

# Cool Changes: Macedon & Mt Macedon

## Community Climate Action Plan

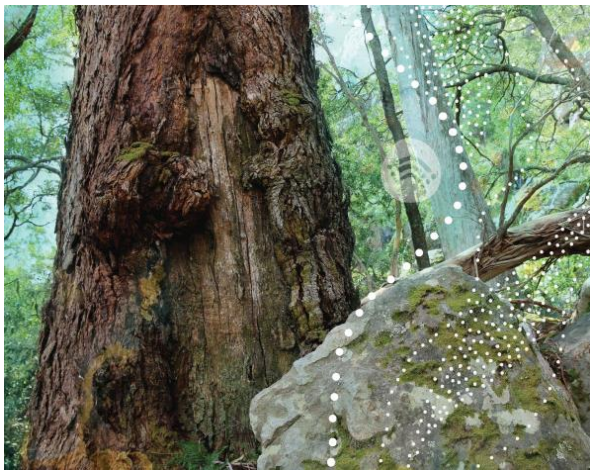




## Acknowledgment of Country

This Community Climate Action Plan has been created by the community of Macedon & Mt Macedon, as such, we acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People as the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways in which the Plan was developed.

We'd like to acknowledge the ongoing care and connection they have to these lands and waterways as the longest living culture on the Planet.



Artwork by Taungurung artist Maddi Moser

## Council context

Cool Changes is a Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC) program that works with local communities across the shire to facilitate the development of local climate change action plans.

Cool Changes commenced in 2018 with a pilot project that resulted in the community group 'Sustainable Malmsbury' forming and has since gone on to help create community-led, place-based climate action plans in Woodend, Romsey & Lancefield, Riddells Creek, Gisborne and Kyneton.

Understanding the vital role communities play in helping everyone adapt and mitigate climate change, the actions identified throughout the program will be used to influence the 'Cool-ER Changes' project, which will create a collaboratively design shire-wide Climate Emergency Response Plan.

This plan was created in partnership with Macedon & Mt Macedon Community House and Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

**Date published: TBC**





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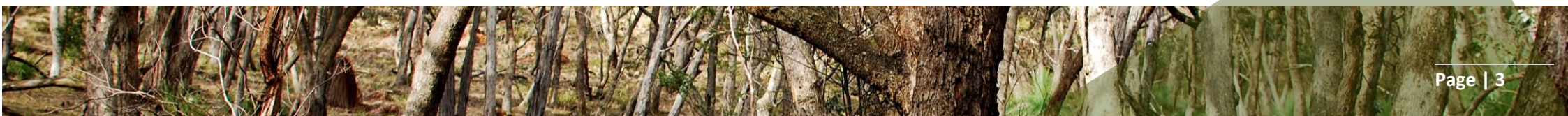
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## Our 'Plan'

This plan aims to create a collective vision for climate action into the future for the Macedon & Mt Macedon community. It looks to harness the multiple assets already present within both communities as well as contribute to emerging community groups and community infrastructure such as the Mt Macedon & Macedon Community House. Ultimately, outlining shared goals for how Macedon & Mt Macedon community can adapt to and mitigate climate change on a local level. Additionally, this plan looks to provide new, passionate residents a document in which to refer to when eager to continue the care and connection that the Macedon & Mt Macedon community shown for many years.

This plan was collaboratively designed by the community and will rely on community members to achieve. If you read of an action or idea in this plan you'd like to assist with, please reach out to MRSC Sustainability Officer, Justin Walsh ([juwalsh@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:juwalsh@mrsc.vic.gov.au)) or the Macedon & Mt Macedon Community House.

## How the plan was developed

The following plan was developed using multiple engagement and collaboration methods. Starting with a town-wide survey and then three sequential facilitated workshops.

Throughout these three workshops, community members explored localised impacts of climate change, township deficits & assets and decided upon a series of actions to create a climate-ready Macedon & Mt Macedon community.





## How to get involved

Community climate action can be performed by anyone! You do not need to be an expert, just some eagerness to participate and join the journey.

This Plan has been created by the community and will rely on the community to implement it. Through collaboration with one another, local businesses, community groups as well as local Council, each action identified is well within reach of being achieved.

To get involved, feel free to contact MRSC Sustainability Officer, Justin Walsh ([juwalsh@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:juwalsh@mrsc.vic.gov.au)) or Macedon & Mt Macedon Community House.

Also, remember that this Plan captures the community's thinking at a point in time and that community actions and ideas will naturally evolve over time. If you see an action on the 'future actions' lists or have other ideas for projects and the willingness to kick-start them, we encourage you to reach out.

