

EcoARC

Council's greenprint for sustainability



Unleash the opportunities

www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au

EcoARC

Armidale Regional Council has developed its 'greenprint' strategy for environmental sustainability. Entitled EcoARC, the strategy guides Council's own operations and aims to assist groups in the community to improve sustainability in the Armidale region.

EcoARC is a document prepared as part of Council's commitment to the 2017-2027 Community Strategic Plan. It encompasses nine key areas:

- Global
- Air
- Biodiversity
- Future
- Living
- Resilience
- Transport
- Waste
- Water

The development and implementation of EcoARC is central to ensuring the community and Council's environmental priorities will inform the four yearly Delivery Plan and annual Operational planning process. It also highlights opportunities to work with community groups and other organisations to instigate projects or partner in initiatives with common objectives. During the development of EcoARC we have already seen some of those opportunities develop, and we look forward to expanding further strong working partnerships.

The document's scope and objectives are broad, because the means of achieving its goals are likely to grow and change over time. It is not an action plan and so does not have the details expected of an action plan, such as timelines, standards and numerical goals. However, council does recognise that there is an urgency of activity needed on many environmental fronts with the changing climate and current challenges such as water sustainability. As well as environmental conditions, community expectations and interests, opportunities such as partnerships with government programs are also likely to evolve over the lifespan of EcoARC.

The community in the Armidale region is already engaged in many sustainability-based initiatives, and there is a great depth of knowledge, skill and leadership in this area. There is also a great strength of positivity towards the environment and our ability to make constructive change. Council also undertakes a range of sustainability-based initiatives and we are keen to be a good example by actively pursuing better environmental outcomes in both internal operations and by supporting our community's actions. Consultation with the community will be vital to the success of all sustainability projects. We appreciate the community's involvement and feedback in the development of EcoARC and look forward to continuing to work together for a more environmentally sustainable future.

Glossary of terms

ARC	Armidale Regional Council
BASIX	Building Sustainability Index – a NSW government policy to help regulate water and energy efficiency of new and upgraded buildings.
BYOB	Bring your own bottle
DCP	Development Control Plans
EEC	Endangered Ecological Communities
ESD	Ecologically sustainable Development
Garage Sale Trail	A national event promoting secondhand goods and garage sales, supported by local councils and held in October each year
HEPA filters	High-efficiency particulate air filters remove particles from the air whose diameter is greater than or equal to 0.3 µm.
LEP	Local Environment Plans
NABERS rating	National Australian Built Environment Rating System, an initiative of the Australian government to measure and compare the environmental performance of Australian buildings and tenancies.
NBN	National Broadband Network
NSW Container Deposit Scheme	Otherwise known as ‘Return and Earn’, residents are able to return containers to collection points to receive a 10 cent refund, which can be redeemed at a retail partner store or donated to a charity.
STP	Sewerage Treatment Plant

Global

UN Sustainable Development Goals

Scope and Intent

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals was adopted by the UN in 2015.

The aim is for governments, businesses and communities, together with the United Nations, to improve the lives of people everywhere. The UN Sustainable Development Goals integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development – the social, economic and environmental. They are:

Everyone is part of the solution to achieve these important, world-changing objectives, from individuals and communities to organisations and governments. Many of the initiatives and practices of Armidale Regional Council and our community already contribute to the achievement of these Goals.

To recognise this ongoing global commitment within our community, this document aligns the UN Goals with council's EcoARC using the icons above.

Council also has social outcomes it undertakes to achieve and which affiliate with the Sustainable Development Goals. The ARC Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 supports inclusiveness and the vulnerable members of our community including those with a disability, the elderly, multicultural groups and refugees, youth and Aboriginal communities.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Council and the community's existing actions and policies that contribute towards the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals have been identified.



- ✓ A clear process for recording and updating council's actions and policies which contribute towards the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals has been developed.
- ✓ Armidale Regional Council has been recognised on a global stage as an organisation that has developed and successfully implemented plans that contribute towards improving the lives of people within our community and beyond.

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Develop and implement the strategic initiatives for the other EcoARC topics, all of which support the achievement of various UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- ✓ Continue to implement the strategic initiatives of the ARC Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027: Our People and Community.
- ✓ Identify where council's documents and actions align with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Develop strong partnerships with state government agencies, community groups, local schools and the University of New England.
- Links to all other EcoARC topics in supporting the achievement of the UN Sustainability Goals.
- Take action for the Goals within council and promote council's achievements as being part of the global community.

