

Koonwarra



Community Ideas Bank 2013

Project Background

In 2011 South Gippsland Shire Council, The Geoffrey Gardiner Foundation and GippsDairy formed a partnership to deliver a three year community strengthening project with 8 communities in the Lower Tarwin Valley district, Fish Creek, Meeniyan, Stony Creek, Buffalo, Dumbalk, Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower and Koonwarra.

The Lower Tarwin Valley Project is the pilot project for the Gardiner Foundation's Strengthening Small Dairy Communities and has been developed to work with small rural dairying communities in the Lower Tarwin Valley district of South Gippsland Shire.

Through the Lower Tarwin Valley - Strengthening Small Dairy Communities project members and groups have had the opportunity to participate in skills development, network building and community development including community planning and project development.

As part of the community planning process in December 2012 Koonwarra residents were invited to a Community Ideas Workshop at the Koonwarra Hall. Approximately 20 Koonwarra residents attended the workshop to participate in developing a shared Vision for Koonwarra and explore ideas for the community.

Ideas Bank

What follows is a list of ideas offered by Koonwarra residents based on what is important to the community, what the community likes about Koonwarra and what they would like Koonwarra to look like in the future. From the list of ideas workshop participants were asked to select 3 'achievable' projects as their first priority for development.

All ideas submitted by the community are acknowledged and remain in the *Ideas Bank* for future reference. Ideas can be 'withdrawn' from the bank at any time by community members interested in exploring an idea further and 'deposited' back in to the bank for future development.

The Koonwarra *Ideas Bank* is a record of what is valuable to a community and can be used as a guide to help direct community development.

About Koonwarra – A small town with a big heart

Koonwarra is in the heart of dairy country, nestled between the rolling hills of the Strezlecki Ranges, the ancient Bunurong Coast and the awe inspiring world heritage Wilsons Promontory. Visitors and residents can experience the region by travelling down the South Gippsland Highway, wandering along the Grand Ridge Road, surfing the Coastal Promontory beaches, riding the Great Southern Rail Trail and relaxing in our hospitality and natural abundance.

It is a picturesque Village with strong traditional community groups such as the CFA, Memorial Hall Committee and Recreation Reserve Committee which maintains this scenic reserve at a very high standard. Koonwarra is also well known for fine food and wine, contemporary arts and craft, innovative health and wellbeing services, a leader in promoting organic foods, plastic bag free, Australia's first Waste Wise Village in Victoria, the pilot for community domain names and Regional Farmers Markers and the Slow Food initiatives were conceived here and have spread to other areas.

(www.koonwarra.vic.au)

Snap shot of Koonwarra

Data drawn from 2011 Census. It can be used in assessing community needs and developing associated plans

Population		Employment		Education	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total• Male• Female	385 183 202	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Population in labour force• Full-time• Part-time• Away from work• unemployed	190 56.8% 35.8% 5.8% 1.6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre school• Primary• Secondary• Post-Secondary• Not stated	13 36 38 16 14
Age		Top 5 industries of employment		Housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Median age• 0-14 years• 65 plus	44 22.9% 15.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dairy cattle farming• Sheep, beef cattle & grain farming• School education• Supermarket, grocery stores• Road freight transport	7.9% 5.8% 5.3% 4.2% 4.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dwellings• Occupied• Unoccupied• Family households• Single person household	157 86.6% 13.4% 75.7% 24.3%

About the Process:

Ideas Workshop

On December 5, 2012 more than 20 local residents attended the Koonwarra Ideas Dinner Workshop at the Koonwarra Hall. The evening was beautifully catered by the Koonwarra Store and facilitated by the Lower Tarwin Valley Project Facilitator, Marzia Maurilli and the Community Strengthening Officer, Barbara Look, from South Gippsland Shire Council.