## How is this plan going to be implemented?

The exact method of implementing is yet to be confirmed. Once this Plan is reviewed for the Macedon & Mt Macedon community, participants will come back together to discuss the best method of keeping this Plan on track. The following options will be explored:

1. Decentralised model: No overarching coordination of the Plan. Essentially the delivery of the Plan will focus on each action team managing their project. People could continue to collaborate through information communication channels and quarterly meetings.
2. Join the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group (MRSG): Macedon & Mt Macedon community to join the MRSG as a locality-based action group, similar to Sustainable Malmsbury
3. New place-based environmental group: Create an entirely new group with a centralised 'steering' committee.
4. Partner with already existing community groups: There are lots of environmental groups with a long history of effective climate action. These actions could be assisted by these groups

# Our framework

## Conscious consumption



## Vehicles for change

Advocacy, Connection, Education, Direct Action, Awareness, Communication

### Core value: 'Conscious consumption'

Throughout the workshops, a common talking point was consumption – of electricity, food, packaging, fuel, even popular bushland reserves. The idea that building the communities capacity to be conscious of their consumption became a common value across all themes.

### Plan themes

Through a series of activities and group discussions the following 'themes' were agreed upon to help address the complexity of climate change.

**Transport - Community - Food - Environment - Energy  
Waste - Extreme weather events**

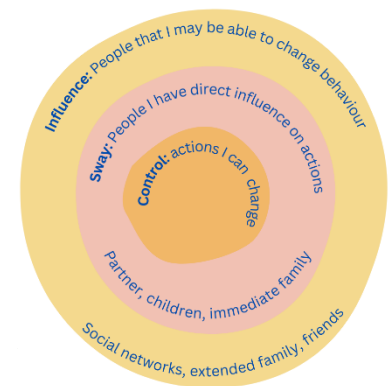
Breaking community climate action into themes allows people to work on passion projects / areas.

### Prioritising principles: 'Vehicles for change'


The 'vehicles for change' were also discussed as a guiding principle to assist with prioritising actions. By outlining which 'vehicle' was being used for each action, the Plan is able to offer a holistic response to climate change and add various ways to engage with local climate action.

### Working within our 'Sphere of Influence'




Working within our 'Sphere of Influence' was also outlining as another guiding framework for prioritising actions. This was discussed as a method of designing a plan that looks to gather more people on the journey towards a climate-ready community.



# Our actions

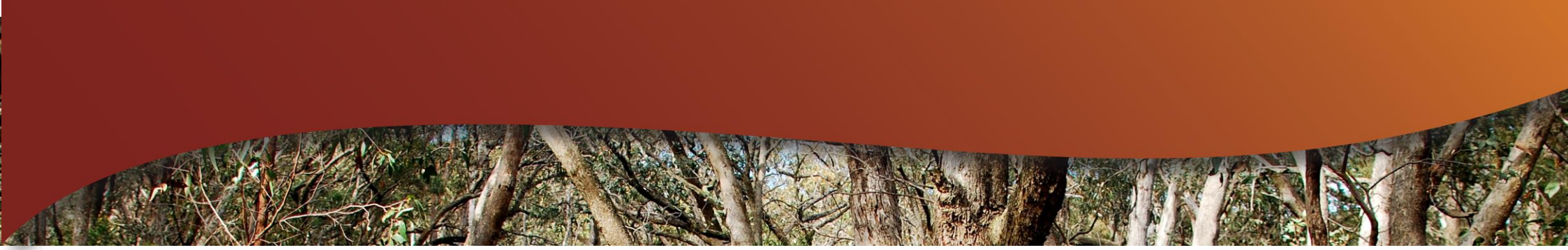
Theme	Prioritised action	Rationale	Vehicle of change	Future actions
	<b>COMMUNITY ENERGY:</b> <b>Macedon &amp; Mt Macedon</b> <b>Neighbourhood battery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce emissions</li> <li>• Shared renewable energy resource</li> <li>• Allows access to renter / low income household to renewable energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Direct action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home improvement (e.g. insulation, draft proofing, double glazing)</li> <li>• Support for grants / financial assistance</li> <li>• Promote use of sustainably grown firewood</li> <li>• Energy efficient building design information for new builds, renovations/upgrades</li> </ul>
	<b>LOCAL ENERGY TRADING:</b> <b>Peer-to-peer / house-to-house</b> <b>energy trading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase resilience</li> <li>• Reduces costs &amp; waste through economy of scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Direct action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase zoned heating / local radiant heating</li> <li>• Community buildings used as local energy generators / neighbourhood battery locations</li> </ul>
	<b>EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE:</b> <b>Energy Efficiency education</b> <b>program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping people to help themselves to upgrade energy efficiency of own homes</li> <li>• Saves money</li> <li>• Reduces Co2 emissions</li> <li>• Impacts mitigation &amp; adaptation</li> <li>• Answering: "What can we do as a family?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community energy park</li> </ul>




