

energy

OUR GOAL: Improve energy efficiency throughout the area and reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions at least consistent with State and Federal Government targets (1.2% per annum).

COUNCIL'S ENERGY USE

Council has reduced energy use in the Civic Administration Building (CAB) by 35% (from 2009-2013). The CAB is the 3rd biggest energy-user of all of Council's buildings and facilities, accounting for 11% of total energy use.

Council has reduced waste generated in the CAB by 70% (from 2011-2013).

These initiatives reduce our carbon emissions and each year save Council about \$35K. Council continues to focus on reducing the energy and waste 'footprints' of its buildings, facilities and general operations.

SUSTAINABLE HOME CHECKLIST

The Sustainable Home Checklist is a free resource developed by Council and adapted from work by Derek Wrigley OAM and colleagues from ANU. Its use is entirely voluntary and its focus is on things that can be upgraded, improved or 'fixed' to improve energy and water efficiency. In this the guide aims to address potential, incremental changes residents can make to the home they live in now. As well, the guide promotes new building design principles for homes before they are built. The four page document also references useful on-line material as well as published resources available through Council's Library.

You can download a copy of the checklist or pick up a copy at Council.

[weblink](#)

LIGHT BULB MOMENTS FOR HOW TO LIVE COMFORTABLY WITH LESS ENERGY

In March 2014 The Armidale Interagency and Sustainable Living Armidale launched 'Light Bulb Moments'. This is a web based resource to help people manage the high cost of power bills. It supports energy users to identify and change everyday habits and lower their energy costs while staying warmer in winter and cooler in summer.

The high cost of power bills is particularly burdensome to low income individuals and families. Light Bulb Moments is a resource which welfare agencies can use to assist clients, colleagues and community. The guide was developed from feedback from participants from Armidale's community agencies at workshops in 2013.

[weblink](#)

ARMIDALE CITY BOWLING CLUB

The Armidale City Bowling Club is committed to a wide range of environmental projects to ensure our impact on the environment is minimised and the Club cultivates a community aware of the importance of taking care of the environment. Some of the Club's

projects include:

- Retro-fitting the entire Club with LED lighting;
- Installing electronic lighting systems and motion sensors to control lighting levels;
- Undertaking waste management programs to ensure refuse is disposed of effectively;
- Sorting waste to use in worm farms at the Club;
- Planting over 1000 trees in the local community to offset the Club's carbon emissions;
- Planning renovations to use the most sustainable technologies;
- Incorporating sustainability in the Club's human resources and corporate strategies;
- Utilising only boar water on the Club's greens
- With these initiatives the Club has achieved:
 - 60 tonnes per annum reduction in carbon emissions
 - 65% diversion of waste from landfill
 - Dramatic reduction in water consumption
 - Educating members and staff
- Patrick Crick, CEO Armidale City Bowling Club

NEW ENGLAND WIND

New England Wind organised a 4-day Windfarm Tour in November 2013 in which 21 people travelled by coach from Armidale to Canberra. Councillors, teachers and students, farmers and environmental activists were on the bus to Canberra.

"There is nothing better than first hand experience to see, hear and learn about the workings of modern windfarms," according to Project Director, Adam Blakester.

"In the last few years there has been questions raised about wind power, such as negative noise and health impacts. The Tour provided an opportunity to sort out the facts from the myths."

"The Windfarms Tour included Woodlawn and Capital Windfarms, as well as two private landholders with wind turbines on their properties," added Blakester.

"The Tour had a strong educational focus about the benefits and impacts of wind power as well as implications for farming operations."

The New England High Country has several approved windfarms awaiting construction and several more

in planning, including New England Wind's project to develop the first community-owned windfarm in NSW. The region is an identified Renewable Energy Precinct due to its high quality wind resources.

The major sponsor of the Tour was the NSW Government Office of Environment & Heritage, with sponsorship from The Earth Welfare Foundation, AGL Energy Limited -Australia's largest private owner and operator of renewable energy assets -and New England Mutual.

NSW GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR RENEWABLES

In July 2013 Farming the Sun and New England Wind received grant funding of \$35,000 from the NSW government to develop projects for solar and windfarms. New England Wind received \$50,000 for site negotiations, feasibility modelling and a comprehensive community engagement and education program.

Member for Tamworth, Kevin Anderson, announced the State Government funding packages totalling \$85,000 on behalf of Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Robyn Parker, at a New Energy Forum held in Tamworth. Around 70 people were in attendance at the Forum.

Mr Anderson reiterated the NSW Government's commitment to achieving 20% renewable energy for electricity by 2020 and said: "There is an opportunity for NSW to lead on community renewable energy.

"Renewable energy is affordable, sustainable and strengthens rural communities and economies," said Projects Director, Adam Blakester.

"The price of solar power technology today is 1/100th of what it was 30 years ago. When combined with a community ownership model, solar power is more competitive than buying 'black power' off the grid for many medium-large electricity users," added Blakester.

UPDATE ** In November 2014 Adam Blakester reported that assessments were done on about 120 potential solar farm sites throughout the New England and the Northern Rivers. So far only one site is possibly viable and this site is in Lismore LGA.

Contact Carol Davies to add your story to next year's SOE. cdavies@armidale.nsw.gov.au or 6770 3686.