

# 2018 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES NATIONAL SUMMIT

- COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY: THE FUTURE IMPERATIVE
- THE NEED TO GROW SOCIAL COHESION, CONNECTIVITY AND RESILIENCE: COMMUNITY, FOOD, ENERGY

TUESDAY 18 AND WEDNESDAY  
19 SEPTEMBER

ANGLISS CONFERENCE CENTRE, MELBOURNE  
(CORNER LATROBE & KING STREETS, LEVEL 5)

## THE 2018 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES NATIONAL SUMMIT WILL FEATURE:

- Case studies galore: Renewable Newstead, tiny Houses, Cardinia Food Circles, Market Forces (divest your super), the power of solar, place making, local food
- Leading speakers on the need for growth in the right places, including
  - o Michel Bauwens, founder of the global Peer To Peer Foundation, leading global advances in the New Sharing Economy (building collaborative networks for the 'commons').
  - o Julie Miller Markoff, bHive Bendigo cooperative
  - o Professor Rebecca Wickes, the Australian Community Capacity Study
  - o Dean Cracknell, founder of the Town Team Movement
  - o Mariam Issa, Resilient Aspiring Women
  - o Sam Marwood, Cultivate Farms
  - o The Food Next Door Co-op, Mildura
  - o David Holmgren, Retrosuburbia
  - o Gilbert Rochecouste, Village Well (MC)
- Snapshots of Sustainability initiatives from around Australia and internationally
- Your involvement to help co-design a better future.

In Hugh Mackay's latest book 'Australia Reimagined', he demonstrates that society is more fragmented (less cohesive) than it has ever been and that this is impacting significantly on the health of citizens. A key solution to address this is local community-strengthening activities to build community sustainability.

## THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF THE OUTPUT FROM THE 2017 FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS THE CHALLENGE WE ALL NEED TO RESPOND TO AT THE LOCAL LEVEL AS WE TRANSITION TO A DIFFERENT FUTURE:

This declaration rests on a belief that the state of the nation and the health of our society depend on community-driven action in the neighbourhood, not just decisions made in parliaments or boardrooms.

Across the world people are concerned about the apparent inability of governments, business and public institutions to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of the 21st Century. Our present ways of thinking and governing are neither coping with the pace of change nor meeting citizens' expectations. There is an urgent need for a fresh approach and responsive leadership.

In some ways Australia remains the 'lucky country' but here too we are struggling with economic upheaval, rising inequality, loss of social cohesion, increased rates of loneliness and mental illness and serious environmental threats, notably climate change. Many Australians are losing faith in our basic democratic institutions and withdrawing from active participation in civic and cultural life. Our reputation as an inclusive, tolerant and compassionate society is under threat.

It's time to explore a new model of governance, one based on a re-energised civil society that draws on the strength and resourcefulness of people working together in diverse local and regional communities – a localist response.

- **STATISTICS SHOW THAT THERE IS AN INCREASE IN PEOPLE WHO FEEL ISOLATED AND THAT STRONGER COMMUNITY TIES CREATE HAPPINESS, SECURITY AND SUPPORT.**
- **THE AVERAGE PERSON UNLOCKS THEIR SMARTPHONE 110 TIMES A DAY.**

## DAY 1: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 18

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: GILBERT ROCHECOUSTE, FOUNDER VILLAGE WELL AND GLOBAL PLACE-MAKER

9.15AM WELCOME AND SCENE-SETTING: Gilbert Rochecouste

9.30AM **'THE COMMONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE'**, Michel Bauwens, founder of the global Peer to Peer Foundation.

Michel Bauwens is the founder of the Foundation for Peer-to-Peer Alternatives and works in collaboration with a global group of researchers in the exploration of peer production, governance, and property. In the first semester of 2014, Michel Bauwens was the research director of the transition project towards the social knowledge economy, an official project in Ecuador. He has been active in many places, including Ghent (Belgium) where the municipality commissioned the Commons Transition project. It is the first municipality in the world to look strategically at the commons transition. In parallel, he has received equally enthusiastic support from civil society initiatives and organisations, showing us that the commons are alive and correspond to a true aspiration.

10.10AM **'THE BHIVE MODEL IS RIPE FOR EXPORT TO OTHER COMMUNITIES'**, Julie Miller Markoff, co-founder bHive Bendigo.

bHive, a Bendigo cooperative, has started a sharing service for an entire town. It has developed its own mobile friendly website and applications to allow Bendigonians to trade or share goods, services and event information with each other. The internet is creating new ways for people to trade goods and services. In the past we went to institutions for goods and services. What's happening across America and Europe is that people are going more towards a peer-to-peer model: There are people offering lifts, car sharing and goods. bHive is saying the Bendigo community should be able to build, operate and own our own peer-to-peer local economy. What we want to do is get money circulating locally. It doesn't have to go out of (our town's) circulation every time we buy a good or a service.