Koonwarra residents were given several opportunities to submit project ideas prior to the workshop if unable to attend. All suggestions and comments were collated by the project facilitator and presented at the workshop for consultation. Before submitting project ideas at the workshop participants were encouraged to explore and discuss strengths, opportunities and issues existing within the community to help form a shared vision for Koonwarra to guide future project development.

Workshop participants were encouraged to refer back to their Vision when submitting project ideas and when later asked to select 3 achievable projects as their first priorities.

Workshop Participants

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Robyn Schmidt	rowen@lyrebirdhill.com.au	5664 3204	Don Cook	55 Egans Rd, Koonwarra	5664 2243
Owen Schmidt	rowen@lyrebirdhill.com.au	5664 3204	Ian Kinnish	ikinnish@tpg.com.au	5664 2334
Kate Walsh	walshpk@gmail.com	5664 2340	Helen Wyhoon	david.wyhoon@gmail.com	0429 301 163
Don Francis	thesolarpumpco@bigpond.com	5664 2347	Wendy Reed	wendy-reed@bigpond.com	0409 813 957
Carol Francis	thesolarpumpco@bigpond.com	5664 2347	Susan Neville	susanvevillepreserves@gmail.com	0431 748 716
Beatrice	shop@esentials.com.au	5664 2422	Carolyn Johns	carolynjohns4@bigpond.com	0418 672 703
Dane Hawley	roversb@bigpond.com	5664 2366	Jolyon Dutton	jsdutton@dcsi.net.com.au	0447 500 026
John Davison		5664 2372	Sue Dutton	sue23@dcsi.net.au	0428 641 270
Maria Stuart	organiccooking@dcsi.net.au	5664 2211	Jan Greer	jagy41@hotmail.com	5664 2414

Koonwarra - What we like

- Healthy life style
- Good food and service
- Slow food philosophy
- Entrance aesthetically attractive
- River
- Beautiful Recreation Reserve
- Natural environment
- High standard action orientated groups
- Rail Trail

Issues

- Road sides/Roads – pot holes
- Over development
- V/Line Bus Stop
- Septic/stormwater
- Black Spur – Rail trail (Addressed in Advancing Country Towns project)
- Lack of pathways (crossing safely from store)
- Lack of a focal point creating a sense of social disconnectedness
- Lack of opportunities to engage with the broader community

What do we want to look like in the future?

- Stay the same
- Maintain the natural beauty
- Multi-purpose Hall
- More bike and walking trails
- Bio diversity

Developing a shared Vision for Koonwarra

Vision Brainstorming

- Healthy people in a natural environment
- Living artisan community
- Food and Art destination
- Connected, active & safe
- Inclusive, generational
- Physically connected – paths and trails
- Shared intention to maintain what we have

Vision Statement

Koonwarra will celebrate our community connectedness with spiritual, physical and sustainable pathways now and in to the future.



IDEAS BANK

Workshop participants were asked for project ideas that reflected and supported the Koonwarra Vision Statement developed earlier during the workshop. Participants were encouraged to envisage how they would like Koonwarra to look in the future and to think about existing assets that could have added value by further development or improvement.

Ideas with a common theme were grouped together under one category. For example project ideas relating to walking paths and trails were grouped together under a **Pathways Strategy**. Similarly several project ideas were grouped together under **Webpage Development**.

What follows below is a list of all the ideas submitted for the workshop with the number of votes received.

Project Ideas	votes	Project Ideas	votes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Webpage Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connection/communications tool – brochure/info pack ○ Revamp Koonwarra Web Site – community groups, community feedback, notice board, connections 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pathways Strategy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Road Crossing/ Path ○ Rail Trail ○ Pathways: activities – signposted – seating, rotunda, covered area ○ Bike trails etc: connecting wider afield (to Inverloch) ○ European Village : seating-involve the elderly ○ Care/development/beautifying the river eg. CFA/Landcare strategy 	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Hall – multi-purpose Hub 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Safe Place/Fire Plan 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Energy demonstration site/plan 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Garden Days/tours 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste project to demonstrate toilets other than septic 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market – infrastructure improvements 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sealed Road – more parking (especially for busy days) – road to the recreation reserve better maintenance. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nirvana Park (community vegetable garden) 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access cash/ATM 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petrol (community garage) - heritage 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas Party – community Christmas Carols 			

