

A GUIDE TO

RUNNING A 'LIVWELL GROUP'

TO REDUCE YOUR CARBON EMISSIONS

Form a group with friends, neighbours,
work colleagues or others you know.

Group members help each other to
reduce their carbon footprints and
have a good time in the process!



Livewell
Communities achieving low carbon wellbeing



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LOW CARBON LIVING
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Introduction

REDUCE YOUR CARBON ...
WHILE ENHANCING YOUR WELLBEING



Roles for everyone

Across the world momentum to reduce climate change is growing. Individuals, communities, businesses, organisations and governments all have vital roles to play. We're making progress, but it's imperative that we transition faster to keep dangerous atmospheric warming under 2°C.

There are many things you can do as an individual or household – improve your home insulation, use sustainable transport, switch to more efficient appliances, eat less meat, start a food garden, make small changes to daily habits in your home, to name just a few examples. And there are also many ways in which you can help to reduce the carbon output of governments, businesses, organisations and other community members.

A word about words

In this Guide the terms carbon, carbon emissions, carbon footprint, greenhouse gas emissions and variations of these are used interchangeably. There are a number of greenhouse gases, but carbon dioxide is the main one that's increased through human activity, and so 'carbon' is a commonly used shorthand term for greenhouse gases.

Reducing your carbon footprint doesn't mean you have to accept a lower quality of life. In fact it enhances your wellbeing in many ways. 'Active transport' – walking, cycling and public transport – provides exercise and improves your health. Eating less meat also keeps you healthier. Better insulation makes your home more comfortable. Anything you do to save energy also saves you money. And joining in the local 'sharing economy' can open the door to new activities and friendships.

PLEASE NOTE:

Quotes appearing in circles throughout this Guide are from members of Livewell groups.

"Anytime anyone gets joy out of trying to make the world a better place, is when I get inspired. And that happens a lot."

"It wasn't about denying myself comfort. You know, I like comfort as much as anyone."

Introduction

Being part of a group can be helpful

However, these kinds of changes are not always easy to make. You're probably busy. Your funds may be limited. You may not know how to make the changes, where to start, or who to ask.

This is where being part of a group is useful. When you're trying something new it helps to be doing it with people who have similar values and goals. Group members can share information and ideas, try out new things and let each other know how it went. They can encourage, prod and help one another.

And in a group you can share tools, toys or home-grown produce, find a new home for items you don't need any more, start a community garden, or encourage governments to adopt low carbon policies.

There's a great deal of evidence to show that making changes together with your peers can make the process easier, more pleasant and more achievable than if you try to do this on your own.

"I don't accept when people say I'm just one person and I can't have an impact. It's like a voice in a choir. If you sing in a choir then your voice won't be heard individually but when you're part of that choir you make music and it does have an impact. And so, we're each a voice in a choir that does something beautiful and meaningful and effective."

"I like meeting like-minded people to share the positives but also the worries related to environmental issues and climate change. And create positive solutions together. Create bigger change together than you would do by yourself."



Livewell core team meeting

HISTORY OF LIVEWELL

Livewell started in the City of Yarra in inner Melbourne as a research project in 2014. It is a project of the Cooperative Research Centre for Low Carbon Living, a federally-funded consortium of universities, the CSIRO, businesses and government bodies that is developing innovative ways to reduce Australia's carbon footprint. The Livewell project is being undertaken through Curtin University with the support of a volunteer team, Yarra Council and Yarra Energy Foundation. During 2015 ten Livewell Groups were initiated in which ordinary people from Yarra and nearby areas got together to help each other to reduce their carbon emissions. (Quotes from some of those people are in this Guide.) There was also a series of workshops, a website and a newsletter for members and the wider community. 'Livewell Clusters' is now an incorporated association, and some of the Livewell Groups formed in 2015 are continuing.



So why not start or join a Livewell Group?

This **Guide to Running a 'Livewell Group'** enables you to form or join a Livewell Group with friends, neighbours, work colleagues or others you know and help each other to reduce your carbon emissions, while enjoying yourselves and enhancing your quality of life along the way! We outline how to form your group, what it can do, and how you can reduce your carbon footprint, with links to other sources of information. There are many groups doing similar things in Australia – some are 'one-offs' and some are part of other networks like Transition Towns and Sustainability Street. It's up to you what you call your group and which networks (if any) you connect to. What matters is reducing your carbon footprint and contributing to building a better neighbourhood and a better world.

While Livewell Groups focus on helping members to reduce their carbon footprint, they can also pursue other goals related to any aspect of sustainability, community building or wellbeing.

"It has reinforced the fact that you can do so many things in a practical way."



Livewell Group members can be neighbours, friends, relatives, work colleagues, fellow students, school parents, faith group or community group members, or any combination of these.



Members share information and help one another reduce their own carbon emissions – and the emissions of the wider community.



Groups can meet for a limited period – say, six months – or keep going indefinitely. Most groups meet monthly. You can meet any day of the week and at any time, and for any length of time, although one and a half to two hours is the usual length.



Your group can meet wherever you like: in members' homes, community centres, libraries, church or organisational premises, or cafés, and you can have meals or refreshments when you get together – before, during or after the meeting.

It requires one, two or a few people to start the process of forming a group. That could be you. From page 8 we discuss how you do it.

What do people do in a Livewell Group?

We suggest a range of activities in the Guide, but it's for you to decide what your group does. We do, however, suggest that you set aside time each session for each of you in turn to talk about specific actions you're taking or considering taking to reduce your carbon emissions. We call this 'going round the circle'. If you're already taking an action you can discuss how it's going and any issues you're having. If you're considering doing something you can raise any questions or concerns you have. In response other members can share information and ideas, often based on their own experience of taking the same action. And they can learn from your experience.

Other activities your group may consider include:

- Discussing particular ways of reducing carbon
- Talks by group members or visiting speakers or videos on specific topics
- Visits to sustainable houses or other sites of interest
- Group exercises for a range of purposes: to recognise the strengths and resources in the group and the wider community, to plan your carbon reduction efforts over time, to get moving when you're stuck, to translate project ideas into action, and to acknowledge and celebrate your efforts and achievements
- Discussing and planning group tasks or projects, for example, arranging talks or workshops for the broader community, recruiting new members, advocacy of government policies that reduce carbon emissions, or getting neighbourhood projects going
- Discussion and action on other sustainability goals, or other ways to build local community and enhance wellbeing.

"I think they've got the right idea in instigating societal change. It's got to be from the ground up. I think they're a motivating force for changing the way people think about how they live, how they consume and how they can contribute in a meaningful way."

"You feel more likely to step up to the next challenge. You can't just go straight away, you know, you're not going to go from zero to a hundred, you've gotta take those intermediate steps and that's what Livewell does."



Josh's House, sustainable house, Perth

What information and support is available from outside the group?

If you become part of a Livewell Group you will be giving each other information and support, but you can also obtain information on relevant subjects from other sources in your community – from local experts, from businesses and community organisations, from the local council, from educational and research institutions. Consult these people and organisations, have them come and speak to your group, or check out their websites.

The Guide also contains links and references to many useful information sources – both in the text and in a list at the end.

There is a wealth of information out there – it's just a matter of connecting to it!

Overview: What's in this Guide

This Guide will help you start and run a Livewell group to reduce your carbon emissions and help others do the same, as well as pursuing other goals that can enhance sustainability, wellbeing and community connectedness. It's set out in three parts.



1

Basics

The BASICS section deals with:

Forming a Livewell Group (p.8)

Getting your neighbours, friends, work colleagues or anyone else you know together in a group

Running your Livewell Group (p.13)

The types of activities your group can do when it gets together, as well as decision making processes and sharing tasks

Connecting with us and others (p.21)

Letting us know you've started a group and (in time) how the group is going, what you're doing and thinking of doing, how you think Livewell groups and the Guide might be improved, and possibly connecting with other Livewell groups and participants.

2

Background

The BACKGROUND section covers:

What is climate change? (p.22)

And why it is so important that we reduce it.

Ten points about getting people into action (p.25)

How to encourage people to act in the face of all the factors getting in the way of this.

Checklist of ways to reduce your emissions (p.27)

Designed to help you whatever your priorities, budget or life circumstances may be.

How reducing emissions enhances wellbeing (p.33)

A list of ways it makes you happier and healthier, builds community, makes your home more comfortable and saves you money.

Beyond your own carbon emissions (p.36)

Other things you can do to reduce the world's carbon, such as recruiting and informing others, starting community projects, advocating government policies that reduce emissions, and using your money to help build a low to zero carbon economy.

Some group exercises for you to consider (p.40)

Exercises to recognise your assets, plan your carbon reduction, get unstuck, turn ideas into group action projects, and acknowledge and celebrate your efforts and achievements.

3

How to find out more

 (p.44)

The HOW TO FIND OUT MORE section provides:

Links to online sources of information, ideas and assistance.

Basics

FORMING AND RUNNING YOUR LIVEWELL GROUP

1

Forming a Livewell Group

PLEASE NOTE: This section is for those who are forming a group. If, on the other hand, you have been invited to join a group this will not be so directly relevant to you, and you might like to skip to the next section, *Running your Livewell Group*, on page 13.

If you're thinking of starting a group it can be useful (though it's not essential) to discuss the idea with one or two people you think may be keen to participate. They might even help you start the group. Doing this together shares the workload, boosts confidence and allows you to bounce ideas off each other.

It's also recommended that you read through this Guide before you begin. It's designed to guide you through the process in a step-by-step fashion.

Who to invite

You can invite anyone to the group, for example:

- Neighbours
- Fellow students
- Friends
- Fellow school parents
- Relatives
- Community organisation members
- Work colleagues
- Church or other faith group members

You can invite people from a number of these contexts, or you may want to focus on just one. For example, if you just invite the people in your street you can focus not only on things each household can do, but also on what the street can do together. Similarly, having a group of work colleagues enables you to give attention to possible changes in the workplace, as well as in your home lives.

NOT FOR EVERYONE

It's probably not a good idea to invite people who you know don't believe in human-caused climate change, because the purpose of the group is to get things done, not to debate the issue. Likewise, it's best to avoid people who (whether or not they believe in climate change) have zero interest in reducing their carbon footprint, because their lack of interest could sap the motivation of others. You might think such people wouldn't want to join anyway, but they may simply be attracted by the company or the prospect of a good argument.

