income is paid to Traditional Owners. We encourage everyone to Pay the Rent.

Let Me Be Frank is a member of 1% for the Planet. We donate 1% of our annual income to environmental organisations. We are proud to be part of a global network that is accelerating smart environmental giving.

Disclaimer

This document and the information it contains was current at the date of publication and may not reflect events or circumstances which occurred at a later date. The content of this document was developed using the best available information and in good faith. Let Me Be Frank, Once Upon Tomorrow and our collaborators cannot be held liable for the accuracy of the information presented in this document.

Waste and Circular Economy

The Waste and Circular Economy workshop was held on Thursday 18 May 2023 at the Romsey Mechanics' Institute.

Number of workshop attendees: 8

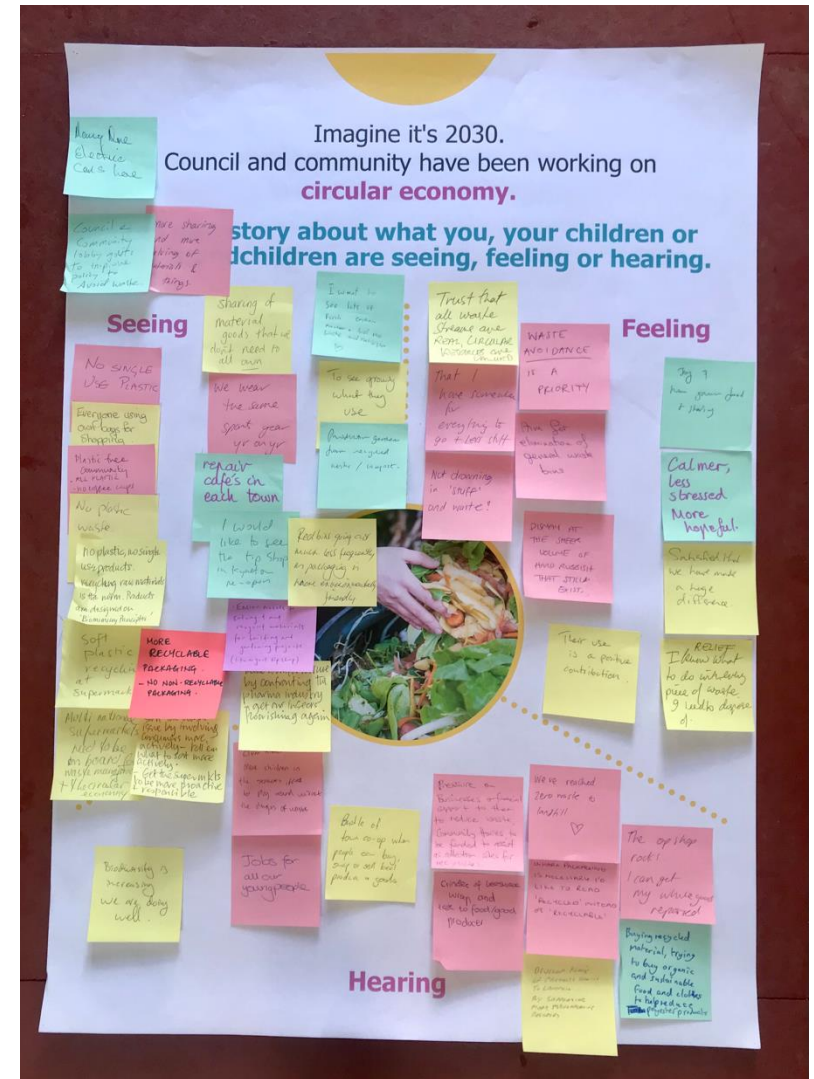
Waste and Circular Economy Community Statement

Cool-ER Changes was launched with our community on 2 March. Attendees were invited to imagine what success looks like for this theme in 2030. This is a synthesis of what we heard:

Our lives feel more joyful and connected from changing the way we think about waste - nothing is wasted in 2030 and what used to be thrown away is now considered a resource.

Our gardens are productive and flourishing and repair cafes thrive in each town. We are a plastic free community and all packaging is made from recycled materials and can be recycled.

Businesses are on board and there are many employment opportunities where innovation is encouraged. We are satisfied that we are making a difference.





Waste and Circular Economy Action Rankings

Given the smaller number of community workshop attendees, the activities used to assess and prioritise actions for Waste and Circular Economy were altered to maximise conversations around a feasible number of actions.

To start with as a large group, participants voted using green sticky dots on the actions they wished to assess during the workshop. Then in small groups participants assessed and scored their actions. Assessed actions were then prioritised with silver sticky dots.

The table below provides the synthesised results of the small group assessment activity and the large group prioritisation activity. The Actions are provided in a table in order of their score (between 1-10, with 10 being the most effective responses to climate change while 1 the least) plus the number of sticky dots or votes each action received.

 Represents the number of sticky dots each action received.

