



Planning Day
Report

July 27

2014

Contents

Acknowledgements	1
1.) Introduction.....	2
2.) Purpose.....	2
3.) Vision Statement	2
What is the BIG picture?.....	2
4.) Values and Principles.....	3
How do we do things around here?	3
5.) Future and existing activities	4
Making a PLAN and getting specific!	4
Action	4
Education.....	5
Networking	6
Advocacy.....	7
6.) Conclusion	8
Appendix 1.....	9
Appendix 2.....	10

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all BEAM members who attended the Planning Day. Your presence shows just how active and vibrant the group is and signifies a bright future for the BEAM Mitchell Environment group.

Thanks also go to the volunteers who assisted in the collation of this information – Phil Bourne, Alissa van Geet, Irene Telford and Annemaree Docking.

1.) Introduction

On Sunday 27th July, BEAM members gathered together to consider the future of the group.

It was a time to reminisce on the past – the long history BEAM in the Mitchell region, the dedicated, long standing membership base and the maturing of the group as an influential and coordinated force in our community. It was a day to celebrate our successes, recognise our strengths and to acknowledge where we have opportunities for improvement.

But the key purpose of the day was to plan - to look to the future and consider the practicalities and possibilities for the group.

2.) Purpose

The purpose of the day was framed as follows:

“To reaffirm what BEAM means for each of us and how we are practically going to work together to continue to do the great things we have achieved.”

More than 30 members– both long standing, familiar faces and new, fresh and enthusiastic participants - gathered together at the Reedy Creek Hall and, facilitated by Steve Ray of Groupwork, we considered the three key elements that will support and shape the future of BEAM Mitchell Environment Group:

- Our Vision - What is the BIG picture?!
- Our Values and Principles - How do we do things around here?
- Future and existing activities - making a PLAN and getting specific!

3.) Vision Statement

What is the BIG picture?

The purpose of the Vision Statement is to succinctly outline the key focus and purpose of the group. It describes the future that BEAM Mitchell Environment Group wishes to create for our community.

The current Vision Statement is:

- “To protect and care for our natural environment for a sustainable future”

It was discussed that this was less of a Vision Statement and more a statement of purpose.

In a group break out session, 12 potential Vision Statements were generated. The top three of these statements, as selected by the workshop participants, are included below (the full list is contained in Appendix 1):

1. An enlightened, sustainable & connected community that embraces its natural environment with a local focus but global awareness.
2. A thriving community working together in wonder and appreciation of our place in the natural world.
3. A community more knowledgeable about our environment for our future generations, or our children & their children.

4.) Values and Principles

How do we do things around here?

The Values and Principles underpin how we do things as a group and shape the core behaviours we can expect from our committee, office bearers and general members when acting on behalf of BEAM.

The following is a full list of those Values and Principles generated on the Planning Day:

- Loyalty
- Support
- Peace
- Community
- Collaboration
- Cooperation
- Respect
- Do what we say we will do
- Know our limits
- Contribute
- Integrity
- Individual points of view are respected by the organisation
- Accountability of members
- To care for all living things and our environment
- To value and learn from our differences
- To value what each person can contribute to our local and global future
- Honesty – to be transparent in all dealings and processes
- Inclusion – all voices are heard, are valid and are valued.
- Everyone welcome
- Stand up for issues that impact on our environment
- Support members initiatives to come into action

There is scope to refine this list through discussion and collaboration with the broader BEAM membership, led by the committee.

5.) Future and existing activities

Making a PLAN and getting specific!

The next stage was to consider the nut and bolts of a plan for the future. This was done via round table discussions under four different themes:

- Action
- Education
- Networking
- Advocacy

Action

What	By When	Key Contact
Bulk Food - open day - advertising - alternate food days w\end & w\day - strategic planning (for growth)	28th Aug	Cynthia Lim Alissa van Geet
Identify other community groups	End Sept	Steve Salathiel
Field Trips - bats - geology - waterways - nature study	2\3\4 per year	Sonia Sharkey SWG Landcare) Expert in area
Global Climate Action day - create sub group	Sept 21st? Now	Linda Kennedy
Educational fun film night	Cooler nights	Mark Padgett
Fast Fair Free Food Feast	Oct 4th	Food Exchange
Name Change Discussion - provide background information prior to AGM		AGM
Radio Advertising Campaign	Now	Cynthia Lim
Sustainable House Day - tours	Sept 7th & 14th	Richard Telford Rob & Karen

Education

What	By When	Key Contact
Wounded wild life		Sarah Atkinson
Flora and Fauna Species Identification		
Cooking - recipe sharing - cheese making - bread making - pizza ovens		Irene Ray
Construction - pizza ovens - vegie gardens - chook sheds - house		
Short fact sheets - point to where to find more information - for various BEAM activities - program of events that can be circulated at community events (could be placed in newspapers and on community noticeboards)		
Involvement in kinders\schools - run activities		Lower Hume PCP - Jamie Poorker?
Local food information		Food Exchange
Sustainable House Day		Richard Telford
Food Growing\Farming workshops	Seasonal	Annemaree Docking Mark Padgett
Free regular media releases\educational articles (newspapers and radio)		
Water watch	October	Mark South
Walks - spotlight - bats - geology - wildflower - frogs	Anytime Spring June\ Autumn	Ray (Leslie Dalziel) Annemaree (Linda Lumsden) Alissa van Geet David Atkinson (Phil Clancy) Mark South (via Sonia)
Bee Keeping		Annemaree (FarmBlitz - support Sonia)
Christmas BBQ	Dec 25th	David A

