

Annual Report 2024-2025

Transition Town Vincent

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Chairperson Report

What a year 2025 has been for Transition Town Vincent! After a few years of reflection and consolidation, this year our group went from strength to strength. We formed new relationships with other like-minded community groups and community members, we grew our volunteer base through running workshops and events, and strengthened our existing relationships with the City of Vincent.

Our monthly movie nights had good attendance, and we showed some great quality documentaries on DocPlay and some fantastic movies made by Australian film makers, such as 'The World's Longest City' by Perth's own Harry Cunningham, and 'Breathing Life into Boodjar'. Many of our movie screenings were followed by an amazing guest speaker who was experienced and/or passionate about the topic and so those who came along had the opportunity to not only learn, but also be inspired to take action. Thanks to all our guest speakers and thank you to Behrooz for being our wonderful MC for all of these years. He officially retired in June this year. Thank you also to Margaret, Phil, Ian, Steve, Faye, Helen and other movie night volunteers for your tireless and consistent efforts. Without you showing up each month, our movie nights wouldn't happen.

I want to acknowledge Kiki Donnelly for continuing as the volunteer newsletter coordinator this year. She has done a stellar job of curating our monthly newsletter.

The Community Food Forest continues to grow and is now not only providing an opportunity for the community to get involved, learn and contribute, it's also becoming a hub for talks, workshops and community get togethers organised by TTV. The nearby Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest has also brought new volunteers, who have contributed to watering, plant care, administration, and general maintenance—further building the collaborative spirit that makes this community space so special. A huge thank you to Chris Cutress and Ian Kininmonth the project coordinators, and all the dedicated volunteers for your hours of work.

On behalf of the group, I want to acknowledge the passion and drive of Ian Kininmonth in leading the Healthy Soils Project. This year we've hosted a range of forums, movie screenings, and workshops which have informed and empowered our community and council to build healthy soils - which is the foundation for healthy food, and a healthy environment, including healthy people. I'd like to especially thank Professor Lyn Abbott and Dr Grey Coupland for so generously sharing your expertise and passion with us and the community.

Once again, I'm appreciative of what our group has achieved this year and am excited to see how TTV continues to strengthen our local community and empower people to tread lightly on the earth in 2026.

Meagan Mayhills

Treasurer's report

We have had a good year financially with a total income of \$5034.24 into our main account which was boosted by two grants from the City of Vincent totalling \$4,000 towards projects at the Food and Cockatoo forests. Otherwise our major source of income continues to be our movie nights which generated \$970 in donations.

Our expenses largely consist of memberships, insurance and some movie costs. Through membership of Garden Clubs Australia we have been able to substantially reduce our insurance costs.

We finished the year with \$7,784.90 in our main account.

The Food Forest account (now Healthy Soils) also received \$2,295 through donations, sales and events with expenses of \$1,176 for items of essential equipment and supplies to support its activities, finishing the year with \$1,392 in their separate account.

Faye Baxter

Movie nights

Our monthly movie nights had good attendance, and we showed some great quality documentaries on DocPlay and some fantastic movies made by Australian film makers, such as 'The World's Longest City' by Perth's own Harry Cunningham, and 'Breathing Life into Boodjar'. Many of our movie screenings were followed by an amazing guest speaker who was experienced and/or passionate about the topic and so those who came along had the opportunity to not only learn, but also be inspired to take action. Thanks to all our guest speakers and thank you to Behrooz for being our wonderful MC for all of these years. He officially retired in June this year.

Thank you also to Margaret, Phil, Ian, Steve, Faye and other movie night volunteers for your tireless and consistent efforts. Without you showing up each month, our movie nights wouldn't happen.

We would like to thank Floreat Athena for providing the venue, and Colin for opening up and operating the bar, the staff at Dejaxy's Cafe for the wonderful donation of bakery goods and The Source for their continued support in providing the popcorn.

List of movies

Month	Movie	Approximate Attendance
December 2024	Biochar Shorts: Cities as Carbon Sinks	15
January 2025	No Movie	
February 2025	The Need to Grow	27
March 2025	The Gig is Up	12
April 2025	No Movie	
May 2025	The Endangered Generation	25
June 2025	Aftermath: Beyond Black Saturday - Cancelled	
July 2025	Making a Mini-Forest	50
August 2025	The Oil Machine	10
September 2025	The World's Longest City	40
October 2025	Breathing life Into Boodjar	52
November 2025	Electrify Everything	25

Community Food Forest

The Community Food Forest at Britannia Reserve, nestled along the western bank of the Floreat Athena Football Stadium, continues to flourish since its planting in June–July 2023. Around 30 diverse food trees now thrive in the area, including citrus, figs, olives, mulberries, pomegranates, tropical delights like mango, custard apple and longan, nut trees such as almonds, and native bush foods including lilly pilli, Burdekin plum and peanut tree.