"I think that we can achieve great things together and one single person can change the course of events, or be kind of a catalyst for action."

"I like the neighbourhood nature of it. You see people in the street and you don't, you know, have to make a special appointment."

Inviting people to the group

You can invite people face-to-face, or by phone, email, letter-boxing, social media, newsletters, mass media, shop window posters or any other means. You may or may not know them personally.

There are really two stages to the invitation: inviting people to join the group, and inviting them to the first meeting. We suggest you first sound people out on joining the group, and then, when you have at least five people, work out a mutually convenient time for the first meeting. You can discuss possible times with people, or set them out in a Doodle Poll, Google calendar, Facebook event or an email. If you have less than eight people you should then put out additional publicity – including both the plan to form a group and the details of the first meeting – so that you can build your numbers up.

Consider covering the following points in publicity about the idea of the group and the details of the first meeting, and put it in your own words:

The idea of the group

- It's about getting together to help each other to reduce carbon emissions.
- This is important because ... (you say why you think it's important).
- If you get involved it should be enjoyable.
- Reducing your carbon emissions doesn't mean reducing your quality of life – in fact it often improves it.
- Joining a group to do this can make it easier to achieve, and more fun.
- Group members decide what the group does.
- The group's not alone – there are many outside sources of information and support.
- If space or time permits, mention some of the other things the group may do beyond individual members reducing their carbon emissions.

“It was just a good opportunity to start thinking again about the kinds of things we can do locally and that sort of thing. So it was the local neighbourly stuff appealed to me.”



Details of the first meeting

- When: the date, and starting and finishing times
- Where: including the type or premises and address
- How they accept or decline if they need to
- (Possibly) what will happen in the first session – can be very brief
- Contact details: your phone number, so they can contact you if they're running late or can't come; and a request for theirs, if they're expected and don't turn up.

Make your communications friendly and informal. In approaching people you don't have to be an expert on climate change or carbon reduction, or even know more than they know. You'll all be helping and learning from each other. You're just taking the initiative to get it going.

You will also need to supply this Guide to those coming to the first session. Do this by email unless people don't have it. People can print off copies if they like, but they will need electronic copies to access the links the Guide contains. You may also want to email it to those just considering joining.

Planning the first meeting

You (and possibly others who are interested in the idea) will need to plan the first meeting of the group, after which it's the job of the whole group to plan future meetings and anything else the group does. Planning the first meeting involves three tasks: arranging a venue and time, organising refreshments, and planning the meeting content. As well, there may be a need to arrange matters such as childcare, or transport for those attending.

Selecting a time and venue for the first meeting

As already mentioned, it's a good idea to involve those who are interested in joining in selecting a time for the first meeting.

You can meet anywhere that's suitable – homes, community centres, library meeting rooms, halls, work premises, schools, church or community group premises, cafés, pubs. Some venues may incur a charge, and cafés and pubs may be noisy and crowded. Think about what's comfortable and appealing, what provides access to kitchen facilities and what is geographically convenient, preferably with public transport access. Of course your preferred venue may only be available at certain times, so you may want to check this out before arranging a time for the first meeting.

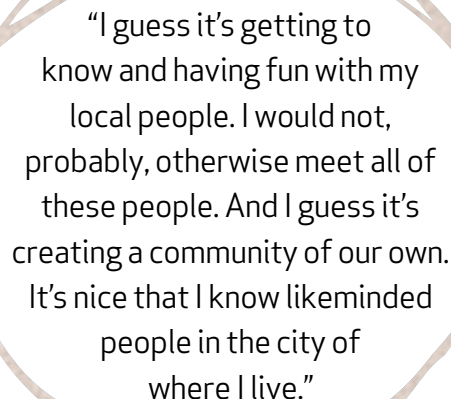
In the first session discuss the suitability of this venue with the group, and possible alternatives. However a careful initial choice can make a good first impression and may save the trouble of organising another venue later.

If you choose to meet in a home, you can stick with one member's place or rotate around the homes of different members. If you want to meet in a public venue and you don't know where to look, your local council is a good place to begin. Their website might list available council venues, and council officers may also know of other public venues in your area.


ARRANGING REFRESHMENTS

You want people to socialise and have a good time, and providing food and drinks can help make this happen. You and any additional helpers need to provide refreshments the first time, and then for subsequent meetings members can bring a plate, or take turns catering.

Refreshments that reflect your values are preferable – such as local, homemade and fresh rather than processed and packaged food – and try to avoid disposable plates, cups and cutlery. Over time, the different dishes people bring can be great discussion starters, and a relatively easy way for members to contribute and be acknowledged.



“I guess it's getting to know and having fun with my local people. I would not, probably, otherwise meet all of these people. And I guess it's creating a community of our own. It's nice that I know likeminded people in the city of where I live.”

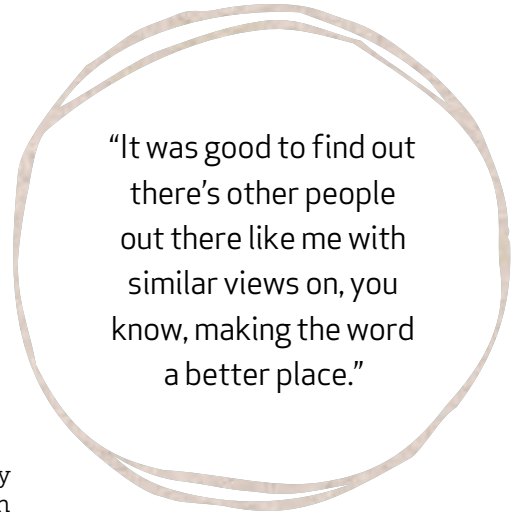


“We had a few good cooks in the group. And it often turned into dinner or a substantial supper, and just a lot of building of a sense of community and meeting other local people.”

Planning the content of the first meeting

First impressions are important. People will be more likely to keep participating in the group if, from the first get-together, they enjoy it socially, they get a chance to talk and be acknowledged, there's a variety of topics and activities relevant to their concerns and interests, they can have a hand in group decisions, and it seems well organised.

We suggest, therefore, the following set of activities for the first session, with recommended durations based on 90 minutes of session time, and one or more initiators leading:



“It was good to find out there’s other people out there like me with similar views on, you know, making the world a better place.”



1. Introduce yourself (10 MINUTES)

Welcome those present and share something about yourself, why you have taken this initiative, very briefly what the group might do, and how this can benefit participants. Add that it's up to the whole group to decide what it does, and that this first session is structured to help them start to do this.



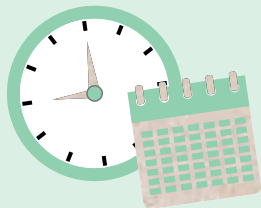
2. Have members introduce themselves and share their first thoughts (25 MINUTES)

Have each participant say something about themselves, why they've come along and what – at this stage – they'd like to get out of the group. Have someone write on a whiteboard or butchers' paper members' comments about what they want to get out of the group, to be used for the next activity. Offer the comment that these are their first thoughts on the matter and may well change as they get into discussions and gain more information. For example, participants may or may not realise that certain actions reduce carbon much more than others do, and the recommended reading before the next session should help to clarify this.



3. Distil the group's initial thoughts (10 MINUTES)

Have the group start to distil from these initial thoughts the 4–6 most popular focuses or kinds of action. Write these down, while observing that these may well change over time, and keep the notes (or photos of them), as group records.



4. Discuss and decide on arrangements for future sessions

(20 MINUTES)

- How frequently you will meet (the usual frequency is monthly)
- The day and time you'll meet
- How long the session will go for (we suggest 90-120 minutes, including refreshment and socialising time)
- Where you'll meet
- Arrangements for refreshments, including who will provide them each time (everybody? one person? a few?) and what stage of the session you will have them (the start? middle? end?)

Some other things to consider:

- It's best to have kitchen facilities if you're serving food and hot drinks.
- When booking venues clarify whether you need to pick up and return a key.
- When booking *times* for venues allow time to set up the room before the session and pack and clean up afterwards.
- Don't worry if you don't have time in the session to resolve all these matters. Focus on what you need to decide for the next session. (And if you don't manage this it can be done by those planning the next session – see next point.)



5. Nominate people to plan and facilitate the next session

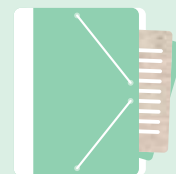
(5 MINUTES)

We suggest two or three. They can include initiators but it's good to have new people as well. We have suggested a structure for that session on page 18.

6. Have each person identify and share:

(15 MINUTES)

- What they got out of the session
- What they're looking forward to from their involvement in the group
- One carbon reduction action they will take before the next session, e.g., changing some light globes to LEDs, enquiring about solar panels, riding to work one time, starting to collect compost, or having a meatless meal. This means they can come to the next session having achieved something concrete.



7. Finally ask people to:

(5 MINUTES)

- Read the Guide before the next session, or if this is too much, read the 'Running your Livewell Group' section (page 13), and 'Checklist of ways to reduce your emissions' (page 27)
- After doing this reading, and before the next session, each identify a further carbon reduction goal that they will share in the next session.

If you can manage this series of do-able steps, you will have created a Livewell Group!

Give yourself a pat on the back. But from here all participants are responsible for running the group. Let's look at how, together, you can make it an ongoing success.

Running your Livewell Group

So far, decisions about your group have been made by the person or people initiating it, probably in consultation with you, but from the time you come together for your group's first session, the idea is that you all start to shape the group and its activities together. It becomes a joint responsibility for all of you.

This section on Running your Livewell Group covers a number of things:

- What you can achieve, individually and collectively, by your participation in the group
- How to run your Livewell Group sessions to help you achieve these things, with a list of ideas for group activities
- How to manage the group and undertake the kinds of tasks that enable groups to function



What you can achieve in your group

Your Livewell Group is two things. It's the group of you meeting together for, say, two hours once a month. That in itself is probably going to be interesting and enjoyable. But the real test of the success of the group is what it enables you to do, individually or together, outside of these sessions – the changes you make in your lives and the projects you work on together. Let's begin with an overview of what you can achieve.

