

RP3011

# COMMUNITY CARBON REDUCTION AND WELLBEING ENHANCEMENT

## Problem

Many carbon reduction programs focus on individual behaviour change using social marketing approaches that emphasise the cumulative effects of individual actions over time.

Other research suggests that social dilemmas arise when trying to solve collective problems like carbon reduction through the lens of individual behaviour change and that efforts should be focused at the community level by engaging people in their role as active citizens through the context of 'low carbon communities'.

## Solution

This PhD is part of an action research project funded by the LCL CRC known as Livewell Clusters, which aims to help participants to reduce carbon emissions in their homes, communities and workplaces.

The first trial in the City of Yarra (inner Melbourne) will involve getting people to use an online calculator to take a baseline reading of their carbon emissions.

Participants will join Decarb Groups that will meet monthly and provide training and peer support. Groups will take on projects to reduce carbon emissions for themselves and other community members. The sharing economy will be investigated for its potential to reduce carbon emissions and build social ties at the local level.



Figure 1 Yarra Sharing MapJam at Fitzroy Town Hall, 21 October 2014.

## How can citizens take collective action through 'low carbon communities' to manage the governance of climate change?

### Benefits

This project is about devising, trialling and evaluating a viable way to engage mainstream Australians in significantly reducing their own carbon emissions and making it easier for others to reduce their emissions as well.

It is posited that this can be achieved by focusing on low-carbon, high-wellbeing living as this will attract sections of the population who are not so motivated by the threat of climate change that they would be prepared to reduce their quality of life.

Livewell will also act as an important test case and model for stewarding low carbon communities and building grassroots capacity to respond to climate change. If successful other Clusters will be rolled out across additional councils in Melbourne and Sydney.

Participants will have a significant role in developing ideas for group activities and projects. Peer governance will be utilised as a method to enable collaborative decision-making.

We need 150 people to take part in the first Livewell trial starting in March 2015. Please help us spread the word through your networks!

### Contact

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