Through the dedication of our amazing volunteers, the forest was lovingly hand-watered three times a week over summer, helping the young trees not just survive but thrive through the hottest months. Their commitment ensured strong, healthy growth across the site.



In June 2025, we celebrated the 2nd birthday of the community food forest. Around 28 enthusiastic volunteers rolled up their sleeves to plant, weed, and mulch—strengthening both the ecosystem and the sense of community.

The food forest expanded again, with the addition of ten native nitrogen-fixing plants to boost soil health and attract pollinators.

The raised garden beds continue to be a local favourite, brimming with herbs and vegetables

for volunteers and residents to enjoy fresh from the garden.



The nearby **Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest** has also brought new volunteers into the fold, who have contributed to watering, plant care, administration, and general maintenance — further building the collaborative spirit that makes this green space so special.

Healthy Soils

The My Healthy Soils project entered its second year with a new logo (thanks Jen Stewart) and maintains the vision of 'residents empowered to transform their urban yards and courtyards into carbon sinks while creating cooler, healthier and more sustainable living environments.' We also continue to be guided by the program logic created for the project and to be opportunistic in our actions where they align to the project vision.



Raising awareness of the consequences of reduced soil carbon through urbanisation has been a priority as has been raising awareness of the three key types carbon in healthy soil primarily charcoal (biochar), humus (compost) and soil organisms (e.g. bacteria and fungi). Given our knowledge of these aspects has been low there has been a steep learning curve to overcome. Fortunately we have been assisted by people such as Professor Lyn Abbott, a nearby resident and World expert in soil biological fertility.

Understanding the relationship of healthy soils (and unhealthy soils) with plants has also been a priority. In fact we have learnt that it is only soil when it has developed a relationship with a plant, specifically its roots. Otherwise, it is dirt or in our case, sand. Similarly the role of community in creating healthy soils has also been something to behold. While it is easy to achieve the physical transformations required it is the involvement of the community which is much more difficult but the ultimate goal.

An integrating model which combined the elements of soil health restoration, growing plants and community and local circularity came to us when we discovered the internationally recognised work of Dr Grey Coupland who has been working with over 21 schools across Perth (mainly in the northern suburbs) to implement the Miyawaki pocket forest methodology. When we heard Grey being interviewed on the radio and saying that a pocket forest could be as small as 3 m², we thought this is something ideally suited to the inner city suburbs in which we reside. While the program is focused on school children our thought is 'Why should kids have all the fun'.

Initial discussions resulted in a presentation by Grey to about 25 people in September 2024 and from there we were very keen to get a pocket forest in the ground the following year. In addition to the above ground enhancement of carbon and biodiversity the project would bring we were also



keen to improve the below ground carbon and biodiversity, using a circular, community based approach.

Also in late September we received a very generous donation of 2 cubic metres of biochar from FASERA, a company based at Mollerin in the WA's north eastern Wheatbelt which specialises in carbon reduction technologies and selling associated carbon credits into the international and Australian marketplaces. Having the biochar has been a game changer for us and is used in a variety of ways but mainly in making co-composted biochar which we use in the food forest, Black Cockatoo pocket forest, and for volunteer projects in their home gardens. It has also been supplied to other community gardens, research projects and as sample bags to residents and others (including instructions on how to use it). In June we received another generous 1m3 donation from FASERA and also use their wood vinegar product, with interesting results including early germination of plants.



The need for a good supply of compost for the Black Cockatoo pocket forest project resulted in restoration of the community composting hub in February but using a different model and most recently, a new name – the Soil Hub. Instead of sourcing waste resources from residents we sourced these from nearby businesses (e.g. vegetable scraps from fruit and veg shop, cafes for coffee grounds), the Council (mulch) and community groups (e.g. grass clippings from the Leederville tennis club). These were combined with biochar in a process called co-composting which resulted in the inoculation of the biochar with microbes and (we hope) stabilisation of any phosphorus which plants such as Banksia and Hakea are particularly sensitive to. The overall process was put together in a very good diagram by one of our volunteers, Jen Stewart.