“It has certainly strengthened my commitment. I'm probably a lot more active in that space just by role modelling the things that I do that maybe I wouldn't have done before.

So we've got an organic waste collection now here in the office that students were trialling, and I just said, “Yep, I'll take it on, I'll empty the organic waste, I'll keep it going.”

“My, you know, changing the down lights is not going to make any difference at all to climate change and the realities of that. You know, in isolation. But I'm not in isolation. I live in a community. I am a global citizen. There are billions of me. And so, if the other “me”s around the world also do that then it has global ramifications.”

“We looked at lots of little things. How to improve our lifestyle comfort without actually using more carbon, how to cut back on anything that would have an impact on our carbon usage without trying to stint ourselves.”

Reducing your own footprint

You will want to reduce your own and your household’s emissions. What follows is an introduction to your options, and there is more on these on page 27 and in the links this section contains.

The three categories of household emissions generally responsible for the highest proportions of greenhouse gas are:



Your household energy usage

This is usually your major source of greenhouse emissions. You can chiefly reduce this by:

- (a) improving your home’s insulation and other thermal properties,
- (b) using more energy-efficient appliances,
- (c) changing your daily practices so that you’re not using energy unnecessarily,
- (d) generating your own solar power, and
- (e) buying green power from elsewhere.



Your transport energy usage

You can reduce this by:

- (a) switching to forms of transport with lower or zero emissions, specifically, public transport, cycling or walking,
- (b) reducing your vehicle emissions by sharing car trips or by using a hybrid, electric or more fuel efficient car, and
- (c) make changes in your life so that you don’t have to travel as much, including on holidays.



Your meat and dairy consumption

Animal agriculture generates greenhouse gases through the methane cattle and sheep emit, and through feed production, though the question of whether pasture fed means fewer emissions is contested. So eating meat (especially beef and lamb) and dairy products adds to your household emissions, although what this amounts to as a percentage of all emissions is also contested. You can reduce this by eating less (or no) meat and dairy products.

Other sources of household emissions and how to reduce them:



The water you use

Emissions are generated when water is processed and transported, both before and after you use it. So use less water and re-use it if possible.



Livewell member Lisa's wicking bed means home grown food with less water use.



The waste you generate

Organic waste produces methane, all waste must be transported and processed, and when recyclable materials aren't recycled making those materials from scratch usually generates far greater emissions. So compost, recycle and reuse what you can, plan your buying to avoid waste, and buy products with as little packaging as possible.



Your food consumption generally

Buy food that is as low carbon as possible – food that is unprocessed, in season and has minimal packaging. As described above, limit meat and dairy. Locally grown or made is preferable, but the means of transporting it is important too. Think of growing your own, and sharing it with neighbours and friends.



Other things you buy

Think about what you buy and the pleasure you do or don't get from it. Buy durable products. Think about buying second-hand. Consider giving experiences as gifts, or home-made things. Give away unwanted items. Consider what items can be shared with others in your life, such as books, tools, toys, children's clothes and even cars.

In attending to these things, you don't need to compromise your wellbeing. In fact most of what's described above can *enhance* your wellbeing, by saving energy and therefore money, making your home more comfortable, improving your health, building relationships and community, and involving yourself in satisfying activities.

So have a look at the checklist of practical ways to reduce your emissions on page 27. There are many options to consider.

Other goals for your group

Beyond reducing your own and your household's emissions through your individual actions, there are many other things you can do through collective action to reduce your community's and the broader society's emissions. These are detailed on page 36, but in broad terms you can:

- Let friends and neighbours know in conversation about the group and about individual actions you're taking. They may want to do these things too, and even join the group.
- Start community projects that allow groups of people to do things in lower carbon ways
- Advocate policies at any level of government that support low or zero carbon living
- Through you banking, superannuation and investments, put your money into industries and businesses that support a lower carbon economy, and encourage institutions to do likewise.

BEYOND A CARBON FOCUS

Of course this is *your* group, and if, over the life of the group, there are other things not related to reducing carbon emissions that you want to take on, then by all means go ahead and do this. You might want to organise a street party, take turns to cook for a neighbour who's ill, lobby for better recreational facilities for local young people, or form a choir. Other ideas can be found [here](#) (see pages 6–8). Our lives don't fit neatly into compartments, so do whatever you're moved to do as a group.

"It did motivate us personally to have a good hard look at our own lifestyles and how they were impacting on the climate, on global warming."

"I think being involved in the project has really heightened my awareness of the need to make concrete behavioural change in my own life."

"It had a nice sort of feel to it. There's a sense of camaraderie when you've got a theme that you're working on."

"The good things were meeting a whole bunch of people who live nearby who have the same values and want to do something about addressing how they live and reducing their footprint. That was really good and it was good to exchange ideas and it was good to meet people of different age groups as well."

Running your group sessions

So these are the sorts of goals you and your group can pursue. The two hours a month (or thereabouts) when you meet is the time when you can consider these things, learn about them, discuss them, make decisions, report on your progress, and so on. This is your group time to use as you see fit, but in what follows we do recommend:

- How you might run the second session (as well as the first one already covered on page 10)
- That in other sessions you use part of the session time to 'go round the circle', with each of you in turn reporting on what you've been doing and what you're considering doing
- That you consider other activities for the third and subsequent sessions from the list of possibilities below.

"There are things we've talked about for years like 'This house has no thermal mass, what can we do about it?' and we could have talked about it for another ten years, but because of the group, we actually moved into doing something about it."

"One of the big pluses I think with Livewell is the knowledge sharing. I guess a few of us think we already know what there is to know, but you're often agreeably surprised by people coming up with things that you perhaps haven't thought about, so that's a very important part of it."



FACILITATORS

You will need to appoint one or two people to plan and facilitate each session.

It's good if this role can be rotated within the group, and if those planning and facilitating a particular session have a least a month to plan it.

The second session

We suggest the following activities for the second session, based on 90 minutes of session time:



1. Go round the circle

(40 MINUTES)

Each person in turn report on (a) the small carbon reduction action you took since the first session, and how it went, and (b) an action that you are considering or planning to take, in particular identifying the first few steps. Other members can ask you questions and make comments.



2. Reflect on your reading of the Guide

(20 MINUTES)

Members take turns to share your thoughts on the Guide, whatever sections of it you have read. You may want to comment on ways of reducing your own carbon, other activities the group might engage in, or anything else in the Guide.



3. Start to plan your group's activities

(20 MINUTES)

From the list of 'Other possible activities for group sessions' (below) start to plan what the group will do, at least for the next 2–3 sessions. (As a rule of thumb, you should aim to have at least a broad idea by the end of each session what the main activities for the next two sessions will be.) You may want to refer to your 4–5 priority areas identified in the first session, but don't worry if your thinking has changed since then as a result of reading and discussion.



4. Review the session

(10 MINUTES)

In a minute or less, each pick one or two things you liked about the session, and anything that might have made it work better.

And remind yourselves:

You will be reporting next session – and each session after that – on actions you're taking or ideas you have to reduce your emissions.

GOING ROUND THE CIRCLE

If you start each session by each reporting on what you've done and what you're considering or planning to do, this focuses you and the group on action. It encourages you to have things on the go at any one time, to try new things and to complete them. As you're reporting, other group members can ask questions and make comments. They may have done the thing you're doing (or are thinking of doing), or they may have information about it. And the fact that you're doing it might in turn lead other group members to do it, and you can advise them based on your experience.

Other ideas for session activities

Beyond our recommendations for the first and second session, and to 'go round the circle' at the beginning of other sessions, it's up to you how you spend other session time.

However, here are some suggestions for other activities:



Discussing ways of reducing carbon

Maybe several people in your group are interested in building a 'wicking bed', or installing a heat pump, or getting cavity walls insulated. Or perhaps one member is really excited about one of these topics and would like to share its possibilities with the group. So allocate time to discuss it. It's good if one member can lead the discussion, and do a bit of research on it beforehand, but it's also important for everyone to pool their knowledge.



Georg and Chris participate in a group exercise at a Livewell workshop.

Group exercises

These can benefit your group or individual members in a range of ways, helping you, for example, to recognise the strengths and resources in the group and the wider community, acknowledge and celebrate successes, devise a long term plan for carbon reduction, get unstuck when you're stuck in inaction, or to turn project ideas into action. See these exercises on pages 40–43.



Visits to sustainable houses or other sites of interest

It's good to actually see the sorts of things you are thinking of implementing yourself. So investigate whether there are examples of low carbon homes or other buildings in your area that you could visit. Or you could visit each other's homes (including your gardens) to see what each of you is doing and how it's working out. As well, there may be other sights of interest – for example, a recycling depot, a revegetation scheme, an environmental education centre – from which you can learn.



Talks by group members or visiting speakers or videos on specific topics

This is similar to the first activity, but is more of a presentation by a group member or outside speaker of their knowledge of a relevant topic, and may also include the showing of a YouTube or other video that members have come across.



Discussing and planning group tasks or projects

For example, you may be arranging talks or workshops for the broader community, recruiting new members, advocating certain carbon reduction policies to government, or getting neighbourhood projects going. These are described in more detail on page 36.



Discussion and action on any goals beyond carbon reduction

As previously mentioned, it's your group and you may from time to time want to pursue broader sustainability goals, or in other ways build local community and enhance wellbeing.

Managing your group and undertaking necessary tasks

To operate effectively groups need to attend to the following:

Sharing and recording decision-making

Groups function best if members have a say in decisions and they think of these as 'our decisions'. While it may be tempting at times for leaders to make key decisions, or for groups to be satisfied with a simple majority decision on contentious issues, for the sake of group cohesion it can be worth making the extra effort to accommodate minority views. Of course minor decisions do not need to involve everyone, but it's good if it's clear which decisions are being delegated. And don't forget to record decisions made and other important information from meetings, in minutes available to members.

Sharing the workload

Sometimes in groups most of the work gets done by one or a few people. This can cause those doing all the work to feel resentment and perhaps burn out, and restrict the total amount of work being done. Try to spread the work around, rotating jobs if necessary.

