Keep Australia Beautiful NSW

TIDY TOWNS
sustainable communities

Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities COMMUNITY GUIDE 2008

www.kabnsw.org.au

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Acknowledgements

This Keep Australia Beautiful NSW Sustainable Communities Guide is a collection of information and resources which Keep Australia Beautiful NSW has accumulated and learnt since its establishment in 1975. Some information contained in this guide was originally developed by various organisations including community groups, Tidy Towns Committees, local governments, state government departments and private companies.

Specifically, Keep Australia Beautiful NSW would like to thank and acknowledge the following organisations for their contributions to this guide:

- NSW Department of Fair Trading
- NSW Department of Environment & Climate Change NSW
- Work Cover NSW
- Keep Australia Beautiful National Association
- Keep Australia Beautiful South Australia (KESAB)
- Gosford City Council
- Our Community
- Keep Australia Beautiful Program Advisory Committee

Foreword

On behalf of the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, I wish to welcome you to our community guide and hope that the information it contains will help assist and encourage efforts within your respective communities.

This is a new initiative by Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, with over 33 years of running community programs a grass routes level. The organisation has extensive experience and understanding of communities around NSW. This guide aims to provide essential information for all types of community groups and remains a working document, which will be updated annually.

For those of you that are unfamiliar with Tidy Towns, I strongly encourage you to look further at this very worthwhile community program, which can be entered by almost anyone.

Tidy Towns has been enormously successful throughout rural and regional NSW where friends and neighbours put in hours of their own time to make their community a better place to live, visit and work.

On behalf of everyone at Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, I wish you all the best of success in building sustainable communities in 2008. Please fill out the feedback form on page 34 so this community guide can continue to be refined and added to, if you have any useful addition, please send them to Keep Australia Beautiful NSW.

Regards,

Dawn Fardell MP
Chair, Keep Australia Beautiful NSW.

Disclaimer

This document has been produced by Keep Australia Beautiful NSW using materials sourced by a diversity of institutions around NSW and Australia. Although, the purpose of this document is to resource community groups, no part of this document may be reproduced which does not credit Keep Australia Beautiful NSW or alters the structure, format and integrity of this document.

While every care has been taken in compiling the information in this document, Keep Australia Beautiful NSW cannot be responsible for any errors or omissions.

Part One – Establishing Your Committee

This section explains the legal essentials in setting up and developing any community group. Check with your local council as minor amendments may be in place which replace or supersede information in this guide. Some councils have codes of conduct and management guidelines associated with their section 355 committee development. Keep Australia Beautiful NSW strongly recommends that all committees are either section 355 committees or incorporated associations.

Section 355 Committees

Initial Set-up Procedures

When a Section 355 Committee is set up in Council's system, several processes will take place:

- A Council contact (co-ordinator) will be established who will have appropriate authority to provide the necessary advice on Council regulations to the Committee and for authorising Request for Goods and Services forms;
- The Committee will be issued with appropriate General Ledger Account Number(s) by the Finance Section (following advice to Finance by the co-ordinator that the Committee has been set up);
- The Committee will be issued with a designated Bank deposit book;
- The Committee will be issued with a book containing manual Tax Invoice/Receipt forms. (An example will be provided as to how to fill them out and training will also be provided if required);
- The Committee will be issued with a supply of Banking Details forms. Note that there are two distinct sections on this form and the use of each is discussed below;
- The Committee will be issued with a number of Request to Raise an Invoice forms; and
- The Co-ordinator of the Committee will be issued with a Request for Goods and Services book and a Stores Issue Docket book on behalf of the Committee.

Income

Income earned by a Section 355 Committee can take several different forms. For example:

- Weekly playing fees paid by members;
- Annual membership fees paid by members;
- Hall hire fees paid by external hirers; and

- Bond/Security deposits paid by external hirers.

Due to the fact that the Committee is an operating section of Council, GST will need to be accounted for on appropriate types of income. Of the four examples shown above, GST is payable on the first three, but not on the fourth. It will be necessary for a member of the Committee to initially liaise with Council's GST Officer to determine those charges that will be subject to GST and those that will not.

Cash or Credit Sales
Cash Sales

On most occasions, the Committee will be collecting cash from members for fees for the use of the facility. These collections are easily accounted for and merely require a receipt to be issued for the amount paid. Once all collections have been taken for the day, the total collections should be banked as soon as possible. Please check further procedures and banking details with your council as they alter from council to council.

Purchase of Goods and Services

Under the Local Government Act 1993, a member of a S355 Committee does not have the authority to purchase goods and services on behalf of Council. Hence any purchase must be initiated and authorised by the Co-coordinator. The purchase may be made through either the Council Store or by means of a Council Purchase Order if the goods need to be supplied by an external supplier.

Purchase Order

To initiate an order for supply of goods or services by an external supplier, a Request for Goods and Services form will be completed. The form is filled out by the Co-ordinator following a request from an authorised Committee member.

In circumstances where a tradesperson is required, a list of qualified persons is available from the Purchasing Section and should be the basis upon which an order is issued. Under no circumstances should a Committee member contract a non-qualified tradesperson to carry out work on a Council facility.

Of equal importance, the Committee must not take delivery of goods or services until an official Council purchase order has been raised and issued to the approved supplier.