The activation of the community compost hub in late February was also necessary to provide the biomass for amending into the soil for the scheduled planting day in July 2025. This was made more difficult by the desirability of having aged the compost for 3 months beforehand. Fortunately we managed to build up a core of about 8 volunteers who turned up once or twice weekly to make and mix the co-composted biochar resulting in about 1,500 litres ready for planting day with about another 2,500 litres incorporated into the gardens of volunteers. It is estimated that we have managed to increase the soil carbon from

about 1.5% to about 2.5-3% at the Black Cockatoo forest site by this process.

This time last year (November 2024) we were also still running swap and grow type events and at one of them the Hon. John Carey donated a wood fired pizza oven for making bespoke biochar with. While it has only been used a few times we are keen to use it more next year. Due to the heat of summer we did not have too many activities and struggled to keep plants alive in our Potting Shed which our good friends at the Tools n Things library allowed us to use. The presence of the Tools n Things library and the ongoing support, advice and assistance from people such as Phil Brown and Helen Ingman has been indispensable.

Also in November 2024 we started the My Healthy Soils project newsletter to communicate project related news, events and other information. We prepared 9 newsletters which now go out to a mailing list which has grown quickly from about 40 people to about 220 people now.

My Healthy Soil Project **NEWSLETTER**

19th August 2025

Can we make it? Yes we can!



After the heat had subsided somewhat in March we had a very successful event 'Transform your Yard or Courtyard into a Carbon Sink'. This was essentially a stocktake of some of the different ways residents could incorporate carbon into their soil (sand) to result in both healthy plants and a more liveable and climate resilient living environment. There are plans to replicate this in a modified way early in the new year.

At the end of April/early May we took advantage of a visit by international pyrolysis and biochar expert Professor Stephen Joseph to conduct a couple of workshops – one on making and using biochar for better soil, water and vegetation management at the North Perth Community Garden and another which looked at the concept of Transforming the City into a Carbon Sink using a Regenerative Urbanism approach. Both were very well attended.



In the meantime the planting day for the Black Cockatoo pocket forest was looming but we had still not ordered the plants. There was a bit of to-ing and fro-ing re the area of the planting area – originally it was going to be only 50 square metres to use the land at the food forest which the Council had previously allocated to us but they then agreed to extend the area to enable us to plant 150 square metres. This change was enough to enable Grey to access substantial funds (\$15,000) from SUGi Projects, the international organisation for Miyawaki pocket forests.

The project was also registered as a Planet Ark National Tree Day project and we were to be granted about \$2,000 to purchase plants but unfortunately Planet Ark went into administration. Even when they were able to trade again a number of

projects were funded but not ours. Our project was registered on the National Tree Day site and we received a significant number of registrations for volunteers to plant. Consequently we did little local promotion.

We also undertook quite a few activities for the purpose of promoting the Black Cockatoo pocket forest generally and related My Healthy Soils project and enrolling volunteers. This included:

- The City of Vincent Native Plant Sale in May where about 6 volunteers were on hand to hand out 120 sample bags of biochar and associated user instructions and to take contact details of people interested in our projects (40).
- Conducting about 5 walking tours of the area around the area of the food forest, compost hub and Black Cockatoo pocket forest. About 22 people attended these.



The showing of the documentary Making Mini-Forest made by a friend of Grey's and which provided a case study of adoption of Miyawaki pocket forests (mini-forests) around Europe. About 47 people attended this including Catriona Ferrie from Rotary. Cat approached Grey and I after the planting to discuss Rotary helping us scale up the project. We have had a number of meetings with Rotary and the momentum is increasing.



While the Black Cockatoo pocket forest project was receiving a lot of attention we were cognisant that the Food Forest may have felt a bit neglected. So we decided to have a 2nd birthday celebration featuring planting of some new trees and shrubs, establishment of a bush tucker garden and some general weeding and mulching. This event was also well attended (28 people) with a lot of new people attending.

As the planting day for the Black Cockatoo pocket forest got closer the forecast for the day was for thunderstorms and lightning and considerable rain. A decision was made to defer the planting to the following weekend in August mainly due to concerns about the lightning. While the forecast for the deferred day was for significant rain and strong wind forecast the decision to proceed was made on the fact there was no lightning forecast. On the morning of the event, I was standing on the hill watching children playing soccer in the heavy rain when I received a phone call from someone enquiring as to whether the event was still going ahead. I said that if was OK for the kids to be out in the rain then it would be OK for us.