Publicity

Activities you arrange for the broader community won't be well attended unless people know about them. Publicity options to consider include: social media; emails to individuals and organisations; announcements, stories or interviews in local media (newspapers or radio); local council publicity channels; letterboxing; announcements at events; shop or café window posters, and having your own e-newsletter.

Funding

If your main activities are running your own group and perhaps organising occasional talks or workshops you probably won't need a lot of money for these things. Expenses that do need to be covered can be shared among members, or funded through small door charges/donations or fundraising activities. You can seek grants for specific projects, for example from local councils, which may have a small grants program. There are also grants from philanthropic trusts or other levels of government, but these can be quite difficult to obtain and will generally require you to be incorporated and perhaps to have a particular charitable status. Crowdfunding has become popular, but you need to do a lot of work yourself to generate the donors to your crowdfunded project.

"We all come from completely different backgrounds and ages and education and even goals. Like when we shared our goals, all of our goals were really different. So the diversity was really apparent to me. And diversity in experience as well. Like some people come with having done quite a lot and some had barely started and were keen to learn a lot and get started."

"One of my next door neighbours was involved in one of the groups and we'll still continue to have conversations and support each other even though I wasn't in the same group as her."

"One of my group had just had their windows done, so it was good because I met her and talked to her about which companies she approached. That was useful."

Incorporation

Any organisation or group can incorporate, but you need to first ask if this is necessary. Incorporation gives your group legal status as an organisation, but most things you'll want to do can be done as a group of individuals. You will probably need to be incorporated in order to receive grants, but an existing incorporated organisation may be willing to take you 'under their wing' and apply for the grant on your behalf.

Insurance

There are two ways of looking at this. You can think of yourselves simply as a group of neighbours or friends or colleagues who get together regularly. You then bear any minimal risks as individuals, just as you do in any informal social situation. Alternatively, you can take out public liability or volunteers insurance to cover your members or the general public, and some organisations (such as [this one](#)) have brokered reasonably affordable deals for non-profit organisations. There's a clearer case for getting insurance cover if you are organising public events, although you may be able to get another insured organisation to auspice an event on your behalf. You may also need insurance cover to hire certain public venues. If you form a Livewell Group it constitutes an independent group making its own decisions, and Livewell Clusters Incorporated bears no responsibility for anything that may happen in your group or its activities.

Checking on the health of your group

Your group will be healthy if you, the members, feel happy to be involved and see the experience as productive. You need to feel that you can discuss things openly, and one way to promote this is to make a brief time at the end of each session for each of you to say how you thought the session went, perhaps identifying one or two good things and anything that might be improved or added.

How long should your group exist for?

We tend to think of groups as ongoing things, but it doesn't have to be that way. There are many enjoyable and productive things we do for a limited duration only – think of a course we might take, or a holiday. Your group can have a finite life if you want it to, or you may prefer it to be ongoing. Either is fine. We suggest you run it for about six months, and then decide whether you want it to continue. If it does continue it may be in a different form or even have a somewhat different membership. It is only there to help you, so do whatever supports the goals and wishes of members. And remember, once members of your group get to know each other the connection is made, and you can keep in touch and keep helping each other for as long as you like

So that's it, as far as our broad recommendations go for running your Livewell Group. We're confident that with your interest and ingenuity, you'll have worthwhile and satisfying experiences.

CONNECTING WITH US AND OTHERS

If you start a Livewell Group, we'd love to know about it and keep in touch. We want to know what groups are being formed and where, what they're doing, how satisfying this is for members and how the group is helping them to reduce emissions. We want to know what you think of the Guide, any problems your group may be having, what questions you'd like answered, and any suggestions you have for changes or additional features for either the Guide itself or the groups as recommended in the Guide. We'd also like to know if you want to connect with other Livewell Groups, or with individual participants through, say, an online forum. Finally, we're keen to hear from any of you interested to help with coordination tasks related to helping Livewell Groups run smoothly and successfully.

Background

PRACTICAL INFORMATION TO HELP REDUCE
YOUR CARBON AND RUN YOUR GROUP ACTIVITIES

2

What is climate change?

The Earth's climate changes continually, but what is referred to as climate change or global warming is a set of dramatic changes that have been primarily caused by human activity since the beginning of the Industrial revolution.

This period has seen a major increase in the concentration of atmospheric 'greenhouse gases'. These gases have, over eons, acted as a kind of barrier helping to retain heat in the atmosphere, but in modern times their increased concentration is raising temperatures to dangerous levels.

In recent times almost every year brings record temperature increases. Average global temperatures are now about 0.8 °C above pre-industrial times and rising. This may not seem a lot, but the consequences, outlined below, will be devastating if we do not curb this increase.



Greenhouse gases

The following are the main greenhouse gases emitted as a result of human activity:

- **Carbon dioxide**, the most important such gas, is generated by the burning of fossil fuels, land clearing, the burning and decay of organic matter, and the production of cement.
- **Methane**, the second most important greenhouse gas, is more potent than carbon dioxide but there's less of it. Human-generated sources of methane currently account for about 70 percent of its annual total, and these include livestock (especially cattle and sheep) farming, rice growing, the burning of coal, natural gas and biomass, and decomposition in landfills.
- **Surface-level ozone**, primarily caused by photochemical smog.
- **Other trace gases** caused by industrial activity, such as nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases (or halocarbons).

WATER VAPOUR is the major greenhouse gas, but it is not, in the main, generated directly by humans. However, the amount of water vapour in the atmosphere increases as air temperature rises, and so this increase can be said to be indirectly caused by human activity.

What are the consequences of climate change?

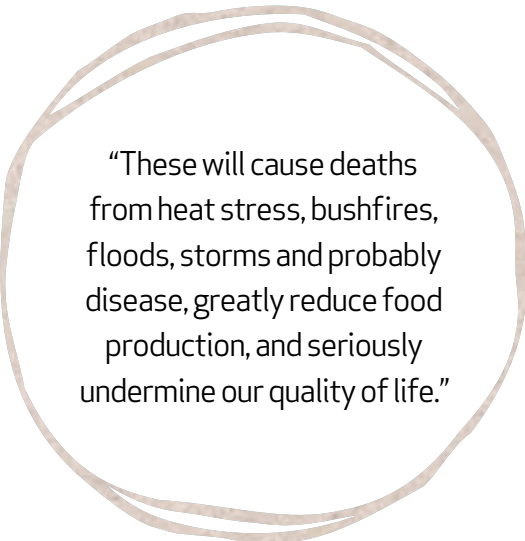
Climate change will affect (and in many cases is already affecting) Australia in a number of significant ways, including through:

- 🌿 Rising temperatures
- 🌿 Increased bushfire risk
- 🌿 More frequent and/or severe rainfall, drought and other extreme weather events
- 🌿 Sea-level rise causing coastal flooding and erosion
- 🌿 The destruction of the Great Barrier Reef
- 🌿 Increased risk of tropical diseases as climatic zones move south.

These will cause deaths from heat stress, bushfires, floods, storms and probably disease, greatly reduce food production, and seriously undermine our quality of life.

Globally, the same factors will bring about the same results, but billions of more impoverished people worldwide will be more severely affected by rising sea levels, storms, floods, drought, heatwaves, declining food production, disease and other climate change effects.

A particularly ominous threat is posed by what are called positive feedback loops. For example, as Arctic ice melts, less heat is reflected off light coloured ice back out into space, and more of this heat is absorbed by the earth's surface, causing higher temperatures and more ice to melt, and thus the process reinforces itself. Other examples of this phenomenon involve thawing permafrost, increasing water vapour, drying rainforests and bushfires. The danger is that, as these positive feedback loops develop momentum, they may spiral out of control and eliminate any possibility of humans halting or reversing the process.



“These will cause deaths from heat stress, bushfires, floods, storms and probably disease, greatly reduce food production, and seriously undermine our quality of life.”

How do we know climate change is happening?

Ninety-seven percent of scientists researching climate change believe that it is being caused by humans. Their conclusions are based on a huge volume of data collected over many years, drawn, for example, from ice core samples, tree rings, marine sediment and other data sources that provide information about the atmosphere from up to 800,000 years ago, as well as on data concerning more recent air and sea temperatures, rain and snowfall, sea levels, ocean salinity and acidity, ice cover and much more.

This consensus is supported by the world's leading scientific and research institutions.

Unfortunately climate data collected in the past few decades has shown that the degree of change that has actually occurred has tended to be at the upper limit of predictions based on climate change modelling. In other words, the climate has been changing faster than expected.

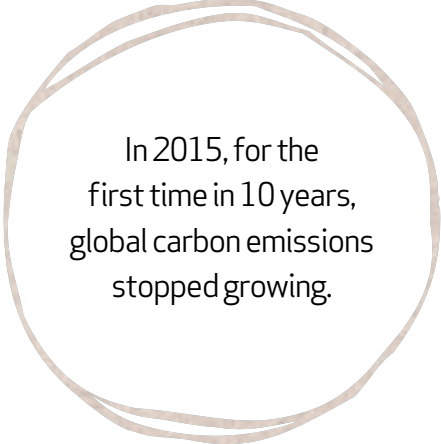
WHY IS ACTION SO URGENT?

There is a lag of several decades between the time when greenhouses gases are emitted and the time when they raise atmospheric temperatures and generate all the adverse effects just described. This is because the world's oceans initially absorb most of the heat increases. Thus the causes of the signs of climate change we are now witnessing go back decades, and the actions we are taking today will have irrevocable consequences decades hence.

Is it all bad news?

The picture outlined here looks pretty grim, but there are substantial grounds for hope. We are in the middle of a renewable technology and energy storage revolution that is spreading across the globe, with new products hitting the market frequently and prices tumbling. Renewables have reached price parity with new fossil fuel power generation and are in the process of getting much cheaper. The energy efficiency of appliances and equipment is constantly improving. Twenty-first century public transport systems are springing up in cities and regions across the globe, while private car use is declining in the US and in every Australian capital on a per capita basis. Zero carbon buildings and precincts will before long become zero carbon cities. In 2015, for the first time in 10 years, global carbon emissions stopped growing. In every area of life in which our actions have contributing to climate change we now have the technology and the knowledge to do things differently – from agriculture to housing, forestry to transport, office buildings to manufacturing.