Once the Committee has received the goods, the Delivery Docket will be signed by the Co-ordinator to indicate that the goods, as ordered, have been supplied in good order and condition. The Delivery Docket is then returned to the Store to allow the invoice to be paid.

Preamble and Implications of GST Legislation

The requirements of the GST Legislation imposed certain conditions on businesses with respect to the collection and subsequent remittance of GST to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In summary, these are:

- If the business is registered (for GST), it must lodge a GST return for each tax period, normally by the 28th day of the following month;
- The GST return is included on the Business Activity Statement (BAS);
- If the annual turnover is $20 million or more, the BAS must be lodged electronically; and
- Any net payment due to the ATO must be paid electronically.

The Section 355 Committees that trade within Council's General Ledger system are considered by the ATO to be an "operation" of Council. Therefore all receipts and payments need to be processed through Council's systems in accordance with the strict guidelines imposed on all other Council departments.

It should be noted that these outlined procedures are subject to audit by the Council Auditor therefore it is imperative they are followed to avoid audit issues developing.

Tidy Towns Committee Constitutional Development

What is a Constitution?

Much like the mission statement, the constitution outlines what you are setting out to do as an organisation. It also includes information about how the organisation will be run, such as:

- Number of board members and their roles.
- Cost of membership to the board.
- How one becomes elected to the board.
- Profit/non-profit status.
- Frequency of annual general meetings (AGM's).
- How decision making works.

What is an incorporated Association?

The Associations Incorporation Act 1984 provides small non-profit community based groups with an easier and relatively inexpensive means of establishing a legal entity rather than forming a co-operative or a company.

Incorporation creates a legal entity that is separate to the individual members. Members of unincorporated bodies face the possibility of being sued as individuals. Incorporation provides a certain amount of limited liability for members, as long as they follow accepted business and community standards. Incorporation is voluntary. Incorporation also allows the association to:

- continue regardless of changes to membership,
- enter into and enforce contracts, including the power to hold, acquire and deal with property, and
- sue or be sued.

Keep Australia Beautiful NSW is an Incorporated Not for Profit Public Company under the Corporations Act 2001. This is much the same as an Incorporated Association, however it sets out a more detailed framework for which the organisation is managed.

How do I make my Committee an Incorporated Association?

You can choose to adopt the Model Rules of Incorporation (enclosed in this guide) as your organisation's constitution and add a mission statement to this (a bit easier than reinventing the wheel). You can also choose to alter certain items of the Model Rules to suit you. If you choose to adopt the Module Rules of Incorporation, please remember that you are adopting <u>all</u> of the rules even if you don't necessarily want to. To adopt to the Module Rules of Incorporation with some minor changes, then tick the Module Rules with changes box and the fix a list of changes to the form, these might include that your want to discount proxy voting or not allow for the re-election of old member to the same role etc. For more information contact Department Of Fair Trading or visit www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/business/associations.html

To incorporate an association, you are required to fill out two forms (1 and 3 included in this guide), this will cost $138 to lodge both forms and you will be sent a Certificate of Incorporation. Your Tidy Town Committee will then end in 'Inc.' and be a legal stand alone entity.

Insurance

An incorporated association may effect and maintain insurance on its own accord which will reduce risk from financial hazards. Insurances may include:

- Damage and property insurance
- Public liability insurance
- Workers compensation insurance

Many of these insurance policies, especially public liability insurance may not be cost effective and therefore require alternative thinking to avoid large cost commitments. Ideas could include:

- Partnering with an existing organisation or business which has the appropriate insurance, please note that this alternative will require their policy to be amended and may attract additional costs. Your aims will have to similar to theirs and within the designated geographic area.
- Partner or amalgamate with other local community groups (permanently or just for designated projects) so that costs can be shared.
- Sign over tangible assets and projects (and their associated liability) to councils and organisations with appropriate insurance to avoid the insurance burden.

When shopping for insurance make sure you indicate that your organisation is a small community group. A new low risk public liability insurance policy has been designed by GIO specifically for small not-for profit organisations. This policy has a flat rate of $360 including taxes for a limit of $5 Million liability, a $10 Million liability is available for $580. These policies are available for organisations with annual turnovers of less than $50,000 and must have less than 20 active members.

For further information please speak with GIO about their low risk facility on 1300 763 117 or email nfpo@suncorp.com.au Please quote reference number 2134.

Section 355 committees have an insurance advantage as they are subcommittees of council and are therefore covered under the policies which council has covered itself. All section 355 committees will be required to perform various tasks and possibly training to comply councils insurance policy. It is essential that all section 355 committees comply with these requirements as insurance policies may become void if discrepancies are sighted.

Election of Members

Election of members

1) Nominations of candidates for election as office-bearers of the association or as ordinary members of the committee:
    a) must be made in writing, signed by 2 members of the association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form
    b) of the nomination), and
    c) must be delivered to the secretary of the association at least 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the annual general meeting at which the election is to take place.
2) If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the committee, the candidates nominated are taken to be elected and further nominations are to be received at the annual general meeting.
3) If insufficient further nominations are received, any vacant positions remaining on the committee are taken to be casual vacancies.
4) If the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated are taken to be elected.
5) If the number of nominations received exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot is to be held.
6) The ballot for the election of office-bearers and ordinary members of the committee is to be conducted at the annual general meeting in such usual and proper manner as the committee may direct.