10.45AM OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMONS

11.05AM MORNING TEA

11.30AM **'THE FUTURE OF FARMS'**, Sam Marwood, founder Cultivate Farms.

Cultivate Farms is a social enterprise that matches hundreds of young farming families with investors to own a farm together. These farms will be setup across the best farming land in Australia. Cultivate Farms will be the first opportunity in Australia to own a farm to achieve multiple objectives of rejuvenating regional Australia, realising a financial return, restoring the ecological health of farming land, and connecting thousands of people back to the land.

We love regional Australia and we want more people to love it as well. Cultivate Farms will spread the love by ensuring that our farming families and investors are connected into the local community. At the centre of our farms is the food. We are connecting people back to their food; growing for maximum taste, selling direct to supporters and telling stories of how it got so good.

## DAY 1: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 18

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|---------|--|--|
| 12.05PM | <b>'DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM'</b> , Nick Rose, Director, Sustain, The Australian Food Network.   | Sustain is a network of municipalities, organizations and other networks. It works alongside government, business and community stakeholders to be a national voice supporting the transition to a healthy sustainable food system. It collaborates with networks and organizations nationally and globally as part of an emerging food moment. Sustain supports the transition to a food system that works for all Australians. Nick will provide an overview of the very significant progress occurring around Australia.  |
| 12.25PM | <b>THE FOOD NEXT DOOR CO-OP</b> , Deb Bogenhuber and John Niyera.  | The Food Next Door Co-op, based in Mildura in the north-west Victoria, has developed an outstanding regional local food initiative model to build a local food system based on matching landless farmers from new migrant and refugee backgrounds with under-utilised farmland, and supporting farmers to grow traditional foods. Food Next Door developed the collaborative model using a community development approach. What started as an experiment on one acre of land has led to \$600,000 of state government funding support to establish a community demonstration farm. |
| 12.55PM | <b>LUNCH</b>   |  |
| 1.40PM  | <b>'LIVEABILITY AND RESILIENCE: THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY CAPACITY STUDY'</b> , Professor Rebecca Wickes.   | Rebecca is an Associate Professor in criminology and the Director for the Monash Migration and Inclusion Centre at Monash University. She is the lead investigator of the Australian Community Capacity Study, a multi-million, multisite, longitudinal study of place. Rebecca's research focuses on demographic changes in urban communities and their influence on social relationships, community regulation, victimisation, crime and disorder over time.   |
| 2.10PM  | <b>'THE NEW LARGE SCALE SOLAR ECONOMY: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RURAL COMMUNITY'</b> , Roger Griffiths, Economic Development Manager, Shire of Gannawarra.   | The Gannawarra Solar Farm is the first large-scale solar farm to be constructed in Victoria with stage 1 comprising 60MW. This 300MW project, includes a Tesla battery storage of 25MW that will make it one of the biggest solar storage installations in the world. This will have significant implications for the Shire of Gannawarra and its community. The Gannawarra has issued 7 planning permits totalling 650MW and has serious interest in an additional 1500MW. Roger will explain the journey to date and future plans.   |
| 2.40PM  | <b>'CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO'S BID TO BE A UNESCO CREATIVE CITY OF GASTRONOMY'</b> , Trevor Budge, Manager Regional Sustainable Development, City of Bendigo, and Sonia Anthony, Proprietor, Masons of Bendigo & President, Food Fossickers Network.  | Bendigo is aiming to become the first city in Australia to become a UNESCO City of Gastronomy, recognising its place as the centre of a diverse, productive and innovative food and beverage region. As the State Government announced in its May 2018 budget a \$2 million Artisanal Agriculture and Premium Food Program (including a grants component), what does it mean to be a City of Gastronomy in regional Victoria?  |
| 3.15PM  | <b>'PLACE MAKING AND FARMERS MARKETS: THIS CASE STUDY WILL FEATURE KEY MEMBERS OF THE TEAM LEADING THE MELBOURNE FOOD HUB'S EARLY DEVELOPMENT'</b> - Miranda Sharp, Managing Director of Melbourne Farmers Markets; Adam Perkins, Food Hub Manager, Ange Barry, Business Development Manager (former CEO of Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation), and Serena Lee, Chief Communications Officer of the agri-tech start-up Farmwall. | The Melbourne Food Hub is a proto-type and a model of what a sustainable, healthy, fair and delicious food system can be. Its goal is to inspire and support the creation of one in every city and region across Australia.  |
| 3.45PM  | <b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>   |  |
| 4.05PM  | <b>'TINY HOUSES: A CASE STUDY, JUDY CLARKE, WALLAN COMMUNITY.'</b>   | The Tiny House movement is expanding globally and may have significant implications for inequality, housing affordability and homelessness. Wallan is leading the way with ambitious community-driven actions supported by the Council.  |