We know that we can live a low, and before long, a zero carbon life while continuing to enhance our wellbeing. Governments are starting to come together. Citizens are mobilising. We just need to keep applying ourselves to the task with greater speed. We have no alternative. The signs of hope are clear in [this](#) article, and in [this](#) one.





In 2015, for the first time in 10 years, global carbon emissions stopped growing.

What about population growth?

One last issue to mention here is that of global population growth. Many people fear it is spiralling out of control and threatening not only the climate but the entire material basis of our wellbeing and survival. But the evidence challenges this. According to the World Bank we have recently been experiencing the most rapid decline in population growth ever, heading to 1% by 2020 and to less than 0.5% in 2050 (from an all-time high of over 2% in 1968). Global population is predicted to peak at around 9 billion some time next century and then to decline slightly.

Experience shows that the best way to reduce population growth – in fact the only way outside of highly authoritarian societies – is to meet the basic needs of all the population, and in particular to ensure that women and girls have access to education and women can control their fertility. If these things occur people almost always choose to have smaller families. And these preconditions are occurring, with poverty the world over declining dramatically (as this amazing [video](#) shows). It should also be remembered that it's not just how many people there are, but the greenhouse emissions and resource use of each person, so these need to be reduced while maintaining prosperity.



Global population is predicted to peak at around 9 billion some time next century and then to decline slightly.

Ten points about getting people into action

There is much discussion about how to get people to accept the reality of climate change and take action to deal with it. In particular, should we be focusing on how serious the problem is or how attractive a zero carbon future can be? And do we need to be concerned what people believe, or simply what they do? What follows are ten points about how we might proceed. The first five are about people's belief (or otherwise) in climate change, while the last five focus on what they do:

1 **We need to talk about the science as settled.** A key principle of the scientific method is that the science is never settled, that on any subject there is always the possibility, however remote, of new evidence or arguments that challenge what is currently believed. The trouble is that most people aren't aware of this principle, and so when scientists express themselves in cautious terms people think there is less certainty than there actually is. The fact is climate predictions based on huge amounts of data are continually being confirmed by new data, and so there's absolutely no reason not to act as quickly as possible based on what we now know about climate change.

2 **We need to talk about climate change as happening now and happening here.** While it might sound compelling to talk about tackling climate change for the sake of our grandchildren, the fact is that in general people consider it much less important to act on future problems than on present ones. So we need to talk about present manifestations of climate change as well as worse ones to come, and to talk about dealing with it for the sake of ourselves and our children and grandchildren! Moreover, the climate change we are experiencing now is resulting from our actions decade ago – because the oceans at first absorb most of the additional heat generated – so action today will reduce adverse effects in decades hence. In a similar vein, we need to talk about how climate change is happening here in Australia, as well as across the globe.

3 **We should avoid describing climate change as an 'environmental' issue – it's a 'whole-of-life' issue.** Many people see the environment as separate from their lives and not connected with their wellbeing, and this view is often reinforced by exotic images of animals and plants in distant locations. But climate change is a human issue, a wellbeing issue, an economic, social and political issue, and a security issue, and we need to be discussing it in these terms.

4 **We're unlikely to shift people's beliefs about climate change if those beliefs are a long way from ours.** We generally don't like changing what we believe in major ways, and because climate science is very complex and is challenged by many people, it's easy for people who don't believe it to find all sorts of material to justify that view. So don't expend a lot of energy trying to convert hard-core deniers. It's highly unlikely to be successful and you have better things to do with your time.

5 **On the other hand, people can change unexpectedly over time.** You may see it as your personal mission to change the views of certain people in your life, and feel very despondent if you don't. But relax a bit. There are many different influences on people, and often the passage of time prompts change. Try to see it as a work in progress.

6 **What's important is what people do, not why they do it.** The atmosphere is not affected by why we do or don't emit greenhouse gases through our actions, but rather by whether we do or don't emit these gases. So we may avoid emissions for a whole variety of reasons: because we're concerned about climate change, because our friends do it and we tend to act like them, because we're obeying regulations, because it saves us money, gives us exercise, and so on. It doesn't matter whether we do it to save the planet; what matters is that we do it. And so whatever gets people into action on this is good. A great way to get people active and enthusiastic is to convey a sense of how their wellbeing can be enhanced while reducing emissions, as described on page 33. This becomes even more compelling when the forces driving the change to this kind of society are seen to be building up momentum. People like to be part of a growing trend.

8 **However, it's important how you talk about it.** Don't preach, criticise or adopt a holier-than-thou attitude, as this is likely to just annoy people and make them defensive. Talk about what you're doing and why, and also consider inviting people you know to a talk, offer to lend them a book or to send a website link, or invite them to join your Livewell Group, especially if this flows naturally from conversations you've been having.

9 **Changes will result from a range of forces that are growing exponentially and starting to reinforce each other.** We are currently seeing dramatic technological developments in renewable energy and battery storage, and technology that reduces emissions is advancing rapidly in many other fields as well. This is making new clean industries more viable and old polluting ones less so. Governments can – and often do – accentuate this process by supporting emerging industries and technologies or ceasing to prop up old ones. As new technologies become more affordable and viable, new social norms, routines and ways of living emerge, and this leads to even greater demand for new products and for bolder action by government. But it's also likely that in the not too distant future it will no longer be a question of consumer choice in key areas – in the energy sphere, for example, renewables will be the only option.

7 **You're likely to influence others if you simply act on your values and matter-of-factly talk about these actions when the situation warrants it.** If you are taking action to reduce your carbon emissions, and you discuss this with people in your life in the same way that you discuss anything else you do, then the people who know, like and respect you will notice what you're doing and in many cases be influenced by it. It's a fact of human psychology that we are very influenced by our peers, and so if you're reducing your emissions and the personal benefits of this seem reasonable in relation to any costs, then it's likely that people in your circle will follow your example in at least some ways.

10

We must keep pushing the envelope! There is no cause for despair, but neither is there cause for any degree of complacency. We know climate change is happening but we don't know how quickly or if the forces driving it will spin out of control. At the same time we know the kinds of actions that can reduce it, and we need to take these actions – in personal, community, industry and government spheres – as quickly and comprehensively as we can.



Technological change is aiding us in our carbon reduction.

Checklist of ways to reduce your emissions

The following are ways to reduce your carbon emissions, developed with the assistance and advice of Alan Pears, one of Australia's leading energy efficiency experts. It's in three sections:



Actions you can take in the home



Changes you can make to your transport



Other actions you can take

Each section has three sub-sections:



Everyday actions you can take



Small investments you can make to reduce your footprint



Larger investments you can make to do this

These distinctions are not always clear-cut, but the list is designed to help you whatever your priorities, your budget or your life circumstances may be.



Everyday actions in the home

Water & hot water

- ✓ Shorten showers to 3-4 minutes to save water and heating costs, and use shallow baths (as a full bath uses around 120 litres).
- ✓ Check flow rate of showerhead by turning on for 30 seconds, capturing the water in a bucket, measuring the number of litres then doubling the figure to get the flow rate. An efficient shower uses 5-9 litres/minute.
- ✓ Check temperature of hot water system is set at 60°C, or 50°C for instant hot water systems.
- ✓ Consider re-using relatively clean waste water, e.g., use a bowl in the kitchen sink for washing up, then use waste water for toilet flushing or on plants.

Cooking

- ✓ Put lids on pots when cooking and turn down burner or element as far as possible.
- ✓ Cook in bulk and freeze, and cook multiple dishes in oven if possible, to minimise energy use.
- ✓ Use your microwave rather than your oven when this is possible.
- ✓ Fill the kettle with only as much water as you need.
- ✓ Cook toast in a toaster rather than a grill.

Heating/cooling

- ✓ Dress for the temperature.
- ✓ Close windows and doors in heated/cooled areas.
- ✓ Only heat or cool rooms occupied.
- ✓ Take advantage of cool breezes to flush heat out.
- ✓ Use a fan, directed if possible at the people. It cools you, not the room.
- ✓ Use internal curtains/blinds.
- ✓ Use external awnings/blinds.
- ✓ Set heating thermostat at 18-20°C.
- ✓ Set cooling thermostat at 26°C.
- ✓ Clean air conditioner filters (check the user manual).
- ✓ Cool yourself with water (washer, spray, paddling pool, foot basin).

Appliances

- ✓ Buy/borrow/share a [Power Mate](#) and measure the energy use of your appliances.
- ✓ Turn off appliances, especially older ones, at the power-point - TVs, DVD players, game consoles and sound systems.
- ✓ Set your computer to 'sleep' mode if not using for a while and turn off overnight.
- ✓ Consider using a radio for background noise instead of a TV, as it uses much less power.

Everyday actions in the home, continued ...

Clothes

- ✓ Dry clothes outside or on racks (and using a high spin speed shortens drying time).
- ✓ Use cold water for washing (and pre-soak heavily stained items).
- ✓ Try using less detergent – it has high embodied emissions, and too much detergent can reduce cleaning effectiveness.
- ✓ Run washing machine only when full, and choose the shortest program that works effectively.

Dishes

- ✓ Don't rinse dishes under hot running water – scrape off food residue instead.
- ✓ When washing in a sink, minimise use of hot water.
- ✓ Minimise the number of small draw-offs of hot water to cut heat lost in pipes.
- ✓ Run dishwasher only when full.
- ✓ Run dishwasher on economy cycle.

Lighting

- ✓ Use natural light when you can.
- ✓ Turn lights off when not in a room.
- ✓ Use local task lighting over used spaces, rather than brightly lighting large areas.

Refrigeration

- ✓ Turn off any second fridge when not needed (it often uses more energy than the main one).
- ✓ Thaw food in the fridge.
- ✓ Cool food before placing in the fridge (e.g. sit it in a bath of cold water or on heat conducting metal so it's not out too long with the risk of bugs growing).
- ✓ Place fridge in a cool spot, away from direct sun and heat sources.