Bush walking	Oct\Nov Apr\May	Ray Highland Ramblers
Pruning	Winter or Summer (after fruiting)	Anne Maree (FarmBlitz) Mark Padgett
Animals - food preparation - husbandry		Anne Maree (FarmBlitz)

Networking

What	By When	Key Contact
Improve Public perception of BEAM	Within 3 months of 2014 AGM	current BEAM members via committee
Initial idea was a Welcome kit – further developed into info on website then thought best to delegate someone to meet/talk with new and prospective Members		
Develop a PR action plan - schools - local media/general public; perhaps profile a BEAM member in local paper or on website to make BEAM more personal	next 12 months	Committee and interested members
Regular get togethers - more get togethers and less meetings; increase social aspect (see also under Action portfolio the radio plan)	Sept 20th?	Spotted quolls at next fun event eg Sustainable homes tour finish with Spotted Quolls gig. Contact Peter L and Mark South.
Organisational Structure of BEAM		
Greater distribution of workload to all members within their capacity. Eg Committee to actively ask members for help or involvement in actions from com meetings.	Ongoing over next 12 months then review.	By incoming committee and members
Have sub committees or portfolio or working groups on specific projects, some that may have specific tasks and limited timelines. Ask at each com meeting "who of the members could help with these tasks?" and follow up with them.	Next 12 months	Incoming committee and members

Networking with Other Groups		
More connection where appropriate with FOE, EV, And ACF.		
Landcare groups - work closer and maybe joint events. Maybe reps from BEAM on SWG Landcare Network. Greater collaboration.	Next 12 months	Incoming Committee and members

Advocacy

What	By When	Key Contact
Develop Advocacy Process. Standard Approach		
Establish advocacy planning group	End of October 2014	Barbara Moss
Categories and criteria of issues eg long and short term, as well as respond.		
Developing overarching vision		
Skills audit for advocacy		
External links		

BEAM has an important role in advocacy in the region. Quality, evidence-based advocacy can not only influence decisions of public and private sector bodies to take more environmentally sensible decisions, but can also establish BEAM's reputation and standing in the community.

There is a need to establish a systematic approach to our advocacy activities. Currently, they are conducted on an ad hoc basis, usually responding to a particular issue raised by others, and involving a small and limited number of BEAM members in the advocacy process.

It is recommended that a small sub-committee (say, three persons) be established to develop draft formal advocacy policies and procedures for the BEAM committee to consider and, hopefully, adopt and implement.

The sub-committee would establish proposals for clear and standard procedures for the advocacy program which would involve:

- Allocating responsibility for managing the advocacy program, including maintaining a watching brief on potential targets;
- Establishing criteria for identifying topics for advocacy – e.g. linking the advocacy program to our annual plan, identifying long and short term issues, recognising

interests and enthusiasms of particular BEAM members, realistic assessments of BEAM's resources and capabilities to undertake a quality program, etc.

- Identifying personnel to undertake the advocacy project. This might be assisted by a skills audit of BEAM members. It would also provide an opportunity to enlist the support of external experts who would not only add additional credibility and status to the program, but also may encourage their membership of BEAM or continuing involvement.
- Providing training or assistance to an advocacy project team in the 'dark arts' of advocacy – writing submissions, conducting workshops, preparing media material, etc.
- Establish a template for submissions

The aim of the sub-committee is to develop proposals for the BEAM committee to develop BEAM's advocacy program from its current mainly reactive approach to a proactive, forward-looking approach where BEAM sets the agenda as much as possible in the region.

6.) Conclusion

The next steps in this planning process include distribution of this report amongst the general membership for further discussion. This discussion needs to refine the outcomes of the planning day – including deciding on a final 'Vision Statement' and list of core 'Values and Principles'. This could be undertaken as a part of the AGM or alternatively through online means, via a survey monkey distribution – or a combination of both approaches could be more successful, as it would potentially be more inclusive and accessible.

Once these two elements are established, the group will be more clear and targeted in its approach, standards, operations and its boundaries. More work can then be done on each of the action areas.

A sub-committee has been suggested for the advocacy conducted by BEAM. Given the increasing relevance of this role to the group and the increasing importance of clear voices for environmental action in our community, this would be an excellent outcome of this planning day and report.

Further discussion about adequate approaches for the remaining action areas – Action, Education and Networking – can be conducted at the upcoming AGM or within the new committee elected at this AGM with consultation to the broader membership.

Appendix 1

All brainstormed Vision Statements generated by the group on the day.

1. An enlightened, sustainable & connected community that embraces it's natural environment with a local focus but global awareness
2. A thriving community working together in wonder and appreciation of our place in the natural world
3. A community more knowledgeable about our environment for our future generations, or our children & their children.
4. A collective passion for a sustainable future
5. A connected and sustainable future
6. A life filled with consideration of all that surrounds us
7. Sustainable future for all
8. Living harmoniously within our community and balancing the use of our environment
9. With kindness educating others and ourselves to be caring and responsible
10. Supporting relocalised, resilient, engaged, community and environment (natural & Social)
11. Living harmoniously within our community and environment
12. Acting locally to sustain globally, education/flexibility, interconnectedness, thinking laterally