Priority Projects

Once all ideas were explored workshop participants were asked to select from the list of ideas **three** projects as their priority. Project selection was determined via one vote per person (*see above table*). Participants were reminded to refer back to the *Vision Statement* when voting for their preferred project and very importantly to use their vote for what could be realistically achieved, taking in to consideration overall value/benefit of the project to the community and effort required such as dollars, time, people power and resources. Participants were then asked to volunteer/nominate one community representative for each of the three projects as the key contact person for that particular project.

The LTV Project Facilitator will work with each project contact person to help further develop project ideas.

Priority projects and Project contact person

Project	Contact Person	Contact Details
Pathway Strategy	Jolyon Dutton	jsdutton@dcsl.net.com.au mob: 0447 500 026
Nirvana Park	Don Cook	55 Egans Rd, Koonwarra Ph: 5664 2243
Farmers Market	Susan Neville	susanvevillepreserves@gmail.com mob: 0431 748 716
*Koonwarra Website	Beatrice	shop@escentials.com.au ph: 5664 2422

**Although the Koonwarra Website project idea received one vote it has been included in the priority list because of the direct interest of one community member to work on developing this project.*

Conclusion

The three priority projects selected by the Koonwarra community at the Community Ideas Workshop are;

- the Koonwarra Pathway Strategy
- Nirvana Park and
- the Koonwarra Farmers Market.
 - *Koonwarra Webpage redevelopment*

The Koonwarra website project, although included in the list did not vote as highly as the three other projects. This project was included in the priority listed projects because one community member was particularly interested in working on the redevelopment of the Koonwarra website.

Koonwarra Pathway Strategy: The Koonwarra Pathway Strategy project scored the highest with 9 notes overall. This project reflects the community's vision for a vibrant, social village that promotes spiritual, physical and environmental health and wellbeing by connecting art, food and people with path ways, trails and outdoor opportunities. Participants described a European style village with connecting paths that lead to a central outdoor community meeting place. Seating, signposts, art sculptures and safe crossing paths are some of the individual ideas suggested as part of the strategy. It is envisaged that this type of infrastructure will help promote social interaction, health and well-being and promote and highlight local art and produce. The LTV Project facilitator will convene a meeting with the project contact person, Jol Dutton early 2013 to discuss actions for further project development.

Nirvana Park: Nirvana Park has long been an issue amongst the Koonwarra community ever since its original owner Mrs Dellabosco bequeathed it to Council. Since then the community feels that the area, once beautifully maintained by Mrs Dellabosco, is now neglected, an eyesore and a possible fire risk. The community would like to see this area either, better maintained, developed or even sold with the proceeds, or part of, going back into the community for project implementation. The LTV Project facilitator met with the project contact person, Don Cook, in January 2013 to discuss in more detail project development. The next step is to hold a community consultation meeting to discuss possible options for Nirvana park and gauge the community's preference for the area.

Koonwarra Farmers Market: The Koonwarra Farmers Market was the first Farmers Market in South Gippsland and has grown to be one of the largest markets in the Shire. The market is held the first Saturday of every month and attracts hundreds of locals and visitors with over 100 stalls selling fresh produce and local art and craft. The Koonwarra Farmers Market Committee is keen to implement improved infrastructure that will provide better access to the existing facilities and create better links with other existing businesses and activities in Koonwarra. The LTV Project Facilitator will meet with the contact person, Susan Neville, to discuss grant funding opportunities.