Education

- Develop a program with interested stakeholders to assist the community to understanding what it can do – from the individual to groups and organisations – to improve the lives of people.
- Highlight the link between the UN Sustainable Development Goals and local actions when undertaking the education component of all EcoARC topics.
- Encourage individuals to look at the UN Lazy Person's Guide to Saving the World to get inspired to live sustainably every day: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction/



Air

Clean air for Armidale



Scope and Intent

Develop and implement a community endorsed Clean Air Plan to reduce the impact of wood smoke on health and air pollution. It would include a comprehensive communications strategy to increase community education about alternative sustainable, clean heating and energy efficient housing options. The plan should help enable residents to make informed choices about how to minimise the health effects of poor air quality on themselves and others.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Achieve National Air Quality Standards
- ✓ Have an informed community that contributes to our goal of clean air in Armidale, and that community surveys show everyone understands the health problems caused by polluted air.
- ✓ Have a 10 year plan resulting in healthy and safe air and lower pollution emissions.
- ✓ Have established partnerships with the NSW Government and other stakeholders to develop and implement strategies and program to improve air quality across the region. This will include:
 - Establishment of a 'whole of government' Clean Air Working Group
 - Development of community discussion papers (based on international research) to assist the community in making decisions around heating and what is current best practice
 - A close working relationship with government for strong and consistent advocacy for clean air
- ✓ Recognition on a global stage as a community that has developed and successfully implemented a plan to achieve clean air.



Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Conduct a new survey to determine the community's level of awareness, perception and understanding of the wood smoke issue
- ✓ Review the success of previous strategies for, and research into, air quality improvement both in Armidale and in other cities facing pollution issues to allow Council to focus resources on the actions most likely to be successful and to utilise existing research
- ✓ Create a database of existing heaters - this is essential to benchmarking current and future use
- ✓ Understand the broader economic impacts of adverse air quality to assist in securing necessary funding to support initiatives, including working with NSW Health and others to use the air pollution monitors to update the estimated health costs of Armidale's wood smoke

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pollution.

- ✓ Based on learnings from all the above points, and a public forum, develop an agreed and community supported Clean Air Plan, for:
 - Appropriate intervention and education
 - Best practice planning controls
 - Reducing illegal firewood collection that once the report and proposed Council strategies are nearing finalisation
- ✓ Development of a clear policy and application process to install heating appliances, supported by guidelines on best practice heating, ESD and consideration and consultation with neighbours, and good promotion of the process
- ✓ Investigate increased enforcement and education by designated, trained staff
- ✓ Research and apply for funding for projects to improve air quality in the areas of education, conferences, replacement initiatives for wood heaters and regulatory activities

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- As an immediate action, advocate to NSW government for incentives for voluntary replacement of existing wood heaters and installation of best practice heating, together with improving infrastructure of the homes (ie. thermal efficiency), and incentives for landlords.
- Develop a strong partnership with NSW EPA and NSW Health for strong and consistent advocacy for clean air, to provide support and resources address air quality health issues in our city, including stronger legislation to support clean heating.
- Advocate to NSW Government to enhance BASIX and develop requirements for sustainable housing design appropriate for our region.
- Strengthen linkages with other communities facing similar air quality problems.
- Work with government and researchers to enable our community to make informed choices around heating options including alternative clean energy.
- Maintain actions in other EcoARC to improve clean-green transport, public transport, and cycle ways to support our vision for a liveable and sustainable region.

- Have a “Clean air” conference in conjunction with NSW EPA in Armidale to connect experts with the community.
- Investigate assistance to residents whose health is affected by air pollution, e.g. availability of HEPA filters.