Action name and ratings	Notes provided for the action
Small group action score: 10	
<p>Kerbside soft plastic collection (Waste minimisation and disposal)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action would be led by Macedon Ranges Shire Council • Collaborators may include Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group – Sustainable Homes • The action should include advocating to increase recycling facilities in Australia • The benefits of this action include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Easy solution for households ○ Solution for a large volume of waste • There is momentum behind this action. There is a trial happening in Romsey with Federal Government funding. There is community demand for this service and Council is already investigating the possibility of expanding the trail to be shire wide • Contamination education is required • To build trust and momentum, examples of what the soft plastics are being turned into should be promoted and demonstrated (e.g. Council to use as much recycled soft plastics in local infrastructure) • It will be important to ensure the service does not give permissions to over-use soft plastic. Ensure there is still a foundational message to reduce (rather than recycle)

<p>Supporting agricultural businesses (Waste minimisation and disposal)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant waste stream in the Macedon Ranges region is silage plastic • This action would be led by Macedon Ranges Shire Council • There is an existing processor/recycler (APR) of silage plastics (soft plastics) located in Dandenong. This facility will be expanded with a new location coming to Bacchus Marsh which will offer a closer proximity option for Macedon Ranges • At the APR Dandenong facility, soft plastics can be converted to polymers and oil. It is envisaged that agricultural plastics could also be broken down into oil and that this process will be feasible by 2030 • This action has been identified in The Macedon Ranges Shire Council Waste and Resource Recovery Management Strategy 2021-26 • Council's role will be to promote this service and transport the material for recycling (sort, bale, compress and transport) • For additional initiatives to support the circularity of agriculture, check Sustainability Victoria grants for Circular Farms in South Gippsland which includes excess produce swaps and Circular Farms webinar. There may be opportunities to enable the sharing of farm equipment
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Two actions rolled into one:

- **Business support to transition** (New action)
- **Local circular economy** (Circular economy)

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- This new action has come from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Economic Development Strategy and has been linked with the Local circular economy action – now one action
- It involves supporting businesses to investigate circular economy opportunities and invest in waste management strategies that align with Macedon Ranges Shire Council objectives for waste and resource recovery
- The lead organisations include Council and Business and Tourism Associations (BATA) with council’s specific role being to facilitate awareness and information as well as promote circular economy opportunities
- The role of BATAs is to partner with council to establish a digital platform where local businesses who have (waste) items available can connect with people who can utilise the (waste) items, therefore reducing waste to landfill
 - Develop information and provide in a centralised place
 - Connect businesses, community and (waste) resource streams
 - Survey businesses
 - Incentivise
- At its heart this action is about connecting (waste) resources with the market/consumers
- The digital platform could include information about the local circular economy, existing circular economy outlets such as opportunity shops, Repair Cafes, tool libraries (share economy). A survey could be issued to local SME businesses to provide input on how they would like to be involved and connected
- There is already a local monthly e-news from BATAs that could be utilised
- Benefits include, increased awareness about the circular economy on a local scale, local swapping of useful goods and services and an increase in community connection
- An App has been developed locally, “Gander”, which connects businesses to consumers. Businesses (i.e. IGA) post food items on the App that are close to use by dates with consumers looking for food at a reduced price. This reduces food waste and assists with food relief. A trial of Gander is currently underway and once launched could provide a mechanism to implement part of this action

<p>Local recycling hubs (Waste minimisation and disposal)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action would be led by council in collaboration with Men’s Sheds, Neighbourhood Houses, Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group – waste action group, Repair Cafe • It was recognised that this action requires a high effort however it is feasible by 2030 to have revamped operation of tip shops as a coordinated approach across the shire • The idea is to create a more dynamic tip shop culture and physical space, by collocating and supporting local charity opportunity shops, Men’s Sheds, Repair Cafes and potentially social enterprises who are encouraged to provide circular economy services for the local community • Benefits include less waste to landfill, reduced costs associated with waste to landfill, partnerships with local groups (like men’s sheds) and improved social connections plus self-reliance (less transport exporting goods elsewhere) • Some workshop participants believe there is an opportunity to rapidly increase the recycling and separation at transfer stations with the right space and technical advice
<p>Small group action score: 8</p>	
<p>Businesses and the green economy (new action)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This new action has come from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Economic Development Strategy • It involves supporting businesses to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the green economy • Lead organisations include council and local businesses, with collaborators Loddon Mallee Waste group, Sustainability Victoria. • Council’s role is to promote, incentivise and increase awareness of green businesses and the benefits to the region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Also, to deepen its own sustainable procurement activities, creating case studies to communicate to the local business community (such as recycled rubber tyre usage in paths and roads). This would also demonstrate council’s leadership in this space ○ A webpage with information for businesses and e-news • Eco Dev team to lead by showcasing the benefits of a local green economy, for future business investment in the region and eco tourism • Additional activities to incentivise the local green economy include creating sustainability criteria or a sustainable business category in council awards • To be effective additional council staff resources would be required

Small group action score: 7

Two actions rolled into one:

- **Community action campaign**
- **Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group – Waste Action Group**
- **Tailored and targeted education campaigns**

(Community campaign and education)

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- These three actions were grouped together as it was identified that more could be achieved working in collaboration

Community action campaign

- The action description should be updated to include education on the different types of plastics, and how they can or cannot be recycled
- This is a community lead action
- Potential collaborators include local media, SV, schools (Gisborne Primary School), traders associations, sporting clubs, and Council
- The benefits may include:
 - Empowering individuals (involvement level can change). It could be the entry point into more climate action
 - Building community pride
 - Slowing consumption patterns
 - Less litter in habitat areas
 - Providing marketing opportunities for local businesses
 - Normalise repairing
- There is already some momentum behind this action. MRSG and schools are delivering campaigns. SV networking days. Towards zero single-use plastics policy at Council (potential to support businesses to do the same)
- This action would be high effort but could be broken down into smaller projects/programs. There are resources available and creating more relevant local resources is relatively easy

Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group – Waste Action Group

- This group was identified as one of the channels for the action above

Tailored and targeted education campaigns

- It was identified that the role for Council is to help community action the campaign. This includes the production of and access to educational materials

<p>Repair cafes (Resource recovery)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The score for this action could be anywhere from a 6 to an 8. The impact is likely to be higher if Council supports, in which case the score would also be higher • The location of this service is important. Ideally it would be accessible somewhere different in the Shire each weekend • This action needs to be coupled with Council advocating for the Right to Repair (as many items are simply not repairable these days) • The Men's Sheds were identified as a possible lead (this would need to be checked with the Men's Sheds in the Shire) • Potential collaborators include Access Australia, Salvos, Vinnies, Churches, SV and Council • This action could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Catching repairable waste at the waste transfer station ○ An intergenerational skill share exchange. Such as older people teaching traditional repair techniques (darning and wood work), and younger people teaching tech repair or how to sell second-hand materials online • There is some momentum behind this action. The Woodend Neighbourhood House host a monthly repair café • There are models in other municipalities that could inspire a service in Macedon Ranges. This includes the Morwell repair café (group participants thought this runs out of the local Transfer Station, however it looks like it may be run at the Neighbourhood House. The Morwell Transfer Station does have a recycled goods shop). Bendigo Repair Café and Castlemaine Repair Cafe are also a good examples • This action was seen to be high effort, especially if it was a Shire-wide coordinated approach. It could be lower effort if Council helped by playing a supporting role
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Actions that require more research before scoring	
Financial incentive to reduce kerbside waste (new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This new action came from a groups discussion at the workshop • There are two potential levels to this action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waste charges based on the size of the bin e.g. 80L, 120L and 240L ○ Pay as you go waste system based on weight as the bin goes into the waste truck • Council would lead the action • There are other council's that have done this. Before rating this action it is necessary to check with other councils about the costs and impact of shifting to a new way of changing for waste. Mount Alexander Shire and Merri-bek have a pay by bin size system. The group thought Yarra Council might have a pay by weight system but this is not reflected on their website • One risk of this approach is an increase in public dumping or people putting their home waste into public bins
Unscored actions	
Tool library (Circular economy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action could align with the Repair Cafe action • Consideration should be given to what is most needed and valued when it comes to sharing. E.g. campaign gear • This action can help drive the share economy • There is some momentum behind this action. The MRSG and Woodend Community House have a hire services for some gardening tools • The Brunswick Tool Library provides a great example • There is more to explore with this action, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could Goldfield Library expand their service to include hire/loan of other goods? ○ Need to research what is already available for local hire (e.g. at Kyneton Hire) ○ Check the capacity of the Men's Sheds
Green waste chipping service (Resource recovery)	-
Processing organics (Resource recovery)	-
Composting at home (Resource recovery)	-
Processing glass (Resource recovery)	-

<p>Public disposal locations and 4 bin system in public spaces (Waste minimisation and disposal)</p>	-
<p>Community engagement and education plan (Community campaign and education)</p>	-
<p>Additional transfer stations (Waste minimisation and disposal)</p>	-

Overarching insights from Waste and Circular Economy workshop:

- Even though there were fewer community participants, the workshop process allowed for participants to focus on actions that resonated most with them
- Council staff from council's waste and economic development teams were able to provide technical information on many of the actions which assisted in understanding the feasibility of the actions and timelines given the waste industry
- To enable a local circular economy in Macedon Shire, it will be important to better understand local (waste) resource streams and connect them to end users (referring to existing platforms and groups such as men's sheds, repair cafes, Buy/Swap/Sell groups). Council's role is to provide information, raise awareness, incentivise action and facilitate connections
- Consider how we talk about waste. Really everything should be seen as a resource
- All actions should consider that we have two communities in the Shire – residents and visitors



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COLLABORATIVE.
KIND.
FUN.

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FRANK.



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letmebefrank.com.au
+61 438 030 112
hello@letmebefrank.com.au