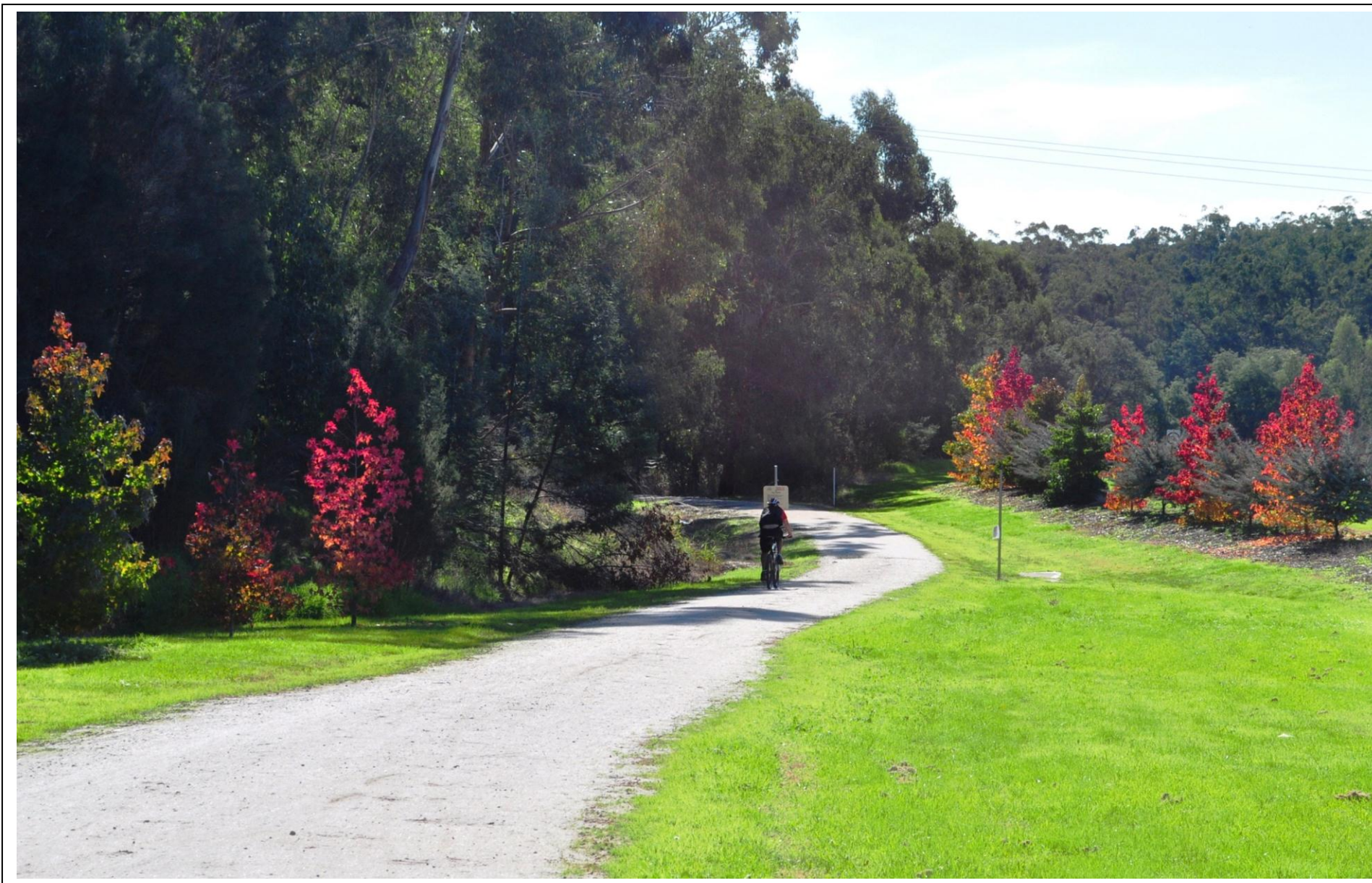


Photo courtesy Ken Fraser