

Many environmental problems are caused by the habits and lifestyle choices of each person. Every individual can help Fairfield City move towards sustainability through actions such as:

- Reducing car dependence
- Minimising water and energy use
- Responsible disposal of litter
- Waste minimisation.

This chapter looks at the role of residents, businesses, councils and government agencies in more sustainable living practices.

## Pressure

### Energy Use

Efforts to reduce energy use are aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and stabilising climate change. The Cities for Climate Protection Program has set an energy reduction goal of 20 percent - an ambitious but achievable goal.

Most of our energy use is from non-renewable sources. There are numerous government and industry initiatives to use more renewable energy (e.g. solar, wind, hydro-electricity).

### Waste Management

Traditionally, the waste collected by local councils has been buried in landfills. By burying waste, resources are lost that could be re-used and land taken up that could be used for other purposes. It is important to increase the amount of waste which is diverted from landfill for recycling or re-use. Council has adopted and implemented a resource recovery methodology to deal with waste rather than landfill. The UR-3R process recovers up to 85 percent of the waste stream with an average recovery of 75 percent.

### Water Use

In the recent drought years, the adequacy of Sydney's water supply has been questioned. There are several ways to address the water supply concern including actions by each individual in reducing water consumption e.g. by water re-use, installation of rainwater tanks.




### Public Transport

Reducing people's reliance on private cars means cleaner air, less use of fuel and reduced traffic noise. Improving public transport also means that people who do not have the use of private cars can move around more easily.

### Car Dependence

Motor vehicles are the most significant source of urban air pollution. They emit greenhouse gases, (most significantly carbon dioxide but also nitrous oxide and methane), which contribute to climate change and the greenhouse effect. Walking and cycling are pollution-free modes of transport and use minimal fossil fuels. They reduce the need to build, service and dispose of cars.

## State

 **Indicator 12 – Average waste consumption per household**

City (municipal) waste comprises of waste arising from domestic premises and Council activities associated with servicing residential and public areas. This includes recycling, domestic waste services, street sweeping, tree lopping and park maintenance, public bins and street litter and residential 'phone-in' clean-up services.

Table 13 shows the weight of municipal waste collected in Fairfield LGA during 2007-08 in comparison with that collected in 2006-07.

City waste production per capita is difficult to determine on a yearly basis, as ABS population data is only available every five years. As data on the number of ratable households



**Table 13: Quantity of waste collected and average waste production per household in Fairfield LGA**

Service provided	2006-07 amount collected (tonnes)	2007-08 amount collected (tonnes)
Domestic	56,209.57	59,946.66
Clean-up service	6,791.86	7,821.28
RFB Flats	5,379.34	5,512.10
Recycling	10,552.04	10,400.04
<b>Total from households</b>	<b>78,932.81</b>	<b>83,680.08</b>
<b>Average per household – tonnes (56,700 households)</b>	<b>1.39</b>	<b>1.48</b>
Street cleaning	1,728.71	2,301.59
Trade wastes	2,047.05	2,268.55
<b>Total all wastes - tonnes</b>	<b>82,708.57</b>	<b>88,250.22</b>

is easily attainable each year, city waste production has been assessed as an average per household rather than per person.

Table 13 shows that 88,250.22 tonnes of city waste was generated and collected during 2007-2008. This is an increase of

approximately six percent since the previous reporting period. The average waste per household also increased from 1.39 to 1.48 tonnes per year. It should be noted that there was a slight drop in the amount of waste recycled from the previous reporting period.

**Above** Aboriginal artist Joe Hurst, designed the feature artwork on the Nalawala Community Hall.

**Top left** Waste products for recycling at the Council's Sustainable Resource Centre, Hassall Street, Wetherill Park.



## CASE STUDY

### What's the Urban Sustainability Hub about?

The Fairfield Urban Sustainability Hub project is a working example of local government commitment and innovation for sustainability. In response to the community's need for facilities and Council's environmental sustainability objectives, the construction of the Community Hall, Bike Shed, and Community Native Nursery was undertaken. Australia's first 95 percent recycled concrete mix was used for the Community Hall and Nursery buildings. These straw bale buildings were constructed through community

workshops – one of several social capacity building initiatives run as part of the Sustainability Hub project. Others include special interest volunteer groups, 'Work For the Dole' programs in conjunction with the activities of the Nursery and Bike Shed. The partnerships formed between community and Council illustrate the desire for sustainable (social, economic and environmental) development in our local government area and beyond.

In 2007-08, a demonstration water tank was installed at the Nalawala Community where a large number of workshops and learning activities will take place over the coming years. The tank demonstrates the capture, storage and use of water around the hall and site.

Multimedia equipment was purchased to enable effective delivery of information through workshops and community events. The new community hall has been equipped with a fully adjustable wall hanging system so that there can be permanent displays on the walls.

A Sustainability Food Fair – titled 'Healthy People Healthy Earth Fair' – was held on 16 March 2008. The event included local music and dance acts and mini-workshops on sustainability themes. Two hundred native seedlings were given away to local households, in partnership with Council's Community Native Nursery project. The event was planned as a Waste Wise event including such activities as bin auditing, monitoring, signage and bin stations. It was the first carbon neutral



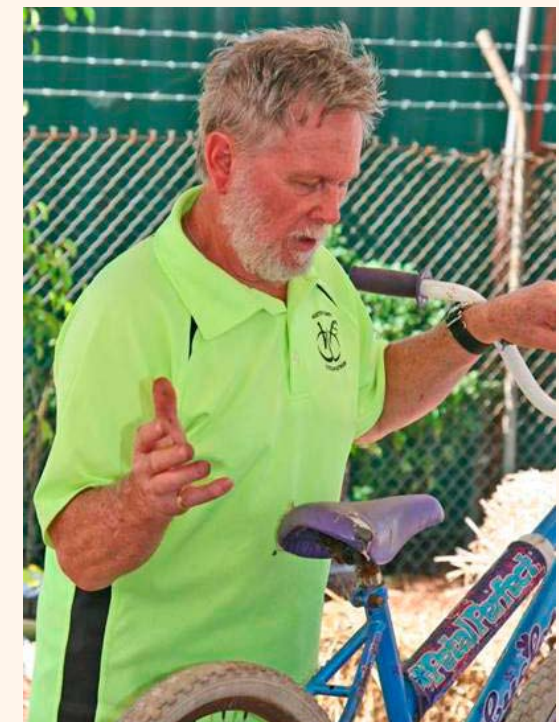
event held by Fairfield City Council. Other sustainability actions at the Fair included:

- Sponsorship from Todae in the form of carbon credits
- Food stall holders used biodegradable cutlery and plates
- Solar powered stage lighting and sound.

Several community groups such as the Community Native Nursery, Western Sydney Cycle Network, Fairfield Indigenous Flora Park and the Bonnyrigg Adopt-a-Road group were involved in the running of the Fair.

During 2007-08 progress was also made with other initiatives including:

- The Local Living Green Directory
- Sustainability Tips Recipe Book
- Community, Council staff and local business workshops on sustainability
- Sustainability website.



**Above** Fairfield's first straw bale building "Nalawala" Community Hall.

**Far left** One of the 140 species of plants of local provenance propagated at the Community Native Nursery, Fairfield Showground.

**Left** Western Sydney Cycle network volunteer recycling bikes donated by the community.