Education

- Develop a comprehensive education program, using affirmative language and including targeted media campaign, around:
 - Monitoring air quality for reliable data
 - The existence and nature of the air quality problem (including setting up a community dashboard for air quality to warn the community when pollution levels are high, so they can choose to avoid outdoor activities and polluted areas and reporting data at highly visible locations for instance on LED screens in Armidale)
 - Good set-up and operation of wood heaters to minimise air quality impacts (including advertising availability of moisture meters, holding a competition to promote good wood storage options, partnering with community groups to hold workshops)
 - Guidance and options for heating which minimise impacts on air quality, including using daytime solar to heat buildings with electrical appliances.
 - Empowering all residents to be proactive in air quality improvement
 - Firewood collection – sourcing good quality wood, implications of illegal collection on biodiversity loss of habitat
 - Improved thermal efficiency of homes – partner with community groups to undertake workshops
- Improve promotion of the requirement for council approval for heater installation, including working with retailers and the EPA.
- Secure funding to deliver several demonstration projects on sustainable clean air examples of best practice heating.
- Explore the development of a Sustainable House Display Home.
- Install at least one purple air monitor in Guyra to help assist in determining whether further investigation of air quality improvements is necessary there.

Biodiversity



Enhance biodiversity in the region

Scope and Intent

To protect and enhance biodiversity in the region.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Long term improvement in water quality of our water ways
- ✓ Enhanced regional biodiversity

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Create our next generation of catchment management plans that recognises the importance of healthy riparian zones to biodiversity and safe drinking water
- ✓ Through the LEP develop a growth plan for our region that recognises biodiversity and liveability, in consultation with relevant stakeholders
- ✓ Include biodiversity and waterway health in the Armidale Regional Plan
- ✓ Biodiversity mapping for our region
- ✓ List and protect threatened species and communities, and protect and enhance wildlife corridors. Use the new DCP and investigate other planning avenues for achieving this.
- ✓ Develop a "Flagship" biodiversity program for the region (e.g. around the koala and the endangered ecological communities on which they rely)
- ✓ Work with the Weed Board on new and innovative approach to weeds management in our region

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Understanding biodiversity issues: imperative for catchment and riparian improvement in our region to create healthy and more resilient waterways
- Sustainable design of housing and housing developments
- Protecting and promoting local World Heritage Areas
- Working with stakeholders in developing R&D

Education

- Collaborate with others to develop a knowledge hub on biodiversity in our region focused on
 - advocacy imperatives
- Promote and educate the community on sustainable housing solutions
- Encourage participation in urban and rural ecosystem rehabilitation by community and volunteerism



initiatives relevant to our regions biodiversity issues

- Understanding our role and ability to influence the critical issues of land degradation, soil erosion, land clearing
- Developing and implementing a plan to reduce illegal firewood harvesting
- Maintaining the Biodiversity Super Group to assist in planning and coordinating biodiversity across the region

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- Initiate a 'Biodiversity and our region' educational schools program
- Undertake further conservation education, especially regarding cats, weeds, and predatory birds. This could be undertaken in partnership with Landcare or other interested parties.
- Promote the use of the AdaptNSW website within Council and the community to reliably inform decision-making with regards to climate changes



Future



Diverse Economic Development; Sustainable LEP and Policies; Education; Strong Renewable Energy Sector

Scope and Intent

To ensure our region is positive, resilient and prosperous with a diverse economy, sustainable LEP and policies, good education opportunities and a strong renewable energy sector.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Economic security and diversity that is appropriate for the region.
- ✓ Strategic studies fulfilled to support the LEP and good decision making.
- ✓ Healthy, environmentally-friendly living, with residents feeling connected to the surrounding environment, special places and activities.
- ✓ Services which support a thriving community with appropriate technology available to advance it further, including in education and health (e.g. using the NBN to link local health nodes to major hospitals).
- ✓ A community that understands and supports renewable energy and the importance and health benefits of clean air.
- ✓ Organisations that employ local skilled people (for example, local consultants) and good connections between organisations to share knowledge and resources.
- ✓ Energy needs are supplied locally and sustainably.

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Integrate sustainability indicators into all Council decision-making processes and operations.
- ✓ Investigate funding and human resources for strategic initiatives (e.g. biodiversity study, transport study) to inform planning policies, especially the benefits of clean air, increased active travel, and increased use of renewable energy.
- ✓ Provide resources to enable planning policies to be flexible over time, recognising that zoning needs may



change with climate change, especially agricultural land and environmentally sensitive land.

- ✓ Encourage industries and business activity that helps deliver and protect prosperity and well-being without "costing the earth".
- ✓ Install universal electric vehicle charging ports across the region and investigate other opportunities to support electric vehicle uptake.
- ✓ Undertake a business audit to:
 - understand gaps in local needs
 - create opportunities for streamlined local production and value-added industry
 - enable the region to advocate for education opportunities to help fill these needs
- ✓ Strive to provide access to work, and formal and

informal training opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, social and health challenges.