 Community	<b>ONGOING SUPPORT:</b> Advocate for 'Community Development' role with Macedon & Mt Macedon Community House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the role related to climate action &amp; preparedness</li> <li>• Explore funding sources for community climate action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See appendix 1 for future Community, Food and Environment actions</li> </ul>
 Food	<b>CONNECTION TO PEOPLE:</b> Community-led suite of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Conversation Circles' can be where local stories and education meet</li> <li>• Builds community cohesion and resilience</li> <li>• Themed connection session (e.g., knitting, carers, chess, food, cooking, food waste)</li> <li>• Seasonal celebration (e.g., solstices, equinox, harvest)</li> <li>• MMMCH to be the 'linking place'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	
 Environment	<b>CONNECTION TO PLACE:</b> Community-led suite of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upskilling the community in a climate crisis</li> <li>• Events to include;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Foraging</li> <li>○ Indigenous history walks</li> <li>○ Edible weed walks</li> <li>○ Local food production (growing, cooking, preserving)</li> <li>○ Fire ecology &amp; history</li> <li>○ Waterway walks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	








<p><b>COMMUNITY ADVOCACY:</b> Community consultation leading to various forms of advocacy around particular themes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding young people’s interests and advocacy activities.</li> <li>• Understanding advocacy opportunities aligned with the Council declaration of a ‘climate emergency’.</li> <li>• Facilitating advocacy and change campaigns for community related interests.</li> <li>• Understanding health impacts of climate change and building resilience.</li> <li>• Advocate for more environment friendly packaging</li> <li>• Political &amp; community advocacy for systemic change &amp; behavioural change relating to extreme climate events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>WASTE SOLUTIONS:</b> ‘Recycling Hub’ in Macedon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local solution with community involvement</li> <li>• Other leading examples throughout the shire (e.g. Woodend, Riddells Creek)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct action</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing knowledge about repairs</li> <li>• Tool sharing shed / group</li> <li>• Tetra plastic recycling at MMMCH</li> <li>• MRSC establish recycling/upcycling hub in each town</li> </ul>





	<p><b>IN-HOUSE MANAGEMENT:</b>  <b>On-property waste management education (e.g, composting, recycling, reusing)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimise waste leaving property</li> <li>• Reduce transport costs / emissions dues to waste collection and disposal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for local retailers to stock product without plastic packaging</li> <li>• Storytelling of solutions / effective action</li> <li>• Measuring waste &amp; energy emissions so people can see the impact of behaviours</li> </ul>
 <p>Extreme weather events</p>	<p><b>BUILDING COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS:</b>  <b>SES-led information sessions &amp; workshops</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help community be prepared for 2hr/4hr/6hr after an extreme weather event</li> <li>• Ensure community know how to seek assistance</li> <li>• Educate tangible actions for community to care for no another in an event (e.g. 'Telephone Trees' to connect with others)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication of available resources / hubs</li> <li>• Funding / resourcing to support recovery</li> <li>• Political &amp; community advocacy for systemic change &amp; behavioural change</li> <li>• Cultural burning</li> </ul>





**BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE:  
Secure bike parking at Macedon  
station (i.e. Bike cage)**

- Lower car usage
- Healthy people
- Easy to implement
- Lower emissions
- Increase e-bike adoption

• Direct action

- Walk & Ride to school days
- Walking School Bus
- "Gis-bus" type service for Macedon & Mt Macedon
- Access to retrofitting existing technology (car conversions, etc.)
- Car pooling
- Ride share & car sharing
- Encourage tourist to use public transport
- Safer roads for cyclists
- Public transport options
- EV car charging stations
- Walking & cycling maps
- Bike lanes
- Bike charging stations

