

DID YOU KNOW?

Australia is the **driest** continent on Earth. We are experiencing **warmer conditions & less rainfall**, yet at the same time, our **population** is growing by more than 40,000 people/year. Go to www.sydneywater.com.au to see how could you save water?

Sustainability Street Welcomes 99-101 Coleman & 1-3 Vincent Streets Merrylands

With the support of Housing NSW, residents from 99-101 Coleman and 1-3 Vincent Streets, Merrylands have joined the Sustainability Street program.

At the first meeting on 28 January 2009, nine enthusiastic residents of this social housing unit complex met to talk sustainability. This represented almost 50% of the people who live in the block.

This was the first of at least five meetings that will occur prior to the end of March 2009 that will enable residents to come together to discuss common issues, learn more about what they can do to save energy, water and waste and get to know one another better.

At this meeting, a pressing issue, the reduction of local bus services, was discussed and possible steps of action identified. A reduction of local bus services would considerably impact on the mobility of these and other neighbouring residents because most do not drive cars.

As a group, we decided to:

- Contact Holroyd City Council and add their names to those who were expressing concern about this proposed change in service.
- Attend the public meeting that Council is hosting on 4 February 2009.
- Write to the local State Member of Parliament, other relevant Ministers and the bus companies.

These actions represent the community-building and political-engagement aspects of sustainability. Being involved in local decision-making processes to improve and protect the local community is integral to creating a sustainable society.



Residents from 99-101 Coleman & 1-3 Vincent Streets Merrylands at their first Sustainability Street meeting

Residents also discussed ideas for a project for the complex. There was real excitement about the opportunity that this provided. Ideas included:

- Rainwater tanks.
- An irrigation system for the gardens, using water from the tanks.
- Re-establishment of the community vegetable garden and sharing of the produce
- Planting of more native plants and shrubs.

People also talked about the number of things they are already doing to improve the environment. There was a strong sense of community in supporting others to engage fully in recycling, shopping wisely etc.

This series of Sustainability Street workshops has begun with energy and excitement. The next workshop is on **11 February 2009**. All residents at 99-101 Coleman and 1-3 Vincent Street Merrylands and their guests are invited!



WANT TO BE KEPT INFORMED?

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email or snail mail, please contact Council's Officer, Bernadette Mackinnon on 9840 9981 or email your details to bernadette.mackinnon@holroyd.nsw.gov.au

Update from Walpole Street

On 3 December 2008, tenants from 64-70 Walpole Street Merrylands joined the St George Community Housing Tenants Advisory Group for their Christmas Party at Central Gardens Merrylands.

After a brief session with Phil and Quoc Tran on how we could all make the festive season more sustainable, the tenants all made pledges such as giving gift vouchers instead of unwanted gifts to relatives, using a pot plant as a Christmas Tree, and hiding gifts around the home for children to find on a treasure hunt instead of using lots of wrapping paper.

All tenants then participated in the White Elephant Gift Giving Game, where tenants had bought an unwanted item from home wrapped up and placed it under the tree. Each tenant that bought a gift was then able to choose a gift to take home. The day concluded with a beautiful lunch provided by St George Community Housing.



Everyone at the St George Community Housing Christmas Party

On 12 January 2009, the tenants and their children participated in a workshop with Elizabeth from the Botanic Gardens Trust and learnt how to propagate succulents.



Elizabeth from Botanic Gardens Trust showing Melissa and her children the process in propagating succulents.

The tenants are now eagerly awaiting the construction of their new community garden which is due to commence shortly.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES

Wednesday 11 February 2009

Time: 2.30-4.00pm

Common Room

99-101 Coleman & 1-3 Vincent Streets
Merrylands

Topic: Green Christmas

RSVP: Holroyd City Council Ph 9840 9981

Wednesday 25 February 2009

Time: 9.30am – 2.30pm

64-70 Walpole Street, Merrylands

Topic: We are going on an excursion to look at Community Gardens

RSVP Essential: Rowa Omari

Ph: 9585 1499 ext 131

For more information about the Sustainability Street program contact Holroyd City Council on 9840 9981.