Secretary

1) The Secretary of the association must, as soon as practicable after being appointed as secretary, lodge notice with the association of his or her address.
2) It is the duty of the secretary to keep minutes of:
    a) all appointments of office-bearers and members of the committee,
    b) the names of members of the committee present at a committee meeting or a general meeting, and
    c) all proceedings at committee meetings and general meetings.
    d) Minutes of proceedings at a meeting must be signed by the chairperson of the meeting or by the chairperson of the next succeeding meeting.

Treasurer

It is the duty of the treasurer of the association to ensure:
a) that all money due to the association is collected and received and that all payments authorised by the association are made, and
b) that correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the association, including full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the
c) activities of the association.

Casual vacancies

For the purposes of these rules, a casual vacancy in the office of a member of the committee occurs if the member:
a) dies, or
b) ceases to be a member of the association, or
c) becomes an insolvent under administration within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth, or
d) resigns office by notice in writing given to the secretary, or
e) is removed from office under rule 19, or
f) becomes a mentally incapacitated person, or
g) is absent without the consent of the committee from all meetings of the committee held during a period of 6 months.

Removal of member

1) The association in general meeting may by resolution remove any member of the committee from the office of member before the expiration of the member's term of office and may by resolution appoint another person to hold office until the expiration of the term of office of the member so removed.
2) If a member of the committee to whom a proposed resolution referred to in clause (1) relates makes representations in writing to the secretary or president (not exceeding a reasonable length) and requests that the representation be notified to the members of the association, the secretary or the president may send a copy of the representations to each member of the association or, if the representations are not so sent, the member is entitled to require that the representations be read out at the meeting at which the resolution is considered.

Meetings and quorum

1) The committee must meet at least 3 times in each period of 12 months at such place and time as the committee may determine.
2) Additional meetings of the committee may be convened by the president or by any member of the committee.
3) Oral or written notice of a meeting of the committee must be given by the secretary to each member of the committee at least 48 hours (or such other period as may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the committee) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.
4) Notice of a meeting given under clause (3) must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that business is
5) to be transacted at the meeting, except business which the committee members present at the meeting unanimously agree to treat as urgent business.
6) Any 3 members of the committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a meeting of the committee.
7) No business is to be transacted by the committee unless a quorum is present and if, within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present,
8) the meeting is to stand adjourned to the same place and at the same hour of the same day in the following week.
9) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting is to be dissolved.
10) At a meeting of the committee:
    a) the president or, in the president's absence, the vice president is to preside, or
    b) if the president and the vice-president are absent or unwilling to act, such one of the remaining members of the committee as may be chosen by the members present at the meeting is to preside.

Delegation by committee to sub-committee

1) The committee may, by instrument in writing, delegate to one or more sub-committees (consisting of such member or members of the association as the
2) committee thinks fit) the exercise of such of the functions of the committee as are specified in the instrument, other than:
    a) this power of delegation, and
    b) a function which is a duty imposed on the committee by the *Act* or by any other law.
3) A function the exercise of which has been delegated to a sub-committee under this rule may, while the delegation remains unrevoked, be exercised from time to time by
4) the sub-committee in accordance with the terms of the delegation.
5) A delegation under this section may be made subject to such conditions or limitations as to the exercise of any function, or as to time or circumstances, as may be specified in the instrument of delegation.

6) Despite any delegation under this rule, the committee may continue to exercise any function delegated.
7) Any act or thing done or suffered by a sub-committee acting in the exercise of a delegation under this rule has the same force and effect as it would have if it had been
8) done or suffered by the committee.
9) The committee may, by instrument in writing, revoke wholly or in part any delegation under this rule.
10) A sub-committee may meet and adjourn, as it thinks proper.

Voting and decisions

1) Questions arising at a meeting of the committee or of any sub-committee appointed by the committee are to be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the committee or sub-committee present at the meeting.
2) Each member present at a meeting of the committee or of any sub-committee appointed by the committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled
3) to one vote but, in the event of an equality of votes on any question, the person presiding may exercise a second or casting vote.
4) Subject to rule 20(5), the committee may act despite any vacancy on the committee.
5) Any act or thing done or suffered, or purporting to have been done or suffered, by the committee or by a subcommittee appointed by the committee, is valid and
6) effectual despite any defect that may afterwards be discovered in the appointment or qualification of any member of the committee or sub-committee.

OH&S

The objects of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* are to:

- secure and promote the health, safety and welfare of people at work
- protect people against workplace health and safety risks
- provide for consultation and co-operation between employers and workers in achieving the objects of the Act
- ensure that risks are identified, assessed and eliminated or controlled,
- develop and promote community awareness of occupational health and safety issues,
- provide a legislative framework that allows for progressively higher standards of occupational health and safety to take account of new technologies and work practices
- protect people against risks arising from the use of plant (ie. machinery, equipment or appliances).

Risk Management

The *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* defines a hazard as 'anything (including work practices or procedures) that has the potential to harm the health or safety of a person'.