- ✓ Learn from other councils with comprehensive sustainability agendas to further implement /better progress local initiatives.
- ✓ Work with the community and relevant organisations to investigate opportunities for diversifying agriculture with consideration for adaptation to climate change.
- ✓ Utilise the economic opportunities of exporting energy as the renewable energy development in the region expands.
- ✓ Highlight the economic and cultural attractions of the region to residents and visitors.
- ✓ Utilise the tourism and education opportunities of renewable energy projects such as Oven Mountain Pumped Storage and wind farms.
- ✓ Facilitate more collaboration between organisations locally to improve the success of projects and their reach.

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Lobby state government to fulfill a demand for particular education needs as they arise (ie. TAFE courses for energy efficiency and the renewable energy industry).
- Encourage developers and designers to seek early

engagement with Council planners to allow for opportunities for best outcomes in building and development design

- Council is a resource that can inform design in a positive, not just restrictive, manner
- Encourage more sustainable and 'whole building' design beyond minimum BASIX requirements
- Encourage early engagement by investigating incentives for good design to indicate that sustainable design is a council priority
- Advocate to NSW government for tightened BASIX, and to applicants to strive for better-than-minimum standards.
- Advocate to NSW government to implement peer-to-peer electricity trading to enhance financial benefits to the local community and increase uptake of locally produced renewable electricity

Education

- Increase staff and stakeholder awareness of Council's sustainability commitments.
- Increase accessibility to good design and energy advice (ie. Council website, community activities such as Sustainable House Open Day).
- Promote renewable energy educational activities such as wind farm open days.



Living



Renewable Energy; Local Food; Sustainable Living; Smart, Efficient Towns

Scope and Intent

A healthy environment is crucial to economic and social sustainability. To reduce our environmental footprint whilst maintaining our lifestyle, future technology and energy use must be efficient, environmentally friendly, and support our health & wellbeing. This includes transport, food production and distribution, and comfortable living.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ The community can participate in initiatives that contribute to a sustainable lifestyle.
- ✓ The community's desire for clean, resilient energy is fulfilled.
- ✓ The region maintains viable sustainably-run small and family farms.
- ✓ Council and other organisations procure local products where possible.
- ✓ Council's planning system supports the appropriate use of rural land across the municipality.
- ✓ Council is recognised as a climate and greenhouse-gas responsible organisation.
- ✓ There is an increased connection between agriculture and rural and urban centres through an engaged and supported community, and an increased appreciation of our surroundings and natural environment.
- ✓ Residents enjoy living in the region and are able to gain local employment or telecommute.
- ✓ Transport links are retained or improved.
- ✓ Residents commonly walk or cycle to work, school, college or university.
- ✓ There are diverse and healthy recreational, and creative social, opportunities.
- ✓ There are opportunities for residents to engage in protecting and restoring environmental values.
- ✓ Community organisations, schools and businesses



provide a range of essential services, opportunities for friendship, and support, including in times of emergency.

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Environmental and Sustainability risk assessments are undertaken for all major Council projects.
- ✓ Participate with UNE in Project Zero30 which aims to move the Armidale local government area to zero emissions by achieving National Carbon Offset Standard certification by 2030.
- ✓ Work with the community to implement short, medium and long term climate actions following the declaration of the Climate Emergency.
- ✓ Adopt a Sustainable Procurement Policy to guide

Council's purchasing decisions.

- ✓ Priorities are set for upgrades and maintenance of local roads, buildings, parks, playgrounds, sporting facilities, swimming pools, bike tracks and community gardens that have sustainability design objectives and outcomes.
- ✓ Work with community groups to investigate reinvigorating the Sustainable Living Expo to promote, encourage and demonstrate local capabilities and initiatives.
- ✓ Support for and promotion of local food
 - Encourage use of 'local food' labelling to indicate the proximity of food origin
 - Encourage seasonal selection of ingredients by residents and local food outlets
 - Promote products of local 'mid-size' farmers to avoid sending local food to city markets
 - Support a mobile abattoir
 - Land use plans support opportunities for food production
- ✓ Increase the number of developments that include an affordable, sustainable housing component and encourage active transport.
- ✓ Set higher standards for new buildings in specified 'innovation zones'.
- ✓ Investigate programs to support energy efficiency and installing renewable sources of energy amongst residents and businesses.