Small investments in the home

Lighting

- ✓ Change to energy efficient light bulbs over time (e.g. LEDs or compact fluorescents)
- ✓ Use light coloured surfaces inside and out to reflect light.

Heating/cooling

- ✓ Close gaps around doors and windows, and in floors, walls and ceilings (e.g., with weather-strips, door seals, door snakes and gap filler).
- ✓ Add extra shading with awnings, trees, or vines on pergolas. Deciduous trees and vines let light and heat in in winter.
- ✓ For passive winter heating keep north facing windows unshaded.
- ✓ Use timer switches on your heater or cooler to switch off when not needed.
- ✓ For central heating, buy vent deflectors to direct warm air to centre of the room, not the ceiling.
- ✓ If safe, close ventilation outlets (e.g. chimneys, extraction fans) when not in use.

Energy & other

- ✓ Switch to 100% Certified Greenpower.
- ✓ Join [Community Climate Chest](#) to invest in carbon reductions and Greenpower, without having to change your electricity retailer.
- ✓ Use rechargeable batteries and dispose of old batteries at council recycling depot.
- ✓ Use indoor plants, such as mother-in-law's tongue, to convert CO₂ to O₂.
- ✓ Check fridge and oven seals and change if necessary. Close the seal on a sheet of paper or bank note. There should be resistance when you pull it out. Check in different places.

Water

- ✓ Change to water-efficient showerheads.

Background



Livewell member Barry inspects his under-floor foam insulation.

Large investments in the home

Use energy and water efficiency labels to choose new appliances – www.energyrating.gov.au and www.waterrating.gov.au. Products now labelled include fridges, clothes washers and dryers, dish washers, air conditioners, TVs, computer monitors, pool filter pumps, shower heads and toilets.

Heating/cooling

- ✓ Insulate your roof.
- ✓ Insulate cavity walls where possible.
- ✓ Insulate under floors where possible.
- ✓ Install external blinds on windows exposed to sun.
- ✓ Install internal lined curtains/blinds, ensuring an overlap of 100 mm each side of window and block gap between top of curtain/blind and window with a pelmet or rigid strip.
- ✓ Install double glazed windows. Some window films can also help in winter – check [here](#).
- ✓ Install 5 star+ rated/energy efficient reverse cycle air conditioning for heating and cooling.
- ✓ Install 5 star rated/energy efficient heating system.
- ✓ Change to zoned heating/cooling.

Lighting

- ✓ Change to energy efficient light bulbs all at once (e.g., LEDs or compact fluorescents).
- ✓ Consider installing highly reflective light fittings.

Cooking

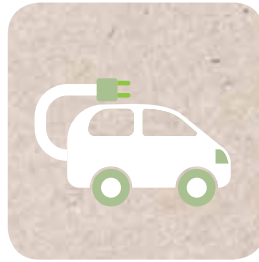
- ✓ Consider buying an induction cooktop.
- ✓ Buy an oven with a triple-glazed door.

Refrigeration

- ✓ Buy a 3.5–5 star rated fridge in the size you need (ensuring 3–5 cm clearance around fridge).

Energy & other

- ✓ Install solar panels.
- ✓ Install a heat pump or solar hot water system.
- ✓ Replace desktop computers with laptops or tablets and look for 7 star labelled monitors.
- ✓ Buy 6 star+ TV (if your TV feels hot it's inefficient).



Transport actions

Everyday transport actions

- ✓ Walk.
- ✓ Ride a bike (or an electric bike).
- ✓ Take public transport, and check out apps and websites assisting with routes and timetables.
- ✓ Use technology (e.g. Skype, social media, email, phone) instead of driving for meetings, communications and transactions.
- ✓ Car pool where possible, and time trips of family members to enable trip sharing to occur.
- ✓ Avoid heavy traffic times and locations when driving.
- ✓ Drive smoothly and at moderate speeds.
- ✓ For greater fuel efficiency ensure tyres are properly inflated and car is regularly serviced.
- ✓ Consider alternatives to flying (and travel economy).
- ✓ Join a car share scheme as an alternative to owning a car (or to owning a second family car).

Small transport investments

- ✓ Purchase carbon credits when you fly.
- ✓ Offset vehicle emissions (e.g., through Greenfleet).

Large transport investments

- ✓ Buy a bike (which can be a small or large investment – a \$100 second-hand one, or a free bike from a friend, or one worth thousands).
- ✓ Check out the product options for transporting children and goods by bike.
- ✓ Buy a more fuel-efficient car, perhaps a hybrid.
- ✓ Buy an electric car and power with Certified Greenpower.
- ✓ Consider relocating your home, work or school to reduce travel time.



Other everyday actions

Food

- ✓ Minimise waste by planning meals and purchases.
- ✓ Buy food with minimal packaging.
- ✓ Use reusable shopping bags.
- ✓ Buy locally grown food.
- ✓ Buy food in season.
- ✓ Reduce meat and dairy consumption.
- ✓ Eat out and get takeaways less often.
- ✓ Minimise car trips to shops – they are usually the major source of food transport emissions, as emissions per kilogram for food transported by car are usually many times higher than by other forms of food transport.
- ✓ Use food cupboards instead of the fridge for some fresh food (e.g., fruit, potatoes, onions).
- ✓ Use reusable cups for take away coffee.

Waste

- ✓ Use reusable bottles for water instead of disposable ones.
- ✓ Put all permitted recyclables in recyclables bin, but not inside each other or in plastic bags.
- ✓ Give away or swap clothes or other items.
- ✓ Take other recyclables to council depot if there is one. Check council website or phone council to find out about this, and about where other recyclables can be deposited. If possible share trips to depots with others to reduce transport emissions.
- ✓ If your council collects green waste, use this service, and maybe share pick-up with neighbours.
- ✓ Join Freecycle or other such scheme to give away unwanted items.
- ✓ Use a compost bin, worm farm or bokashi bucket to compost food and garden matter.
- ✓ Consider reading newspapers online for some or all of the week.

Other

- ✓ Share tools and other items with friends, family, neighbours. Sign up to Streetbank.
- ✓ Consider your choice of nappies. Check out this analysis of the options by [Choice](#).
- ✓ Wash young children in a baby bath instead of in a full adult-sized bath.

Other small investments

Food

- ✓ Purchase compost bin, worm farm or bokashi bucket.
- ✓ Grow your own food or join community garden.
- ✓ Give away excess food grown to others.

Reduce waste

- ✓ Buy recycled clothes.
- ✓ Mend clothes rather than throw out.
- ✓ Buy durable items that won't wear out as quickly.

Other larger investments

Water

- ✓ Install one or more rainwater tanks.
- ✓ Change to 4+ star dual flush toilets.
- ✓ Install system to recycle grey water for toilet flushing and gardening.

How reducing emissions enhances wellbeing

Many people think that reducing our carbon footprint also means reducing our quality of life, but the evidence shows that, while some compromises may be required, overall we can lower our emissions while maintaining and often enhancing our wellbeing. Here are some examples of how this can happen.



'Active transport' refers to walking, cycling and public transport (the average public transport commuter walks 30 minutes a day getting to and from their stops or stations). Its benefits are many:

- The exercise involved reduces or prevents cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, obesity, lung disease, breast cancer, sleep disorders, dementia and many other conditions, and it improves bone strength, joint flexibility, balance and endurance.
- It also makes you feel good, releasing endorphins and reducing anxiety and depression.
- Getting exercise from your daily travel saves you the time and expense of separate sport or exercise programs, and makes it more likely that you actually get your necessary 30 minutes a day, as you are doing it for another purpose.
- By reducing car use, active transport reduces the risk of death and injury from road accidents.
- Active transport reduces pollution. Pollution from fossil fuelled vehicles costs Australia around \$3.3 billion a year, and air pollution from vehicles and other sources (for example coal mining and coal-fired power generation) claims more lives each year than road accidents do.
- Reduced traffic means not only less danger and pollution, but also less noise, less of the visual impact of traffic, and less tendency for traffic to act as a physical barrier within localities. Neighbourhoods become more pleasant places to be and more people get out and about in them. In communities where fewer people drive neighbours have more contact with each other as they walk or cycle around, and greater community contact is yet another factor that has been demonstrated to improve mental and physical health.
- Non-car transport is much cheaper on average than car transport when you factor in all costs, including buying, insuring, maintaining, running and parking cars.
- Public transport, walking and cycling are also much more efficient ways to transport people, taking up less land, costing less public and private money, and generating less congestion. As more people drive, traffic congestion increases; as more people take public transport, the increased fare revenue is available to improve the quality and frequency of services.



Livewell participant Liz with her bike trailer

“Getting exercise from your daily travel saves you the time and expense of separate sport or exercise programs.”

Background



Thermally efficient homes, offices and other buildings – which keep the heat out in summer and in in winter – mean that more comfort can be achieved for less cost, and this is particularly important for those who have lower incomes or more fragile health.



Water and energy efficient appliances, efficient lights, and water and energy saving practices in the home or workplace also generate significant cost savings.



Renewable energy has lower running costs over time as the wind and sunshine are free. Initial higher costs have been largely due to development costs and small production runs, but as sales increase prices drop dramatically. It is pollution free (unlike fossil fuels) and does not involve the dangers and waste storage problems of nuclear power. While there are substantial detrimental effects on health from coal and petrol, there are none from renewables. Claimed ill-effects of wind generators on health have been extensively researched and found to be baseless.

New York has only one third the per capita carbon footprint of the US as a whole.



More compact cities tend to have smaller carbon emissions per capita while enhancing wellbeing. They reduce emissions in a number of ways. Distances travelled within them (by all modes of transport) tend to be less. Density also encourages

active transport, as the shorter travelling distances allow walking and cycling, and public transport systems have more patrons in a given area and can thus use the additional revenue to improve services and attract even more customers. Mixed use zoning also helps because it means that shops, workplaces and entertainment are within easier reach. In compact cities the overall lengths of roads, paths, rails, and utility pipes and wires per capita are less, as are the greenhouse emissions from making and maintaining them. Compact urban houses and apartments have fewer external walls, floors and ceilings (thus saving energy) and they also tend to be smaller. For all these reasons New York, for example, has only one third the per capita carbon footprint of the US as a whole.