Hazard identification, **risk assessment**, and **elimination** or **control** offer the best opportunity for reducing workplace injury or illness.

Hazards arise from:

- the work environment
- the use of machinery and substances
- poor work design
- inappropriate systems and procedures.

Hazards can be classified into five broad areas:

- physical eg. noise, radiation, light, vibration
- chemical eg. poisons, dusts
- biological eg. viruses, plants, parasites
- mechanical/electrical eg. slips, trips and falls, tools, electrical equipment
- psychological eg. fatigue, violence, bullying.

Hazard management plans can be developed after hazards have been classified, eg. a physical hazard management plan.

It is important for workers to be aware of hazards. Your occupational health and safety committee may recommend hazard specific training.

Having identified hazards and determined that people are at risk of injury or illness from them, there is a legal obligation for employers to do something about them.

Clause 11 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* states that an employer must eliminate any reasonably foreseeable hazard and, if this is not practical, must control the risks. Clause 5 explains the meaning of 'control of risks'.

If elimination of the hazard is not possible, then the risk still exists and should be minimised by using the most effective method, in the following order:

1. substituting the system of work or machinery with something safer
2. isolating the hazard
3. minimising the risk by introducing engineering controls eg. guard rail, scaffolding
4. minimising the risk by adopting administrative controls eg. warning signs, safe work practices
5. using personal protective equipment eg. safety glasses, ear muffs.

If no single control is sufficient, a combination of the above controls needs to be put in place to minimise the risk to the lowest level that is reasonably practical.

The measures at the fourth and fifth levels are less effective, and require more frequent reviews of the hazards and systems of work.

Once implemented, control strategies should be documented. They also need to be properly used and maintained, and training should be provided where necessary.

Ongoing monitoring and review are necessary to ensure the continuing appropriateness of controls and to encourage continual improvement

Hierarchy or Hazard Controls

There are seven controls which can be managed to reduce the level and degree of hazards of an activity. These seven controls are:

1. DESIGN. Try to ensure that hazards are 'designed out' when new materials, equipment and work systems are being planned for the workplace.

2. REMOVE the hazard or **SUBSTITUTE** less hazardous materials, equipment or substances.

3. ADOPT A SAFER PROCESS. Alterations to tools, equipment or work systems can often make them much safer.

4. ENCLOSE OR ISOLATE THE HAZARD through the use of guards or remote handling techniques.

5. PROVIDE EFFECTIVE VENTILATION through local or general exhaust ventilation systems. Administrative Controls

6. ESTABLISH appropriate **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES** such as:
- job rotation to reduce exposure or boredom, or timing the job so that fewer workers are exposed
- routine maintenance and housekeeping procedures
- training on hazards and correct work procedures.

7. PROVIDE suitable and properly maintained **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT** (PPE) and training in its use.

Part Two - Membership

Attracting New Members

It is recommended that all community groups have representation from all sectors of the community. Many of the following representations may not be possible but where possible try to include them. These include:

- Business representation
- Council representation (councils officer or councilor)
- Other prominent community group representation
- Aboriginal community representation
- Local media representation
- Schools representation
- Youth representative (also see next section)

Attracting Young Members

Tidy Towns Committees are important community leaders in their towns. Their ability to provide training and mentoring to both peers and younger generations are important steps in building capacity and passing along knowledge.

Tips

- ➢ See whether there are any local teachers, youth group leaders or young farmers who can be involved in your Tidy Towns Committee to provide new ideas on involving youth or providing a mentoring role for youth in town.

- ➢ Encourage youth representatives from the local school or youth club to visit a Tidy Towns committee meeting and talk about the things that give them a sense of place in the community and what they would like to see changed. This could be done as an outcome of a school activity involving the whole class. In inviting the students to the meeting, resist the urge to lecture, be prepared to accept new ideas and work together to see how their needs or aspirations can be realised while respecting where each other is coming from.

- ➢ Set youth the challenge of providing a service to the community in exchange for the provision of recreational equipment or a site for a youth club. Be sure to clarify what you would like the young people to contribute, and keep the negotiation simple. If youth have ownership of the project, a much higher level of success could be achieved, recognition and leadership by the committee is essential.

- Introduce students to people in the community, by way of classroom talks or visits to project sites. Give them the opportunity to ask Tidy Towns related advice.

- Host a barbecue or other appropriate event between school children and young farmers or business people in town to talk about why they have stayed in town and share some of the difficulties they face living in rural and regional NSW.

- To help build the skills and knowledge of the Tidy Towns Committee, encourage resident environmental experts or local historians to come and talk at the next Tidy Towns committee meeting about your region's unique natural features, wildlife or cultural heritage and look at ways of developing a partnership to work on natural or cultural heritage issues.

- Encourage visits between Tidy Towns Committees by having an open day/half day where neighbouring towns can come and see the achievement of your Tidy Towns Committee, learn new skills and share experiences. Combine it with a sausage sizzle to ensure plenty of opportunity for networking.

- If a young volunteer has excelled in a number of areas and for an extended period, then mention this to your allocated Tidy Towns assessor and encourage them to nominate the young person for an individual or group **Exceptional Achievement Award**.