## DAY 1: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 18

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| 4.25PM | <b>'FOOD EDUCATION AS A RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGE OF OBESITY'</b> , Josephene Duffy, Acting CEO, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation. | The Kitchen Garden Program provides a real response to the growing global childhood obesity crisis, attempts to address the burden of disease, and supports World Health Organization recommendations for food literacy in schools. Over 30 nations have sought support from SAKGF to introduce the model into their communities, and the Program has been evaluated as successful in changing food habits, reinforcing learning, supporting diversity and building communities. Children participating in the Program learn lifelong skills in growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing fresh, seasonal, nutritious and delicious food, through regular garden and kitchen classes that complement and reinforce learning across many other areas. In addition, children take these learnings home and influence the health of their families, and local businesses, organisations and groups come together to support the Program. |
| 4.45PM | <b>3 TRANSITION PECHAKUCHA PRESENTATIONS</b>  |  |
| 5PM    | <b>NETWORKING SESSION: FINGER FOOD AND DRINKS</b>   |  |
| 6PM    | <b>CLOSE</b>  |  |

## DAY 2: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 19

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| 9AM     | <b>'RETROSUBURBIA: THE DOWNSHIFTER'S GUIDE TO A RESILIENT FUTURE'</b> , David Holmgren.                        | David Holmgren is an Australian environmental designer, ecological educator and writer. He is best known as one of the co-originators of the permaculture movement.  |
| 9.35AM  | <b>'CREATING MORE WALKABLE, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES'</b> , Dr Claire Boulange, RMIT Centre for Urban Research. | Claire has been developing a ground-breaking planning support tool that will help planners create more walkable, sustainable communities. Her widely-acclaimed current research focuses on developing advanced simulation tools and Planning Support Systems to inform an understanding of the relationship between the built environment and population health.   |
| 10.05AM | <b>'A RESILIENT LIFE'</b> , MARIAM Issa, Resilient Aspiring Women.   | <p>Mariam Issa arrived in Melbourne from her Somali homeland in 1998 with her husband, four children and a fifth on the way, and little knowledge of Australian life. Today she has established herself in Melbourne as an inspirational public speaker, author, storyteller, intercultural facilitator, dedicated community builder, social cohesion champion and social entrepreneur. In 2012 Mariam launched her autobiography - A Resilient Life- which shares her refugee experience and story of determination to persevere despite immense hardships she faced growing up in a culture and nation dominated by clans and tribalism, patriarchy and superstition, to then overcome the vast cultural differences and challenges of inclusion in Australian life.</p> <p>In that same year she co-founded and incorporated the not-for-profit organisation and community garden RAW (Resilient Aspiring Women) in the backyard of her own home in Brighton, where the Australian government settled her and her family. Forged from Issa's inspirational trust and determination to serve and build community around her RAW aims to support women's resilience through intercultural dialogue and exchange facilitated by activities of storytelling, cooking and gardening. Mariam continues to share her experience and commitment to improving refugee's lives by sitting on the board of Asylum Seekers Resource Centre, serving as an ambassador for Refugee Council of Australia and a Director at Family Peace. She is an International Women's Forum member and co-founder of Space2b, an art and design based social enterprise established to support asylum seekers, refugees and newly arrived migrants. She was recently awarded the Ambassador of Peace award from the Universal Peace Federation - in recognition of her on-going work promoting social cohesion amongst Melbourne's culturally diverse population.</p> |

## DAY 2: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 19

10.40AM MORNING TEA

**11.05AM RENEWABLE NEWSTEAD,** Genevieve Barlow and Geoff Park.

Newstead is a diverse, creative and cohesive community with a high level of community participation and volunteerism. The locals are also keen to have a say in the future of their town. One of the key initiatives, Renewable Newstead, commenced in 2010 to enable the Newstead community to transition to 100% renewable energy, using a combination of solar and storage. The project seeks to ensure barriers to participation are minimised, while providing a balance of financial, social and community benefit to Newstead residents. We have taken significant strides towards the 'roll out' of a feasible, cost-effective and replicable community energy model. The presentation will provide an overview of the project and it's achievements to date, but more importantly we will share our insights into problem solving and community building at the 'grass roots' level.