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Council is a role model in the local community for energy use and encourages and supports energy efficiency in the broader community.
- Promote the local landscape and natural attractions while considering potential impacts on the environment and ways to mitigate such impacts.

- Promote use of mechanisms such as wood smoke filters and HEPA filters in winter to improve air quality and the health of our community.
- Advocate for better train links between Armidale and Sydney (fast or overnight), competitively priced flights and bus links between capital cities and other local and regional towns.
- Support community events that promote sustainable living such as the Armidale Farmers Market, Sustainable Living Armidale events and revegetation activities.

Education

- ARC applies some of the recommendations of the *Australian Energy Efficiency Policy Handbook (produced by the Energy Efficiency Council of Australia)*, such as
 - Raising awareness about the benefits of energy efficient buildings
 - Advocating to the NSW government to tighten BASIX in NSW and move towards a nationally consistent standards regime
- Together with interested residents, promote and encourage the reduction of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by the community and industry in the region.
- Increase awareness and issue a sustainable home checklist to all residents to reduce running costs whilst improving the environment.
- Increased engagement between rural and urban areas through Council-led or supported activities such as farmers markets, barbeques, land care activities etc.
- Promote community gardens and encourage their use, and liaise with community groups to provide localised information on home food production.
- Support consumer education and market development of locally produced food.
- Better communication of positive local stories to inform the community of initiatives in our area.

Resilient



Plan for Climate Change; Diversity in Agriculture and Horticulture; Resilient Assets

Scope and Intent

Climate change impacts will be experienced at regional and local levels. Councils can play a key role in managing these risks.

Adaptation and mitigation are complementary strategies to reduce and manage the risks. Mitigation seeks to reduce net emissions to limit climate change, while adaptation helps individuals, communities, organisations and natural systems deal with the consequences of climate change that cannot be avoided.

Policies and practices in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation which target both Council operations and services to the community can be adopted.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ Substantially reduced total and per-capita greenhouse gas emissions
- ✓ A Climate Change Risk Assessment, Mitigation and Adaptation Plan for the whole ARC area is developed and all extreme and high level risks are identified and addressed.
- ✓ The agricultural sector is growing, diversified, resilient and supports a more self-sustaining Armidale Region.
- ✓ The economy is diversified through management of resources.
- ✓ Biodiversity values are enhanced and the loss of biodiversity is reduced.
- ✓ The community is well-informed and engaged in adaptation and mitigation actions.
- ✓ Climate change impact on the community is reduced.

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Work with individuals and community groups to encourage sustainable land management practices to protect water, environment and heritage and control pest species.
- ✓ Protect agricultural land from urban encroachment and



fragmentation, including utilising existing developed land more efficiently to protect agriculture and habitat/wildlife corridors.

- ✓ Develop Mitigation and Adaptation Plans for natural hazards and climate change.
- ✓ Identify and manage risks to Council-managed natural land
 - Increase and improve the extent and condition of native vegetation including wildlife corridors and urban riparian and bush lands.
 - Continue weed management, erosion remediation and improved habitat linkages at landscape scale.
 - Improve the effectiveness of Council's and community effort toward environmental rehabilitation through improved integration,

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collaboration and greater knowledge transfer between councils and stakeholders. Work in partnership with land and catchment agencies, organisations and private landowners

- ✓ Identify and manage risks to Council-owned assets and facilities and undertake and promote mitigation actions where possible (such as energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, including demonstrating of the savings that can be achieved by switching to efficient, low-cost renewable energy)
- ✓ Support energy efficiency in energy generation, planning and building design to prepare for climate change, decrease demand and create jobs.
- ✓ Expand and review partnership programs to support vulnerable households
- ✓ Work with the community and organisations to minimise the impacts of climate change on socially and economically disadvantaged communities through social impact investment for actions such as upgrading homes, community facilities and infrastructure
- ✓ Utilise tools such as CSIRO's AdaptNRM tool (which provides support for natural resource managers to develop climate-ready plans), and the AdaptWater tool (which quantifies the risk associated with climate change and extreme weather events to water utility assets) to inform planning and investment decisions.