Part Three – Getting Started

Partnerships

Working with local Aboriginal communities on projects

Involving Aboriginal groups in your environmental projects can have a number of tangible benefits which result in positive project outcomes. To involve Aboriginal Communities in your project, contact your local Aboriginal land council(s). The following tips will ensure that positive and lasting relationships are built:

- Develop a local accurate understanding of the local Aboriginal history and protocols and cross reference this with Aboriginal communities.
- Ensure proposed projects show respect for cultural diversity, and acknowledge and respect cultural knowledge, practices and protocols.
- Ensure proposed projects are based on the ideas and desires of the whole community, including community elders, respected leaders, different family groupings, organisations and individuals.
- Develop significant and genuine relationships with members of the local Aboriginal community.
- Build on the strengths knowledge and capacity of Aboriginal community, groups and leaders and ensure projects reflect the importance and worth of strong, positive role models and previously successful projects.
- Ensure Aboriginal people are involved in each stage of the design, implementation and evaluation of the projects that include them.
- Allow enough time to facilitate the involvement and participation of the whole community. It is critical to continuing Aboriginal involvement to ensure the Aboriginal community has a role in all decision making aspects of the project. Be clear with the community about what you see as their roles and responsibilities, and be prepared to negotiate.
- Ensure all Aboriginal people are included in making decisions about natural resource management, and made aware of how the outcomes or results of the decisions will affect them.
- Ensure communication strategies are culturally appropriate and assessable to as many Aboriginal people in your local community as possible. Aboriginal people respect more positively to information given in person.

Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

Each town and city in NSW has Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities from a variety of different backgrounds. These backgrounds depend on geography and historical circumstances. The following tips will assist your community group to work with CALD communities:

- Identify CALD communities in your local area and determine which languages they speak.
- If language barriers are preventing effective communication then an interpreter may be necessary.

- Community local environmental issues and how they might be able to assist or get involved.
- Invite CALD communities to your events, festivals, launches, workshops and encourage them to display or present information.
- Remember that education is a two way street and that your community can learn just as much about your local CALD community as they can of you.

Project Ideas and Planning

Please refer to the **case studies 2008** document and **handbook 2008** for project ideas, these documents contain past award recipients and potential ideas which will assist you in ideas for you towns next project.

Project planning is an essential component of a successful project. It is very worthwhile to spend some time brainstorming and planning to make sure a strong foundation is established. Sometimes planning may seem time consuming and unproductive however it is best that everything is discussed before a project starts to avoid problems and issues cropping up during the projects implementation.

Here are eight simple steps to make sure you have covered the core requirements in a project plan.

Step One: Analyse the issue of problems

Step Two: Identify stakeholders

Step Three: Know your target group

Step Four: Determine objectives and outcomes

Step Five: Design your methods

Step Six: Consider funding

Step Seven: Make an action plan and implement it

Step Eight: Monitor and Evaluate

Part Four – Evaluating Your Projects

Measuring Outcomes

Measuring outcomes is incredibly important to understand if you achieved what you set out to achieve. Measuring outcomes can be done both formally and informally. Formal reporting is necessary for many state and local government reporting processes. Informal reporting processes are less structured and normally draw on less varied information, this reporting can be useful for internal measurements and smaller activities.

Monitor and Evaluate

Monitor and evaluate the project, and tell people about it. This is generally considered the most difficult step in education project planning and is therefore often left out of many project designs. Increasingly, however, groups who want to attract funding and support for projects are being asked to show how they will determine a project's success. Monitoring and evaluation of your education project can:

- Help you make decisions and recommendations about future directions.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your project.
- Enable judgments to be made about the worth of the project.
- Determine stakeholder and target group satisfaction.
- Determine the rate and level of attainment of the objectives.
- Monitor performance.
- Meet demands for accountability.

It's very rare that all aspects of a project are successful. So it is as important to identify opportunities for improving your project as it is to report on the project's successes.
It is important to develop an effective evaluation plan early in the life of the project so the evaluation process can be built into the project design.

How

Evaluation is about collecting information and keeping records that show the progress of your project, and problems and achievements against your goal and objectives. This can be done simply through recording and documenting, or in a more scientific approach which involves comparison and rigorous experimental design.

For the community education projects there are two main types of project evaluation:

1. **Process evaluation -** provides information about what is happening throughout your project development and implementation. It involves examining, describing and documenting the project's activities or processes. It is the most common form of evaluation undertaken in

community education projects and is characterised by qualitative assessment.

Tips

- Decide on the methods you'll use to assess your project. Common process evaluation methods include documentation and description, discussions and observations, focus group questioning, participant and opinion leader surveys, monitoring of participation rates, expert or peer reviews, audits and trialing of project components.
- Process evaluation will help with quality assurance and the continuous improvement of your project. It provides information about the appropriateness of your project content and methods.
- Keep records such as photographic and written evidence of key activities to show the progress of your project.
- Tell people about your results and use the evaluation information to make improvements to you project.

2. **Impact evaluation –** assesses the overall effectiveness of a project in achieving its stated goal and objectives. It generally requires some form of planned evaluation design that will measure impact over time and determine whether that impact was the result of your project. Impact evaluation usually requires significant resources and expertise, particularly if experimental and quasi-experimental designs are used. Impact evaluation is often characterised by quantitative assessment methods.