And compact cities enhance wellbeing in many ways. We love to visit cities like Paris, Rome, London, Amsterdam and Barcelona, which have urban densities between three and thirteen times Melbourne's density. Much of our enjoyment comes from the walkability of these cities and the exciting urban character brought about by many people living, working, shopping and amusing themselves in a fairly compact area. They hum with interest and life, with people sitting, walking, talking, looking, lots of pavement activity, greenery, buildings with 'active facades', and much more. Not all compact urban areas are like this, but they can be with effort and imagination.

Interestingly, the European cities just described are not known for their high-rise developments, as the density has mostly been achieved through medium rise buildings of around six storeys. The challenge, therefore, is to achieve more compact cities through good medium-rise design, the preservation of (low-rise) heritage or established neighbourhoods, the creation of great public spaces and the imaginative use of greenery (for example, through 'green' walls and roofs, nature-strip gardens, planter boxes, restored watercourses and 'pocket' parks.) As part of this, it's important to restrict the amount of land given over to car parking and multi-lane roads.

Background



The sharing economy also offers carbon reduction and wellbeing benefits. This term refers to activities that involve sharing, re-using, recycling, domestic or community production and the like. Examples include car share and tool share schemes, toy libraries, food co-ops, community gardens, home

produce swaps, cooperative working-bees and 'free-cycling'. It means fewer emissions as a result of the sharing and passing on of items, home-based production, reduced packaging and waste, and reduced transport (and thus transport emissions) because most of this production and distribution is local.

At the same time the sharing economy has great potential to enhance wellbeing in that it encourages community building and contributing to others, involves interesting and challenging activities and provides healthy exercise. It is about people doing things with and for each other, looking out for each other and acknowledging each other.

So there's no trade-off. We can have a low – and eventually zero – carbon life and have high wellbeing at the same time. In fact, if we have the former we're more likely to have the latter.

It is about people doing things with and for each other, looking out for each other and acknowledging each other.



Beyond your own carbon emissions

It's very important to reduce your own greenhouse emissions, but there are also many other things you can do to contribute to emissions reductions in your own community and the broader society. Specifically, you can:

- 🌱 Inform and encourage others you know, or others in your locality, to reduce their own emissions and to get involved in the activities described in this section
- 🌱 Start community projects that allow groups of people to do things in lower carbon ways
- 🌱 Advocate policies at any level of government that support low or zero carbon living
- 🌱 Through your banking, superannuation and investments, put your money into industries and businesses that support a lower carbon economy, and encourage institutions to do likewise.

Let's look at each of these in turn.

Engaging others in reducing emissions

Individually or as a Livewell Group activity, you can talk with your neighbours, friends, family members, work colleagues or anyone else you know about what you're doing. Don't preach or put pressure on them to do what you're doing. Just matter-of-factly tell them about it, as you'd tell them about other things happening in your life. And be open about both the challenges involved and the benefits you're experiencing, including quality of life and financial benefits. If it seems appropriate, invite them to join your group or to come to relevant events being organised by your group or others, or share interesting reading material with them.

Consider as a group organising events – public workshops or talks – to inform local people about how they can reduce emissions in specific areas of their lives – and this will also serve to promote your group. You can invite as speakers anyone with expertise in the area under discussion. They might be from the local council, a non-government organisation, a university or research institute or a business, or perhaps they're someone who's just applying a particular aspect of low carbon living in their own life. They may be from your group. If you're arranging a workshop think of inviting two or three speakers, and allow lots of time for questions, perhaps some small group discussion, and certainly socialising time (with refreshments). The connections and information sharing between participants at these events can be as valuable as the information coming from speakers. If you're stuck for a venue, check the local council website or ask council staff. And you can publicise your event through social media, local papers and radio, contact with local organisations, shop window notices, local council publicity channels, and emails to supporters.



SPREADING THE WORD

You can share information on how to reduce emissions via social media or a website. There is free and relatively easy-to-use software to enable any group to set up a website, but bear in mind that you then need to generate the content, and it's best if a proportion of this – especially on the homepage – is changed from time to time.



Starting projects that reduce emissions

While there are many things we can do as individuals or households to reduce greenhouse emissions, there are often situations in which doing things collectively can make it possible, or easier, or more fun! In fact, reducing carbon emissions may be just one of many benefits from such activities – described in the previous section and referred to collectively as being part of the ‘sharing economy’. They include:

- 🌿 **Sharing things:** tools, toys, books, compost bins, even cars (through car sharing schemes)
- 🌿 **Sharing activities:** developing a community garden, parents taking turns walking kids from multiple families to school, making pasta sauce or preserves together, having working bees at each other’s homes in turn, carpooling for work commutes
- 🌿 **Passing on things you don’t need any more or have a surplus of:** children’s clothes, toys, prams and car seats, books, magazines, home-grown produce.

Such sharing can reduce emissions in a number of ways. When things are shared rather than individually owned, or when they are passed on from one person to another, it means that fewer of these items need to be produced and fewer need to be disposed of. Shared surpluses also mean less wastage. Walking kids to school is zero carbon transport. And producing and sharing things in the neighbourhood usually reduces emissions from transport, production and packaging.

It also brings people together and generates a sense of cooperation and reciprocity that makes everyone feel good, builds individual and community resilience, and introduces people to new activities. Your Livewell Group could start such projects for members and others in your community.

Walkable localities enhance health and wellbeing while reducing carbon.

Advocacy of government policies supporting lower carbon living

The health of our democracy depends on active engagement by citizens. Councillors and parliamentarians are usually generalists without across-the-board expertise, so you can help to inform them in areas of policy that you have knowledge of. They will often welcome this, and it's important for them to know what residents and citizens think, need and want. Moreover, if we look at policy reform across history it is usually spurred on by groups of ordinary people arguing for particular changes. And finally, your political representative may already agree with what you are advocating, and value your expression of community support – and the information and arguments you can supply – when seeking to win over colleagues.

In advocating for a particular policy (such as better bike paths or more comprehensive recycling) you might bear in mind the following:

- It helps to assume that your representatives are decent people intent on doing good. That belief may not be sustained, but it often is. Think about how you would appreciate being treated if you were them.
- Make a time to put your well-argued and evidence-based case to them, but listen to them as well. They are working within constraints. Budgets are not unlimited, and their colleagues may be opposed to what you are advocating. Find out if you can provide them with information that might help to win colleagues over. Graphic examples of how the policy is working well in similar localities can be useful. You may have to initially settle for something much more modest than you originally hoped for, but see that as a start.
- Numbers matter. Encourage others to put the case as well, not just to that representative but also to their colleagues.

Reducing carbon emissions in our own lives and advocating policy change that leads to emissions reductions are different but very complementary actions. When governments provide infrastructure, programs, models, funds, information and laws that support low carbon living, it is much easier for us as citizens to do our bit to reduce carbon. On the other side, if we are actively reducing our own emissions we're not only 'walking the talk', we're also in a better position to advise the government on what it needs to do to support us most effectively.

GOOD POLICY, BROADLY SPEAKING

It is not the role of this Guide to describe in any detail what government policies supporting a low carbon society might look like. In broad terms they are policies that support the switch to renewables, active transport, energy efficiency, planning for low carbon cities, and the retention and extension of vegetation, to name just some key policy areas.



Windpower:
part of the new
clean economy
we can support.

Investment to support a lower carbon economy

Your money has a carbon footprint just as your personal consumption does. Unless you keep it under the mattress, it's being used for something, whether that's via your investments, superannuation, bank deposits or insurance policies. Is it helping to finance a high carbon economy, or a low carbon one? In our market economy the choice is yours. You can choose where to put your money on the basis of likely returns and the degree of risk involved. You can also choose on the basis of what your investment, deposit or policy is doing for society and the planet. This is your right. (This approach is often referred to as 'ethical investment'.)

And it's not just a matter of avoiding investments in industries and firms directly involved in maintaining a high carbon economy. You may also want to avoid investments in companies that finance these enterprises. You can deposit your money in banks that don't lend to fossil fuel industries, and put your superannuation with companies that don't invest in such industries (or offer alternatives among their policy options). And best of all, you can find banks, super funds and firms to invest in that are financing the new clean economy.

As time goes on it is becoming more financially prudent to take this path as well, because it's predicted that fossil fuel industries will be left with unusable (or 'stranded') assets as the world switches to renewables, and companies that finance them will also be exposed as a result.

You can also be part of movements encouraging institutions – such as universities, local councils and church denominations – to switch their investments. An ever-growing number of such institutions across Australia and around the world are doing this. They often have noble aims and ideals, and so it is entirely consistent that they should use their investments to help build a safe low carbon world.

This area of activity is often referred to as 'divestment' – withdrawing from forms of investment that support a high carbon economy – but it's also important to then invest in the low to zero carbon economy. To find out more, contact [Market Forces](#) or [350.org](#).

Some group exercises for you to consider

Group exercises can help individuals and groups in a wide range of ways. Here are a few to try in your Livewell Group. (The group can decide on time allocations for the different parts of each exercise depending on how much time you have):

🌿 Recognising your assets

Assets are anything that can help you do what you aim to do, and they include skills, knowledge, contacts, time, money, equipment, buildings, enthusiasm, energy and other qualities. Assets can be possessed by individuals, groups, formal organisations and whole communities. Often we take our assets for granted or don't even realise we have particular ones.

You and your group need assets to get things done. You need to know how to reduce your carbon emissions, and to have certain practical skills if you want to make the changes yourself. Your group will need contacts in the community to locate speakers or publicise what it's doing, people with writing and speaking skills, venues to meet in, small amounts of money to operate, and so on. There will be many assets in the wider community that you can tap into as well.



Group exercises encourage cooperation and get people into action.

Step 1

Each person take an A4 sheet and, turning it to 'landscape' orientation, divide it into three columns, headed 'My assets', 'Group assets' and 'Community assets'.

Step 2

Then fill the columns with as many assets as you can think of that are useful in reducing your own or others' carbon emissions or advancing the goals of the group. Some assets that you list in the first column may be useful to the group – if so asterisk them. In the 'Group assets' column include any assets you know other group members have that will be useful to the group or to individual members. In the Community assets column, put any assets in the wider community likely to be useful to the group or individuals.