# Appendix 1 Community, Food & Environment future actions lists

Community		Food	Environment
<p><b>Any Activity That Brings the Community Together:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops &amp; education (likely linking to all the other themes)</li> <li>Social events, celebrations</li> <li>Sharing food &amp; eating together</li> <li>Opportunities to work, play, eat, learn together</li> <li>Regular, consistent open times at Community House for 'drop in'</li> <li>Community circle sharing</li> <li>Activities that teach and encourage civic participation, developing community empowerment eg. street level democracy</li> <li>Assist young people connect with 'place and environment' w/ their own activities or just hang outs</li> </ul> <p><b>Advocacy and Ways to make people feel someone is advocating for them / the community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community consultation leading to advocacy around particular themes</li> <li>Opportunities to engage with politics, Q&amp;A sessions etc</li> <li>Facilitating advocacy and change campaigns for community related interests.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Specific Events / Activities Offers &amp; Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market (connect people to make an exchange)</li> <li>Regular Community Story Circle (ie. monthly at the Community House)</li> <li>Open drop in sessions at the Community House (come for a coffee &amp; chat)</li> <li>Themed connect sessions (knitting, permaculture, vegan, carers, LGBTIQ)</li> <li>Events focussed on</li> <li>Resource Share (eg. lawnmower, dehydrator, passata maker, flour mill, cars)</li> <li>Opportunities to learn and grow as a community, and develop capacity for collective decision making eg. circle process, Art of Hosting, Prosocial tools</li> <li>Opportunities to be heard and share knowledge, ideas and opinions eg. open mic sessions</li> <li>Opportunities to share creativity with each other eg music, poetry, storytelling, craft, art.</li> <li>Plant and growing program w/ sports group, scouts, local schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase local garden knowledge</li> <li>Increase food growing knowledge for local area</li> <li>Community food garden / allotments "Farm It Forward" program</li> <li>Buying group Share grown produce - community growers network connections.</li> <li>Community permaculture hub</li> <li>Local food swaps</li> <li>Digital food &amp; food learning exchange</li> <li>Seed savers</li> <li>Edible garden workshops @ MMMCH</li> <li>Share equipment for food growing, harvesting &amp; preserving</li> <li>Reduce food waste</li> <li>Learn about composting</li> <li>Preserving food (learn about preserving = less waste)</li> <li>Council FOGO / compost conversion</li> <li>"Casserole Club" - share meals for older/isolated people</li> <li>Bulk buying food groups (to reduce packaging + buying ethically + local food</li> <li>Grow/harvest/preserve group action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobby govt / Council for greater protection of flora &amp; fauna, waterways for habitat &amp; protection of species</li> <li>Educate schools &amp; public to learn about the environmental values</li> <li>Consider suitable fencing &amp; gates to sustain wildlife corridors</li> <li>Planting along waterways</li> <li>Signage for tourist</li> <li>Education for residents around property management that lessens environmental impact</li> <li>Promotion of native flora &amp; fauna species value &amp; protection</li> </ul>

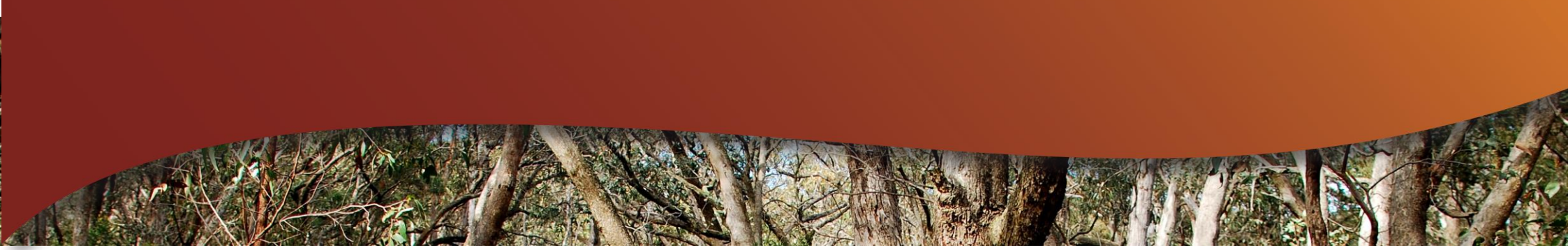
# Appendix 2 Community skills & knowledge inventory

Early in the process, a community skills & knowledge inventory was taken to get an idea on the current skills and knowledge that could be employed to achieve the actions listed.