Tips

- If you want to do this type of evaluation, seek the advice of a professional who has experience in designing and conducting evaluations.
- Professional evaluators can provide on the evaluation design, the sample size, internal and external, and the evaluation procedure.
- How will we know if we have achieved our goal and objectives?
- How will we measure the effectiveness of the project?

Questions you can ask

- Is the project reaching the target community?
- What have been the strengths and weaknesses of our project?
- How will we gather the information we need to determine the success of the project?
- Who will be interested in the evaluation of our project?
- What will we do with the information we collect as a result of monitoring and evaluating our project?
- How could the project be improved? What worked, what didn't and why?

Case study: Shoalhaven Buisness

Monitoring and evaluation

Activities included:

- A pre-project telephone survey.
- Monthly monitoring through steering committee.
- Assessment of practices through environmental review process.
- Monitoring of media coverage.
- Post-project interviews to determine perceived value of project.
- A report summarising strengths, weaknesses and outcomes with recommendations for future work.

Eight steps with questions to consider

Step 1. Analyse the issue or problem

What is the problem or issue of concern?
To what extent is this an issue of concern within our community?
Does our community realise there is a problem?
What are the reasons for or causes of the problem?
How can we provide community discussion and debate about this issue?
What do we know about the issue? What research do we have? What's been done already? Who's been involved?
Is "education" the way to deal with the issue? What about other approaches such as regulation and enforcement, economics, engineering and science?
What do we want to achieve? What can we achieve? What's our goal?
What outcome do we want from education? Are we trying to encourage debate? Influence attitudes? Give or gather information? Develop skills? Change behaviour?
Are the alternatives we wish to promote practical?
Can we formulate our needs in terms of short, medium and long term goals?

Step 2. Identify stakeholders

Who has a stake (positive or negative) in the problem or issue?
Who is most affected by the problem or issue? Who is concerned? Who may have different views? (Prioritise)
In relation to the problem, who are the leaders in the community?
Who are the key people to assist in solving the problem?
Is there a person who could "champion" the project for us?
What do the stakeholders know, feel, want, believe and value in relation to the problem or issue?
What are the threats, risks, costs and benefits for the stakeholders?
How will we involve the stakeholders?

Step 3. Know your target group

Who are we trying to reach/influence through this project?

Is there more than one target group? (Define each group precisely.)
What incentives are there for the target group to be involved with the project?
What does the target group know, feel, want, believe and value about the problem or issue?
What are the threats, risks, costs and benefits for the target group?
What is the best way of reaching the target group?
If they are not already involved with the issue, what will motivate our target group to be involved?
What support do we need to give the target group to help achieve the project's outcomes?

Step 4. Determine objectives and outcomes

What are we aiming to achieve as a result of this education project?
What are the specific educational objectives of the project in terms of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and practices? Are these objectives measurable?
Do we need to look at short term and long term goals for this issue?
What are the key messages we wish to communicate?
What outcomes do we want from our project?
Will any products result from our project? What will we do with these products when the project is finished?
How will achieving our objectives help solve the issue or problem?
What barriers may hinder the achievements of our objectives?

Step 5. Design your methods

What is the best method of achieving the project's objectives and outcomes, given the time and money available?
What is the best method of achieving the project's objectives and outcomes in view of what we know about the target group?
Do these methods reflect the educational needs of our target group?
Would it be useful to use more than one technique to achieve the objectives?
What methods will have the most impact on the target group?
Are there solutions to the problem and how do we reach these solutions?

Step 6. Consider funding

What is the estimated cost of the project?
What funds do we have available?
What funds do we need?
What "in kind" support do we have or could we get?
Who may be interested in financially supporting our project?
Do we need to consider sponsorship for our project? What are the benefits for potential sponsors?
Are there potential sponsors who are not appropriate?
If we can't attract full funding for our project, what options do we have?

Step 7. Make an action plan and implement it

What specific actions are needed to achieve the project's objective? What are the key tasks?
What is the time frame for the project? What are the milestones?
What resources, other than dollars, are required (eg.people and time)?
Who is responsible for doing each task?
Have we identified monitoring and evaluation steps in our action plan?
How will we market the project to the broader community? Is ther value in launching the project?
How will we keep the broader community informed?

Step 8. Monitor and evaluate

How will we know if we have achieved our goal and objectives?
How will we measure the effectiveness of the project?
Is the project reaching the target community?
What have been the strengths and weaknesses of our project?
How will we gather the information we need to determine the success of the project?
Who will be interested in the evaluation of our project?
What will we do with the information we collect as a result of monitoring and evaluating our project?
How could the project be improved? What worked, what didn't and why?

Photographic Records

Photographic records are a cheap and effective means of measuring and comparing works in a designated period of time. Photographic records graphically show tangible changes in selected periods of time, they are an excellent means of reporting and evaluating projects, especially for any reporting that must be done as a result of grant funding.