**11.35AM 'USE YOUR POWER AS A SUPER FUND MEMBER TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE',** Will Van De Pol, Market Forces.

Market Forces works to expose the institutions that are financing environmentally destructive projects and help Australians hold these institutions accountable. We work with the community to prevent investment in projects and companies that would harm the environment and drive global warming. This presentation will provide an introduction to our work across various campaign areas: banks, superannuation, insurance, shareholder activism and corporate governance, before delving more deeply into our superannuation work, explaining the steps fund members can take to align their retirement savings with their climate values.

**12.05PM 'CONNECTING COMMUNITIES IS ABOUT PEOPLE',** Dean Cracknell, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Town Team Movement.

The Town Team Movement is an 'under-arching' non-profit organisation helping town teams to organise, engage and empower their communities and create better places.

Town teams are a model where businesses, residents, community groups and local governments work collaboratively to create great places. The teams are: independent; not politically aligned; and a positive voice and influence in their community.

Each team has slightly different priorities and focuses, but all share these principles.

There are currently 21 town teams in Perth and this number is growing quickly! Dean is a local resident who is keen to help this grassroots movement to grow and flourish across Australia. The community should be leading the change and take ownership: the people make places!

12.40PM LUNCH

**1.25PM GREAT EVENTS:** Feedback from 2018 events that are changing the game:

- 'Transition to a Safe Climate: creating a new story for Banyule', Robin Gale-Baker of Sustainable Madeod and Transition Banyule
- 'Climate Emergency', Samantha Green, Darebin City Council

**2PM CARDINIA FOOD CIRCLES CASE STUDY:** Garry McQuillan, CEO, Cardinia Shire Council, Max Godber, Community Engagement Coordinator, Cardinia Food Circles Project, and Tamsin Hadfield, Coordinator of the Community Grocer Pakenham.

Cardinia Shire is experiencing a range of significant social and health challenges that negatively affect the health, wellbeing and quality of life of many residents. Tackling these challenges effectively requires a cohesive and systemic approach, guided by a shared vision and sense of responsibility and commitment across all institutions, organisations and residents of Cardinia. Many of the serious challenges, such as the high rates of preventable hospital admissions resulting from diabetes, have their origins in a food system dominated by fast food outlets, with local farms under threat from urban sprawl and with local residents unable to access much of the wonderful fresh produce grown right on their doorstep. Cardinia Shire Council and Sustain have come together to share collective experience and knowledge and to take a collective approach to finding local solutions to local problems. The aim of the Cardinia Food Circles project is to strengthen communities and build local food system resilience and food literacy among shire residents. Through this approach, Cardinia can be the first community in Australia to successfully address the obesity crisis through combined and mutually reinforcing strategies linked by the Cardinia Liveability Plan.

**2.30PM 'THE BIG FIX - CHANGING THE STORY: HOW COMMUNITIES AND COUNCILS CAN COLLABORATE TO CREATE A GRASSROOTS MEDIA SERVICE',** Lis Bastian.

Lis is founder of The Big Fix Inc in the Blue Mountains. The vision is to start a Big Fix in every community to share stories of creative solutions in every sector.

**2.45PM 'CREATING A MOVEMENT',** Gilbert Rochecouste, Founder, Village Well.

**3.10PM NEXT STEPS: TABLE CHALLENGE:** seeking a commitment from every Council in Australia

**3.25PM CLOSE**

# 2018 **SUSTAINABLE** COMMUNITIES NATIONAL SUMMIT

## **COST:**

- Local Government officers & Councillors (and consultants & State Govt): \$550
- Community representatives (Transition Group members and volunteers): \$176

Note: No single day registrations are available.

## **TO REGISTER:**

For online registration and conference details go to [www.mav.asn.au/events](http://www.mav.asn.au/events) (click on 'upcoming events' and scroll down to September 18.)

Note: Program subject to change. See MAV website for latest version.

## **WHO SHOULD ATTEND?**

**COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL OFFICERS, MEMBERS OF TRANSITION AND SUSTAINABILITY GROUPS, AS WELL AS STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSULTANTS. IN FACT, ANYONE WITH AN INTEREST IN THIS IMPORTANT STUFF.**

## **QUERIES:**

[jhennessy@mav.asn.au](mailto:jhennessy@mav.asn.au)

## **SUGGESTED ACCOMMODATION:**

Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens, 380 William St, Melbourne Vic 3000.  
Phone (03) 9322 8000 (refer to MAV event at Angliss Conference Centre for discount).