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Build partnerships with the University of New England to create research funding opportunities, particularly involving climate adaptation (e.g. new crop varieties and animal breeds, efficient irrigation, flexible farm management, food and storage preservation facilities).
- Build capacity in Council, and partner with knowledgeable individuals and groups to provide advice to the community on energy efficiency
- Investigate and advocate building technologies suitable for this region, such as materials, improved insulation and heating/cooling.
- Establish facilitation teams in local government peak bodies to advise on upgrading facilities and assets.

Education

- Work with stakeholders to provide workshops to help build resilience in the community (ie. Coping with Extreme Heat Seniors workshops - an opportunity to build resilience to extreme weather among a demographic known to be more vulnerable to such impacts)
- Promotion of activities individuals can undertake for both mitigation and adaptation through Council's communication channels and activities such as festivals.
- Support local community groups undertaking climate change education and activities to improve residents' wellbeing.



To consider the current transport situation within our region, investigate future needs and facilitate sustainable transport options that create less pollution and use fewer resources. Carbon emissions from transport are increasing, particularly for private passenger vehicles, and there is an urgent need to reverse this trend.

**OUR
GREEN
GOALS**
ARMIDALE

- ✓ Adoption of a region-wide transport plan considering priorities, and advocacy for improved public transport and encourages active transport (cycling/walking)
- ✓ Improved transport infrastructure (lights, pathways, roads, signage)
- ✓ Reduction of single-driver car journeys and greenhouse gas emissions from transport
- ✓ Increase in cycling, walking and use of public transport
- ✓ Integrated cycle-friendly routes and walking paths that are safe and movement-friendly and identified by appropriate signs and logos
- ✓ Health and wellbeing improved (health benefits of walking and cycle commuting)

- ✓ Increase use of public transport by:
 - Supporting improved bus services (eg. ongoing bus shelter maintenance) and investigating the co-ordination of multiuse transport: school/ public /aged care etc.
 - Considering the results of the autonomous vehicle trial and its potential to enhance transport options.

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- ✓ Revise LEPs to encourage residential development within easy cycling and walking distance of major employment and business areas, and facilitate residential living within the CBD of Armidale.
- ✓ Ensure sustainable transport is part of the Armidale Regional Plan.
- ✓ Improve traffic management and analyse injury statistics to improve safety.
- ✓ Implement vehicle sharing- or fee-for-service transport options, specifically for older people in the local area.
- ✓ Promote car pooling and provide incentives and support such as designated car pooling spaces.
- ✓ Create opportunities for other uses of car parking areas (for example, creating a greater concentration of urban activities in the CBD).
- ✓ Provide suitable bicycle parking.
- ✓ Provide recharge points for electric cars.
- ✓ Investigate the transition of ARC car fleet to low emission vehicles such as electric, cng/h2 and/or hybrid vehicles and small vehicles.

Advocacy and Education

- Increase awareness that carbon emissions from transport are increasing, particularly for private passenger vehicles, and there is an urgent need to reverse this trend.
- Promotion and marketing of public transport services to increase use.
- Increase awareness of the health benefits of cycling and walking.
- Encourage our community to make sustainable personal transport decisions and lead by example.
- Raise driver awareness of cyclists and pedestrians, including signage, and improved provision of suitable bike parking
- Ensure we work closely with the community, health organisations interested in promoting cycling and walking, and businesses, to gather feedback, optimise funding opportunities and maximise improvements.
- Promotion of new and sustainable transport options to increase their visibility within the community and knowledge of alternatives (eg. electric cars).
- Promote offsetting carbon emissions associated with travel.
- Report on council's performance in achieving strategic initiatives.



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Reduce

- Develop waste reduction targets and recommendations for improvement (eg. for kerbside services, Council offices, businesses and industry)
- Develop a Council purchasing policy that promotes and supports products with low waste profiles, including electronics
- Engage businesses in waste reduction practices, by encouraging increased participation, investigating incentives, and leveraging consumer demand for more sustainable practices
- Measure, identify and reduce the amount of construction waste streams going into landfill and implement behaviour changing practices.

Reuse

- Create incentives for businesses that can 'upcycle' waste into products to be located locally.

Recycle

- Provide recycling points and services at key public facilities such as the Mall, shopping centres, libraries, sporting facilities and public events (polling points, festivals)
- Continue to service and promote recycling facilities throughout the council area
- Continue recycling or ensuring safe disposal of e-waste, light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- Investigate user pays for unseparated waste (create incentives to recycle – the cost must be prohibitive for disposing of unseparated waste however not too high that people will illegally dump / bury) and price incentives (especially commercial and industrial businesses) - eg. environmental levy to fund recycling bins/reduce costs to businesses.