Step 3

Share what you've written with another group member, and then share 2–3 items from each column with the whole group. Alternatively, skip the partner-sharing and just share with the whole group. As people are contributing in the large group, have someone write the assets on butchers' paper or a whiteboard. When someone repeats an item already written up just give that item a tick.

Step 4

If, after that, there are important assets on your list that are not on the group list, add those as well. You can also put names beside assets if you like.

This way, you will have compiled a list of at least some of the assets you'll need to pursue your individual and group carbon reduction goals.

Background

Creating a long term carbon reduction plan

You may feel a bit overwhelmed by everything you could do to reduce your carbon footprint – so consider spacing it out over a number of years. You should start this exercise between sessions and then bring the results to the next session to share with the group.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Note:
Write a list of all the things you want to do to reduce your carbon emissions over 3? 4? 5? years.	Then do a multi-year timeline on paper or on computer and start to work out what you'll do and when, according to any of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none">☑ What's most important to you☑ What needs money, time or other resources that you don't yet have☑ What is smaller and easier to start with (achieving small wins at the start can be morale-boosting)☑ What needs to happen before other things can☑ Any other relevant factors, e.g., waiting for the right season for outside work, or for someone to move out of a room before it can be renovated.	Share your timeline with others in your group and invite their responses.	<p>This plan isn't sacrosanct. You can change it as your circumstances, your knowledge and your preferences change. Its purpose is mainly to start you thinking and get you into action.</p> <p>You can also use this model to plan your group's activities. You may, however, want to go for a 6–12 month plan rather than a longer term one.</p>

Getting unstuck

Often you want to do something to reduce your carbon emissions but you get stuck. Maybe you don't know how to begin, or you think someone in your household won't like it, or you can't decide definitely whether you really should do it, or you've got things on your mind.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Think of something on which you're stuck (or something you'd just like to run past others to make sure you're on the right track).	In a group exercise, pair up and take turns to share one thing you're stuck on and why you're stuck. The other person should then briefly respond with whatever suggestions or questions might be helpful, and you can discuss these.	Then share your issue (and possibly your partner's suggestions) with the whole group, inviting them to also respond. Be mindful of the time that's available for each person to share their issue.	During the session or as soon as possible afterwards, decide on a few first steps you'll take before the next session, take them as soon as you can and certainly before the next session, and report how you went at that session.

You can use this way to get unstuck anytime you want. Just make a time to get together with another group member or friend and go for it! They may or may not want to share something they're stuck on.

From ideas to plans to actions

This is intended to help your group choose the projects it will work on from the wide range of possibilities.

Step 1

Before the session in which you're going to do this exercise (e.g., in the previous session) think about some projects your group might take on, for example:

- Community projects to help your members or others reduce their footprints (see 'Starting projects that reduce emissions' on page 37)
- Advocacy of policy change (see 'Advocacy of government policies supporting low carbon living' on page 38).

Step 2

Each person choose one (or two). Take turns to share your idea/s with the group, with someone writing these up on butchers' paper or a whiteboard. Group together any ideas that are very similar.

Step 3

Each person then puts dots beside the two ideas they like best.

Count the dots and identify the ones that there is most interest in pursuing.

Step 4

Then form into small groups that are each discussing a particular preferred idea, with the proposer of the idea in the group. This may take some juggling and you may not get to discuss your most preferred idea, but go with the flow.

Step 5

In your small groups proposers are just one member of their groups and should listen to comments from others as well as contributing themselves. Consider the following questions:

- What is the idea intended to achieve?
- How important is this as a goal for the group? What are its potential benefits?
- Is it practical and achievable? What are the costs in terms of efforts and resources? Does the group have the skills and resources to do it? Can these be obtained from elsewhere?
- Are there people in the group who are personally willing to work on it?

Step 6

Each small group then reports back to the whole group.

It's then up to the whole group to decide which (if any) of these ideas they wish to pursue.

Step 7

If the group decides to pursue an idea, then a sub-group of two or more people should take carriage of it and report regularly on progress to the main group, though of course others may need to be involved as well. It's also important to clarify what the small group can decide themselves and what decisions should be considered by the whole group.

Step 8

And so, through this process, projects can be born, developed and put into action!

Background

Acknowledge and celebrate

We often take a dimmer view of ourselves, others and society than we should, because once something has been achieved we tend to take it for granted and focus on the next problem. This can then undermine our confidence in our ability to make positive changes in the future. So this exercise is designed to challenge this tendency and help us to be more conscious of, and pleased about, the things we have achieved and the efforts we have put in.

You can do this exercise focusing on the efforts and achievements of either individual members reducing their carbon emissions or the group as a whole pursuing its various objectives, or both. If you're focusing on the group's efforts and achievements it's best to wait till your group has been going for a while (4–6 months?) so that you have a reasonable amount of time on which to reflect. If focusing on individuals' efforts and achievements, however, you can also draw on the period before the group started, as many or most group members will have been trying to reduce their emissions before they joined the group.



For individuals

Step 1

Write a list of all the things you've done to reduce your own or your household's carbon emissions, including things not yet completed or unsuccessful (You can do this either before or during the session in which you're doing this exercise).

Step 2

Take turns to report your list to the group, and say how you feel about it (surprised? encouraged? pretty much what you expected?)

Step 3

Other group members can comment on and acknowledge each person's efforts and achievements in whatever way you think is appropriate and supportive.

For the group as a whole

Step 1

Together, produce a list of all the things the group has achieved or attempted since it started – not just the formal things, like any events organised, but also the informal ones, like significant conversations had, produce shared, encouragement and information given. And don't forget the regular business of running the group sessions.

Step 2

When the list is complete, each member comments on the list as a whole and on particular efforts and achievements they think are especially noteworthy.

Celebrate

You might like to leave this exercise to the end of the session, so you can then toast yourselves for your efforts and enjoy extra special food, music or whatever is fitting for the occasion. Congratulate yourselves on all the amazing things you have done to reduce your carbon emissions – you deserve to celebrate!

How to find out more

LINKS TO ONLINE SOURCES OF INFORMATION,
IDEAS AND ASSISTANCE

3

Emissions reduction

Australian Government product energy ratings www.energyrating.gov.au

Australian Government product water ratings: www.waterrating.gov.au

Australian Government Guide to environmentally sustainable homes: www.yourhome.gov.au

Alternative Technology Association: <https://renew.org.au/>

Positive Charge (Moreland Energy Foundation): www.positivecharge.com.au/

Beyond Zero Emissions: www.bze.org.au

BZE's 'Energy Freedom' (a guide to having an energy efficient home): www.ata.org.au/

Josh Byrne's website 'Josh's House': joshshouse.com.au/

Window Energy Rating Scheme: www.wers.net/wers-home

GreenPower providers in your state: www.greenpower.gov.au/Homes/Find-a-Provider/

Clean Energy Council's Guide to Installing Solar PV for Households: www.solaraccreditation.com.au/

Sustainability Victoria: Advice to Households:

www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/services-and-advice/households/

Environment Victoria's 'Green Renters' Guide': environmentvictoria.org.au/rentersguide

'Sustain Me' app for information about recycling: www.sustainme.com.au/

Also Google 'apps to reduce carbon footprint' for a range of options.

Bicycle Network: Australia-wide bicycle organisation: www.bicyclenetwork.com.au/

Climate change organisations

The Climate Council: www.climatecouncil.org.au/

The Climate Institute: www.climateinstitute.org.au/

Climate Reality Australia: www.climatereality.org.au/

ClimateWorks Australia (Monash Sustainability Institute): climateworks.com.au/

The Climate Change Authority: www.climatechangeauthority.gov.au/

Climate Action Network Australia: www.cana.net.au/

Australian Youth Climate Coalition: www.aycc.org.au/

Climate and Health Alliance: caha.org.au/

350.org: 350.org/

350.org Australia: 350.org.au/

Skeptical Science: www.skepticalscience.com/ (Don't be misled by the title – this is about 'Getting skeptical about global warming skepticism'.)

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: www.ipcc.ch/

🌿 Greenhouse Gas Calculators

Australian Greenhouse Calculator: www.epa.vic.gov.au/agc/

Carbonneutral Carbon Calculator: carbonneutral.com.au/carbon-calculator/

WWF Footprint Calculator: www.wwf.org.au/our_work/people_and_the_environment/human_footprint/footprint_calculator/

🌿 Carbon offsetting and ethical investment

How to choose carbon offsets – guidance from CHOICE, the Carbon Offset Guide and the National Standard: otter.org.au/carbon-offsets-how-to-choose/

Community Climate Chest: www.climatechest.org.au/

Choice: Ethical Investing Guide: www.choice.com.au/money/financial-planning-and-investing/stock-market-investing/articles/ethical-investing-guide

Market Forces: www.marketforces.org.au/

🌿 The sharing economy and community building

Shareable: www.shareable.net/

Streetbank: www.streetbank.com/splash?locale=en

Freecycle: www.freecycle.org/

Open Shed: peer to peer hiring of tools, camping gear, electronics etc: www.openshed.com.au/

Choice: Car share services: www.choice.com.au/transport/cars/general/articles/car-sharing-vs-car-buying

The following information on the sharing economy is specific to the City of Yarra (Melbourne), but provides examples of what others might do:

Council's 'Share Yarra' page on its website:

www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/environment/community-participation/share-yarra/

Council's 'Car Sharing' page on its website: [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Parking-roads-and-transport/transport/sustainable-transport/Carsharing/)

[Parking-roads-and-transport/transport/sustainable-transport/Carsharing/](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Parking-roads-and-transport/transport/sustainable-transport/Carsharing/)

The Yarra Sharing Map: bit.ly/ZLnZXx

Cultivating Community: promoting community gardens:

www.cultivatingcommunity.org.au/

Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network: communitygarden.org.au/

Street by Street: turning streets into communities: www.streetbystreet.org.au/

Shareable: How to start a social street:

www.shareable.net/blog/how-to-start-a-social-street

Our Community: where not-for-profits go for help: www.ourcommunity.com.au/



Livewell

Communities achieving low carbon wellbeing