It was a nervous wait to see if anyone would brave the rain but 50 initially nervous people turned up and following a moving smoking ceremony and welcome to Country the planting got under way with up to about 40 people enthusiastically doing the actual planting of about 500 plants of about 32 species including three eucalypt species and five banksia species; food which Black Cockatoo's love. While we did not get any lightning, the community atmosphere at the event was nothing short of electric with many people on a high days afterwards. Many thanks to Dr Grey Coupland and her team who made this all possible. An article penned by volunteer Jens Kirsch summed the event perfectly with lots of quotes from attendees and appeared in a couple of community newspapers.



Following the event there has been a team of volunteers weeding the Black Cockatoo pocket forest and making co-composted biochar for the stage 2 planting which will be on about 600 m² of bituminised land granted to us just west of the Tools n Things library. This will be de-paved for us by the City of Vincent and will cover an area of about 300m² when it is planted by the community in July 2026.

Since the planting we have been having discussions with a number of groups in relation to planning and planting of other Black Cockatoo pocket forests in their areas. These include a number of town teams and Claise Brook Catchment Group. As previously mentioned, Rotary and Perth NRM Rewild Perth are extremely interested in being involved in scaling up and extending the project. We hope to assist at least one local group with a Black Cockatoo pocket forest planting 2026 and many more in 2027.



We cannot emphasise enough how fortunate we are to have such a supportive and approachable Council, in the City of Vincent. Mayor Alison Xamon has been very supportive as have many Councillors and staff. Frequently other groups comment on how lucky we are to have an enabling Council that wants to say "Yes". In addition to providing land and other resources and infrastructure, they have participated in a number of events and facilitated things to make things happen, even if they have not necessarily been in any specific plans. Quarterly meetings with the Mayor have also been much appreciated.

Another key advocacy activity that members have been involved with includes the City of Vincent Sustainability and Transport Advisory Group. Three members of TTV are on the STAG and have had significant influence in affecting the formulation of the now finalised Enhanced Environment Strategy. This makes it easier for formulating projects as our objectives are similar.

The City of Vincent has also provided us with two grants of \$2,000 in 2025/2026 with the first being used towards purchasing plants for stage 2 of the Black Cockatoo pocket forest and the other for interpretative signs in the area.

Volunteers are key to the success of the group and we have been successful in enrolling volunteers to assist with a wide variety of activities. Conservatively it is estimated that around 1000 hours of volunteer time has been involved in the project. Supporting our volunteers will be critical to the ongoing success of the project and a productive 2026.



Summary of activities/outputs

Events/activity	Date	No.	Measure
Volunteer time		1000	hours
Steering group meetings		6	number
Walking tours/project briefings X 5		22	people
Pocket Forests for the Inner City	24/09/2024	25	people
Open day at the Potting Shed and Community Food Forest	24/11/2024	22	people
Swap and Grow	5/10/2024	18	people

Presentation at Creating Black Cockatoo Friendly Suburbs talk at City of Vincent Library	6/03/2025	30	people
Transform your Yard or Courtyard into a Carbon Sink	16/03/2025	36	people
Workshop - Biochar for Urban Soil, Water and Vegetation Management	30/04/2025	12	people
Forum - Transforming the City into a Carbon Sink: A Regenerative Urbanism Approach	1/05/2025	13	people
City of Vincent Native Plant Sale	17/05/2025	120	biochar samples
Presentation at Black Cockatoo event by the Flower District Town Team	25/06/2025	40	people
Britannia Community Food Forest 2nd Birthday	29/06/2025	28	people
Black Cockatoo Pocket Forest Planting	2/08/2025	50	people
North Perth Community Garden Spring Festival	20/09/2025	30	biochar samples
Breathing Life into Boodja	13/10/2025	52	people
My Healthy Soils Project Newsletters		9	newsletters sent
Emailing list		235	subscribers
Media articles		4	media articles
Videos		5	
Events attended by Mayor / and or Councillors		6	
Diagrams		3	number
FASERA biochar		3000	litres

Co-composted biochar made

4000 litres

Sample packs of biochar

180 samples
distributed

Ian Kininmonth, Coordinator