Things I know something about the environment, climate change and/or sustainability	Skills I have that could help sustainability projects	Things I care deeply about the environment	Things I do to stay connected to my community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land regeneration</li> <li>• Climate justice</li> <li>• Home energy efficiency</li> <li>• Climatology</li> <li>• Power generation, distribution &amp; networks</li> <li>• Fire risk &amp; ecology</li> <li>• Bird calls</li> <li>• Can grow a mean silverbeet &amp; rhubarb all year around</li> <li>• High order policy</li> <li>• Wildflowers</li> <li>• Permaculture</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Growing food</li> <li>• Local food systems</li> <li>• Lots of little bit, want to know more!</li> <li>• Climate and weather becoming harder to predict</li> <li>• Hort. Science</li> <li>• Regional planning</li> <li>• Data / analytics</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Policy approaches (int., nat., local)</li> <li>• King parrots</li> <li>• Local walking tracks</li> <li>• Trees &amp; plants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying attention (to small environmental change)</li> <li>• Energy audit / assessment</li> <li>• Advise on resourcing EV's, solar, etc.</li> <li>• Group processes for collaboration</li> <li>• Podcasting</li> <li>• Community development</li> <li>• Gardening &amp; growing veggies</li> <li>• Environmental education (permaculture, growing food, seed saving, composting, soil)</li> <li>• Researching</li> <li>• I.T skills</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Land &amp; weed management</li> <li>• Building small garden structure</li> <li>• Composting</li> <li>• Permaculture principles</li> <li>• Grant writing</li> <li>• Sustainability projects (tree planting, habitat protection etc.)</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Food preserving</li> <li>• Upcycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to environment, Country, place</li> <li>• Commitment to biodiversity</li> <li>• Improving liveability in M.R.</li> <li>• Supporting low socio-economic households</li> <li>• Protection of habitat</li> <li>• Protecting waterways</li> <li>• Community sufficiency</li> <li>• Ancient wisdom</li> <li>• Emissions reduction</li> <li>• Indigenous connection &amp; land use practices</li> <li>• Recycling &amp; waste management</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Regeneration</li> <li>• Food production</li> <li>• Circular economy</li> <li>• Learning to live non-destructively</li> <li>• Working and learning with Traditional Owners</li> <li>• Enhancing tourism as vehicle for protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community sport</li> <li>• Community groups               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MRSG</li> <li>• PS My Family Matters</li> <li>• Landcare</li> <li>• Permaculture course</li> <li>• Community House</li> <li>• Stanley Park</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Laneway exchange</li> <li>• Local events</li> <li>• School volunteering</li> <li>• 'Over the fence' conversations</li> <li>• Support local projects</li> <li>• Promote conservation activities</li> <li>• Working with community</li> <li>• Volunteer</li> <li>• Local events</li> <li>• Food sharing</li> </ul>

# Appendix 3 Township assets & deficits

ASSETS			
Community House	Jubilee Hall	Local examples of leading building design for bushfire mitigation	Train station
Great people	Tony Clarke Stadium	Mountain climate	Macedon Ranges Cycling
Most residents have \$\$\$	2 ovals & club rooms	Reservoir	Amenity (sometimes)
Experience from Ash Wednesday fires	Cemetery	Environment National Park	Wildlife
Strong school community	Nursery	Fauna and birds	Wildflowers
Community of gardeners & gardens	Shops, pubs, cafes, IGA	Bushwalks	Writers Festival
Unique heritage, history & character	Mount Players Theatre	Forest	Peace & quiet (sometimes)
Big backyards (for food growing and biodiversity)	Local market	Clean air (sometimes)	Community-minded, rural enviro conscious people
Buying group 'hub'		Sporting clubs	
DEFICITS			



Firewood dependency	Poor cycling infrastructure	Upcycling & Recycling Hub	Community-led capacity
Sunshine (solar potential)	Proximity to Melbourne (also discussed as potential asset)	(Jar, timber, garden supplies exchanges)	Funding for volunteers
Poorly designed homes (for temperature control & energy efficiency)	Dependency on cars	Large volumes of green waste being burnt	Street parking for Mt Macedon CFA
Ideas exchange for sustainable homes	No EV charging stations	Water & energy resilience during extreme weather	Heritage loss
No community energy projects	Public transport options	Build capacity for community-led recovery from fire	First Nations representation, knowledge and wisdom
Housing developments	Keeping the Mt Macedon creek flowing to sustain habitat	Fire risk, planning and awareness	Community Permaculture Hub
Lack of low-income housing options	Need for protection of our waterways	Lack of cultural burns	Planning scheme compliance
Local food swap / share	Behaviour of tourists	Sustainability of our forest	Skills exchange hub
Access to local good (regen ag farmers)	Degrading environment (weed & pest infestation)	Information re. nature walk trails in Macedon Ranges	
Small scale "home-based" food businesses/farms	Water education in schools		