Tips for taking photographic records:

- Use the same camera for all photographs, a digital camera is recommended as the photos can be easily used for electronic work and distributed.
- Make sure that photos are taken at equal (or as close to) time periods. Remember that its best to take too many as photos can be culled later. For example if you take monthly photos and notice that there is very little change then the photos can be culled to either bimonthly or quarterly photos.
- If your camera automatically prints the dates on the photos, make sure it has the correct date programmed into the camera. If not make sure you either print the date on the back of the photos or save the digital image as a place and date. This simple step will ensure that anyone in the future can easily understand what and why the photo was taken.
- Use an existing marker (i.e. tree, building and/or fence) or install wooden pegs to plot where photos are taken from.
- If possible the same person should take the photos in every time period for consistency. This is because different people will take slightly different photos depending on their height, experience and understanding. Using a tripod stand will insure that photos are taken from the right height.
- Make sure the photos are taken at the same time of days as shade and light can alter the appearance of the photos.

Part Five – Promoting Your Projects

Working with the Media

What catches the media's attention?

Positive:

- Community achievements
- Local history of Tidy Towns Awards success
- Individual contributions to the current award submission
- Examples of community meeting challenges and rising above disadvantages
- First time achievements/long-term achievements
- Conservation achievements
- Environmental initiatives
- Wildlife success stories
- Environmental education successes

Negative:

- Political/local government controversy
- Industrial unrest
- Community disquiet
- Animal welfare issues
- Unhappy visitors to town
- Local environmental problems/debates

So what are the do's and don'ts when dealing with the media?

You should remember **these Golden Rules:**

- If you don't want it reported, **don't say it**
- Assume all microphones/cameras/journalists are switched **ON – ALL OF THE TIME**
- **"Off the Record" is a hazardous statement** – It's believed that there is no such thing – so we come back to point one!

Preparation

There is strong interest shown by regional media to the Tidy Towns Awards program. Therefore preparation is vital. Take time to think about the key messages of your project(s) and committee messages. Make sure you are up to date with all the local and regional issues. Emphasis your towns' past performances in the Tidy Towns Awards. Once a media appointment has been made, spend some quiet time thinking about the upcoming interview. When the appointment is being made, you could ask for their planned questions so that you have time to prepare answers. Here are some tips:

- Anticipate the questions – including possible 'unrelated' questions.
- Know your subject thoroughly.
- Find out as much as you can about the interview: What's it for (news, features, current affairs, children's programs), who is doing the interview, what are they like, what are the areas to be covered, what questions are likely to be asked, who else are they talking to.
- Develop a simple message and get it across – be very familiar with the list of prepared responses you have been provided with.
- Think about the concept of Tidy Towns and why it has been successful for over 27 years.

Musts
As an interviewee you must be:

- Brief and to the point
- Bright and enthusiastic
- Confident and authoritative
- Courteous, co-operative and friendly

Avoid
Avoid 'in house' speak:

- Jargon e.g. never use KAB
- Never say "no comment" – instead use phrases like "that is not my area of expertise" or "sorry, I am not the designated spokesperson on such matters" but offer to follow up the question and always have someone get back
- Never push personal agendas
- Do not stray (or be lead) from your area of expertise – concentrate, remain focused

See media appearances as valuable opportunities to project an overall positive attitude through the media for your town and Keep Australia Beautiful NSW.

Points to remember when doing Radio and TV Interviews:

- Always answer the question
- Think about the key message you want to get across
- Get right to the point (news grabs on radio or TV rarely run longer than 12 to 15 seconds) so avoid preludes to answers
- Use simple language
- Avoid lists and multi-point answers
- Use word-pictures – illustrations, examples, a statistic (especially for radio)
- Remember first and last impressions are important
- Remember to smile (when appropriate)

TV Interviews:

- Deprive viewers of visual distractions – avoid stripes, checks, bright red, white, anything garish, pens in top pockets, name tags, badges, lapel pins, broaches, unusual earrings, things in hair, excessive jewellery of all kinds.
- Avoid hats – if it is part of the uniform, and you are often filmed outdoors, make sure it does not cast a shadow on your face.
- Glasses – if you don't have to wear them, don't.
- Never wear sunglasses
- Check that your hair/tie/collar/make-up is as it should be
- Look at the interviewer, ignore the camera (unless instructed otherwise by the crew)
- Eyes – the most important part of your body on TV (maintain a steady eye contact)
- Standing – stay still (don't rock and roll)
- Sitting – sit just forward of vertical, never back or leaning forward

How do I put together a media release?

Please see part eight of this document for templates of media releases. Media alerts are generally sent out to give warning to media before a news story and a media release is used to give details on the story. The key details to include when writing this information is:

- **What –** What is the story.
- **Who –** Who is attending, any well known faces.
- **Why –** Why should the media attend, what's in it for them?
- **How –** The history of how it happened and the causes etc.
- **Where –** Address, location and if necessary directions.
- **When –** Date and time.

Review and critique

- Try to listen or view all your radio/television appearances. Be self-critical and look for ways of improving your performance next time. Collect the press clippings if you are able and use these in your submissions to Keep Australia Beautiful NSW.
- Take note of what worked well and use that next time.
- Each time you do an interview it will become easier and more enjoyable.
- If you happen to have a bad experience, talk it over with Keep Australia Beautiful NSW. Look for ways to make it work better next time i.e. more preparation.

