



Newham & District Landcare Group

Presidents Report 2017/18

This year the committee has again been highly active in the local area and. In addition it has participated in both the Upper Deep Creek and the Upper Campaspe Landcare Networks.

We have been successful in obtaining several grants for local environmental improvement works. I note specifically the excellent work undertaken by the Roadside Management Group.

Participation in two Landcare networks helps maintain our profile and gives access to a wider range of events.

Membership has remained steady with just over 100 member households – over 35% of the Newham population

Highlights have been:

- Over fifteen different functions in the year.
- A “future directions” meeting with participation of members and pupils from Newham Primary School
- Plantings on private property and public land (Hanging Rock).
- A State Government Biodiversity On-ground Action Grant of \$50,000, obtained for work to be undertaken on public land and eight private properties in 2019 - 2020.
- New Members function and Christmas BBQ
- Support for Newham Primary School environmental education and promoting care of our environment
- Provision of services to members (auger, tools, plants, spray trailer, tree guards etc).
- Newsletters published quarterly with reports of events, projects, reviews, and articles

Special Interest Groups

Roadside Management Group

The Roadside Management Group continued their great work this year with further roadsides mapped and follow-ups undertaken. Specific roadsides have been targeted for the removal of Gorse, Blackberry and Broom. Action was taken against Chilean Needlegrass discovered on Three Chain between Carlsruhe and Newham, with the aim of eliminating this particularly noxious weed. The group has been instrumental in improving roadside management by the Shire, as well as making a robust submission to the MRSC roadsides strategy. As a result of roadside surveys undertaken by botanist/ecologist Karl Just since spring 2014, 1600 or so significant roadside flora specimens have been entered into the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas.

Pest Control

A pest control coordinator has been appointed by the committee and local landowners can contact the coordinator, via the committee, who can assist with organising programmes.

Water Watch

Newham Primary School is active in the programme and with a fantastic contribution by Jenny Waugh motivating the students. In addition Karl Kny monitors Garden Hut Creek and provides results to Melbourne Water. Monitoring shows that rainfall directly effects water quality.

Clean Up Australia

The contribution by members to Clean Up Australia day was up on the 2016/17 numbers. A substantial amount of rubbish was collected particularly bottles and food wrappers. All members are encouraged to pick up rubbish at every opportunity not just one day per year. Reduced litter in the Newham area and contributes to the health of the environment.

Wesley Park

N&DLG provided ongoing support for plantings and park maintenance, thanks to Jane Trikojus for her maintenance activities.

Social

Social activities continue to be a focus of the committee as we believe a strong social network will enhance the aims of the group and its members. The two new members' nights (including a display by the Leigh Valley Hawk and Owl Sanctuary) and Christmas barbecue were again a great success. A barbecue was held for young members at the Newham Primary School and again generated a large turnout from parents and pupils. The committee was pleased to provide these events at no door charge.

Educational

Four events were held to impart knowledge to our members and guests. Held generally at the Newham Mechanics Institute these again proved popular with topics on Bird song, Wildflower walk, Biolinks and Aquatic plants. Our seminars endeavour to be relevant and give a base for members to have a long term plan for the development of their properties.

The Committee is focused on needs and interests of members, which can be communicated in many ways.... ring a committee member; attend a committee meeting or one of the many events held, and check the website.

Independence is encouraged... anyone can set up a project or activity within the broad context of our landcare objectives and be assured of our overall support.

We believe strongly in community building - we want our members to feel that they belong, and to become involved in broader community landcare issues.

Lobbying

This year the committee has been engaged actively on Roadsides and Hanging Rock in encouraging the Council to maximise their environmental focus. This is having success with greater cooperation between Council grading activities and Landcare involvement. Our committee is also participating in the review of roadsides policy. We also contributed to the Review of the Hanging Rock and East Paddock master plan.

Future Directions

A workshop of members facilitated by Jim Sansom, with contributions from pupils of Newham Primary School, was held in April to assist the committee in reviewing its long term strategy for Newham and District Landcare. Currently an action plan is being finalised based around the key priorities that were identified in the meeting of:

- Activism/political involvement.
- Creation of a MAP or PLAN of biolinks and habitat corridors.
- Renewable energy technology.
- Education, creating awareness.

Committee

Thanks again go to our dedicated and hardworking Committee for their time, sense of humour, input and drive to keep us moving forward (Helen Scott, Secretary and website; Hilary Roberts, Treasurer; Penny Roberts, Past President; Karl Kny, Vice President; Jim Sansom, Doug Dalgleish, Howard Stirling). I also acknowledge the contribution of David Bonsall who manages newsletter publication.

Above all, thanks to our members for their participation, feedback and friendship - keeping our group vibrant, interesting and one that we can be proud of.

Nick Massie,
President
July 2018