



# TRENTHAM SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

AUSPICED BY TRENTHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

To inspire, inform and support our local community to meet their needs  
without compromising the needs of future generations

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021

TSG has enjoyed a bumper year of activities and success in being awarded four grants. This funding is enabling us to implement ambitious projects covering our four priority areas: Conservation & Earth Repair; Waste & Resource Recovery; Community Energy & Sustainable Housing; and, Local Food & Farming. Events, projects and online information sessions held over the past year are outlined below:

### **Tour of Trentham Water Storage & Treatment Plant, 27 February:**

Coliban Water offered local people a fascinating and informative tour of the water treatment plant on-site at Lagoon Road. The tour arose from TSG's interest in water security and followed an interesting on-line presentation by Coliban Water managers in November last year. The tour showed the uniqueness of Trentham's water system (which is spring-fed supplemented by a license for groundwater) and the complex multi-stage filtration and treatment of water which enables a clean and reliable water supply for our town.

TSG was invited to participate in **Coliban Water's Urban Water Strategy 2022 for Trentham**. The Strategy is reviewed every 5 years and takes a 50-year timeframe. It identifies climate change, rainfall variability and a growing population among the major challenges to our water security. An on-line session gave local people an opportunity to have their say on the challenges and opportunities for building a sustainable water future.

**Farm Forestry Event – Master Treegrower presentation by Rowan Reid, 25 March - Growing trees for biodiversity, pleasure & profit:** Jointly hosted by TSG & Landcare, nearly 50 enthusiastic people filled the Supper Room at the Mechanics Institute to hear the inspiring story of Rowan's craft timber and carbon forestry farm at Bambra in western Victoria. Interest in forming a local tree growers group and funding will assist us with our community Carbon Forestry project.

**Trentham Carbon Forestry Project:** We were delighted to be awarded funding of \$9,895 for this innovative project from the **2021 Z-NET Climate Resilience Fund** through the **Hepburn Wind Impact Fund**. TSG is working in partnership with central highlands-based company, **wood4good** to engage with local landholders to deliver the project which aims to sequester carbon, enhance biodiversity and, ultimately, grow firewood. Congratulations to TSG member, Sebastian Klein, who conceived the carbon forestry project, prepared a detailed application and will oversee its delivery.

**Trentham Energy & Climate Resilient Project:** We were successful in winning funding from the Shire's **Towards Zero Grants** and from the **Community Bank** for the sum of \$44,000 to address unstable power supply, particularly for essential services, and encourage more renewables and energy storage. The June storm event saw power out for 3-6 days across Trentham and districts. Communications, water supply and other services went down and road access to the town was cut off. This significant project aims to achieve a more stable electricity supply for our township and make significant progress towards achieving 100% renewable energy supply by 2029.

TSG has been entrusted with Coliban Water's 'community rebate' funding (\$5,000) allocated as a consequence of the interruption to service during the storm. We will use this money to complement the Energy & Climate Resilience project and encourage more community engagement.

### **Waste & Resource Recovery:**

The Resourceful Hepburn group, which grew out of TSG's 2020 on-line waste presentation has been active with continuing involvement of Trentham representatives. Emerging interest in 'the circular economy' is expected to become a more significant factor in how we live in a world facing climate and biodiversity crises.

### **Local Food & Farming:**

The TSG working group has focused on community building and planning and made an application for funding (awaiting outcome) that will help us position local food security firmly within a climate change framework. We are also planning to focus more on land use planning, particularly retaining productive agricultural land – the subject of a major recent study into the peri-urban region (100 km radius of Melb, which includes Trentham and districts).

**Produce Exchange:** We celebrated the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our popular food swap at Trentham Farmers Market in January. Missing just a few months due to Covid restrictions, the swap enjoyed another successful and happy year. Thanks to all the wonderful locals, visitors and market stall-holders who continue to support us and bring their amazing garden produce along to swap and share. The Produce Exchange is a truly 'organic' activity which we all help make a success, so congratulations to us all!!

**Communications:** We report regularly in the Trentham Trumpet and we thank the editors for their enthusiastic support for TSG and sustainability in general. In the June Trumpet, TSG co-convenor, Sophia Christoe, painted an inspiring vision of what Trentham could look like in 2050 if all TSG's plans and projects come to fruition.

**New TSG Website:** Nat Cursio successfully applied for a Community Support Grant (\$2,350) from Hepburn Shire and is managing the development of this much-needed platform to extend our existing written and social media communications. We plan to organise a community event early next year to "launch" the new website.

**Hepburn Shire Council Community Vision & Council Plan:** TSG made a submission to this important plan, detailing many ideas and concerns covering a wide range of issues. We believe that sustainability and the natural environment should underpin all our thinking and planning to help build a resilient and healthy community for ourselves and future generations.

**Z-NET Community Transition Plan:** This ambitious 10-year masterplan to reach 100% renewable energy and zero-net emissions by 2029, is being implemented across the Shire. Two members have re-nominated to represent Trentham on the Roundtable which meets every two months. Several informative online information sessions on bulk buys for solar, battery storage and heat pump hot water systems are wonderful opportunities for local people. The Electric Vehicle (bulk buy) offer is proving popular and E.V. charging stations are being installed in towns across the Shire. The Z-NET website <http://hepburnznet.org.au/> is a useful resource for information about Z-NET.

A big "thank you" to our enthusiastic and inspiring core group members (Seb, Soph, Nat, Glen & Ian), who are driving the projects reported above, and all our supporters for your interest and participation.

*Sustainability is stimulating and important work - it connects us to our community and the planet as we work together to create a better future.*

*Being involved and taking action is a great antidote to feeling overwhelmed in a challenging world.*

TSG thanks Trentham Neighbourhood Centre for their assistance and is grateful for TNC's continuing support through our Auspice Agreement.

We need more people power and would love you to join us! Please phone Sophia – 0427-697-083 or Glenda on 0419-877-267 or email [tsg@trentham.org.au](mailto:tsg@trentham.org.au) Find us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) .

Glenda Holmes  
Co-Convenor

**Trentham Sustainability Group**  
**Living Locally, Living Sustainably, Living Well**