Part Six – Project Funding

Types of Funding

There are 10 types of funding, all funding types will not apply to any one community groups, instead a combination should be used which suite the aims and make up of the committee. In summary, these funding types are:

1. Grants
2. Newsletters and Publications
3. Rotary and other service Clubs
4. Donations
5. Memberships
6. Sponsorship
7. Business and Community Partnerships
8. Will and Bequests
9. Tenders
10. Sale of Goods and Services

Available Grants

All manner of grants are available to individuals and community groups who are doing environmental and community work in NSW.

In this small booklet we hope to give you some ideas about who to contact and where to look for funding.

There is lots of money out there. It is just a case of finding it. There are many advantages for those bodies who are willing to donate funds; positive publicity, tax deductions, the “feel good” factor, corporate image, and as often as not, the sheer good will of it all.

In some cases, funding bodies may only run specific grant funding programs for a short time, changing or renewing their criteria on an annual basis. This may well be the case with some of the entries in this guide. However, if they have funded in the past, then it is worth checking them out again to see what they have currently running. A good source of information is the Web. Key words in your search field such as ‘Grants’ and ‘Funding’ can bring results. Equally, finding the websites of environmental and community organisations (some are listed at the end of this leaflet) can guide you to sources that offer help.

Check out your local Council. Many councils can provide assistance, (on Heritage work for example). Keep an eye on the local and national papers, in environmental magazines or in your local Public Library.

Above all “Ask”. Ringing or emailing an organisation you may know of can sometimes bring results. Be mentally flexible in fitting your criteria to their expectations. Often slight modifications to the way you present your project can make it eligible for funding.

When you apply for a grant, you will usually be sent a set of forms to fill in. Along with those forms will be a set of criteria that you will have to meet to be successful in your application. Quite a lot of these forms are simple to fill in, merely asking you for basic information and to produce evidence to support your application. The critical balance is to give sufficient succinct evidence to prove you are worthy of their money, but not to overwhelm them with so much paperwork they don’t have time to look at it. Occasionally the forms look daunting, but try not to be deterred. Despite the formality of such applications forms, try to keep sight of the enthusiasm you have for your project. This is essential as this will shine through in your application.

Don’t be deterred if you are not successful the first time. Ask the funding body for feedback on why you weren’t successful on this occasion. You may have to re-evaluate your project. There may be some touching up to do, either on the project itself, or with the way you presented your application. Perhaps there was only a very limited amount of funding available and if they don’t tell you on the letter they send, ring and ask when the next run will be. If none will be available for some time, ask if they know of any other sources of funding from other similar bodies whose criteria may be more suited to your needs.

For smaller amounts of funding, corporate bodies in your area are often worth approaching, as are medium sized local businesses, particularly if they can gain some (preferably ongoing) publicity from your project. Equally most people know of the amazing generosity of small local businesses when it comes to helping with materials and labour.

Make sure you keep “evidence” of what is going on with each project. Take photos, document your ideas and plans; keep press cuttings, keep notes, keep the names of those involved; show alliances to local bodies such a your council or local businesses. Community bodies who are correctly set up with a properly constituted committee, and who keeps Minutes, are viewed more favourably than those who haven’t taken this step. Equally, individuals should not be deterred from applying for funds, but will need to have a well thought-out and documented set of plans to prove credibility. Being able to show evidence that you have entered in an Awards program, or that you have won an award, or that you have already been successful in obtaining some funding will help you in your quest.

Of huge assistance is the Community Builders website which is filled with information on many topics including funding sources and submission writing. Their address is www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/funding/

Another interesting site is the Swinburne Orgs calendar. This is a huge source of information with links to many organisations that provide funding. You can find the site on www.swinburne.edu.au/research/grantinfo/

The Grants Link site is also useful try www.grantslink.gov.au and then type in the word you are looking for in their Search box. For example, the word "Environment" will put you in contact with a number of other interesting sites. A South Australian Website also contains some great federal grants and is updated all year round, please visit http://www.grants.ord.sa.gov.au/closing.asp

Please refer to the separate **funding guide 2008** booklet for a list of various grants and funding opportunities for more details.

Please refer to part eight of this document for funding request letters.

Part Seven - Useful Contacts and Links

Department of Environment and Climate Change Website
www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Our Community
www.ourcommunity.com.au

Tidy Towns Yahoo Web group
tidytownsnsw-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.au

Keep Australia Beautiful National Association
www.kab.org.au

'It's a living thing' Resources Website
www.livingthing.net.au

Part Eight - Templates and Resources

Please see Part 8 folder on this CD to access the templates electronically.

FEEDBACK SHEET

We would like to know how helpful you find this guide. If you could spare five minutes to fill it in and send back to us, it would be most helpful.

1. **What percentage of the material in this guide was useful to you?**

2. **How useful was this information to you/your group? (please tick)**

   ☐**Very useful** ☐**Somewhat useful** ☐**Not very useful**

3. **Did you find the information up-to-date?**

4. **Did you put any of this information into practice? If yes, which parts?**

5. **Were you successful in obtaining funding? If so, could you describe the details of the grants you have received.**

6. **Is the guide in a format which is usable? If not, how can we improve it?**

7. **What additional information do you think would be useful in this guide?**

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions.

Please submit to:

Keep Australia Beautiful NSW
Email: info@kabnsw.org.au
Fax: 02 96334402