Recover

- Continue to encourage the sale and donation of old equipment, furniture and fittings that are still in good condition through the second hand shop at the transfer station and other venues in the local government area.

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Support local organisations who undertake waste education and advocacy with enthusiasm and skill
- Build upon an ARC and State Government partnership to utilise funding opportunities, for example:
 - The Waste and Environment Levy
 - The Waste Less, Recycle More 2017-21 Extension, which will continue to provide funding to support new or enhanced household kerbside collection services for garden, food or combined food and garden organic waste
- Engage with industry, particularly construction, and increase support for programs which increase reuse and separation of recyclable waste.

Education

- Continue to work with Northern Inland Regional Waste, particularly on education programs
- Provide more information on Council's website, intranet, newsletter and annual report on the breakdown of waste and recycling collected through kerbside services and from Council offices - updates, newsletters, annual report
- Specific education about reducing and recycling e-waste, as it is the fastest growing waste sector
- Conduct visual and full waste audits Council waste on a yearly basis and publish results
- Make public recycling stations common, visible and easy to use and consider incentives
- Continue to provide specific educational programs on waste reduction and recycling (including reduce. reuse.recycle.recover and Bring Your Own Bottle-BYOB) and support these programs with increased recycling services across the council area
- Continue to promote the reuse of second hand goods and events such as the Garage Sale Trail
- ARC provide a good role models of good waste practices within its facilities and at community events
- Promote use of the NSW container deposit scheme

Water



Sustainable Water Quality

Scope and Intent

Sustainable use of water is vital for our regional environment, our community health, our lifestyle and our regional economy. The scope is to deliver initiatives that enhance the sustainable use of water in our region including:

- A focus on more sustainable domestic and business urban water efficiency, including the use of rainwater tanks, greywater and water efficient fittings.
- Improving our drinking water catchments to protect our drinking water and enhance biodiversity.
- Improving waterway health by targeted improvement to stormwater management and sewage treatment.
- Better managing water to become a water sensitive city thereby reducing flooding, reducing our impact on the environment and enhancing aesthetics.

Key Success Indicators

- ✓ To have healthy catchments which enable sourcing of good quality water for our community's needs.
- ✓ To have implemented best practice sensitive urban water design for new dwellings and have a water wise community.
- ✓ To reduce our impact on waterways in our region particularly downstream of urban areas by having in place effective sewage collection and treatment, and stormwater management.
- ✓ To meet our obligations in terms of environmental objectives for sewage treatment.
- ✓ To upgrade the Armidale STP to enhance reliability, enhance treatment and improve the ongoing sustainability of plant and effluent reuse operations.
- ✓ To develop and promote water sensitive urban design principles in our region that values water, improves water quality and retains as much water as possible within its natural catchment.
- ✓ Work with enthusiastic stakeholders to protect and improve riparian vegetation and wetland habitats to decrease evaporative loss.
- ✓ To ensure we are a water SMART community by developing a Smart plan of how we best use urban water in a Smart city.
- ✓ To review BASIX and make recommendation on the most appropriate urban water management policies for our region and the sustainable use of water.

Strategic Initiatives

- ✓ Develop a long term catchment management plan for the Malpas and Guyra Dams catchments, to protect our source water.
- ✓ To secure funding to deliver on improved catchment management.



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- ✓ To ensure we have best proactive stormwater management in place to protect our downstream aquatic environment.
- ✓ Understand how we can better management stormwater in a water sensitive city to reduce flooding, reduce impact on the environment and enhance aesthetics.
- ✓ Encourage installation of greywater systems for new dwellings in the revised DCP

Advocacy and Education

Advocacy

- Develop a compelling case for action in catchment management to protect our source water for our region.
- Ensure ARC works closely with the community on smart and sustainable urban water use.

- Encourage cooperation in riparian ecosystem rehabilitation between agencies and community.
- Continue to communicate to Government that BASIX is not driving the best and most sustainable urban water outcomes for our community.

Education

- Work with knowledgeable residents to encourage the community and industry to be water smart, and continue community education about water wastage and water efficiency.
- Apply and promote water sensitive urban and building design that improves how we use water, enhances water quality and retains as much water as possible within its natural catchment.

