



Healesville Community Renewable Energy

Strategic Plan 2025-27



Acknowledgements

Soon after Healesville Community Renewable Energy Inc (Healesville CoRE) was established as an organisation, the committee committed to taking a strategic approach to the governance, management, and operational aspects of the organisation. The first Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021 was established, followed by the second Strategic Plan 2022 - 2024 completed in March 2022.

In February 2025 a group of committee members and financial members gathered to evaluate the current organisation situation and plan for the next three years, leading to the establishment of our third Strategic Plan. The 2025 - 2027 Strategic Plan aims to assist Healesville CoRE to be sustainable and to continue to grow over the next three financial years. We would like to thank the following people for participating:

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The day was facilitated by Deb Blaber from EMS Consultants, and the committee would like to thank her for the professional manner in which the day was run. The committee appreciates this service being provided pro bono.

This strategic plan will enable the organisation to clearly articulate its values, vision and mission, reflect on achievements so far, and prioritise goals, tasks, responsibilities and timeframes for future endeavours. The climate change narrative has evolved significantly since 2017 in that the focus has now shifted to preparing our communities to become more resilient, as well as continuing to accelerate the transition to renewable energy and lower emissions. We believe that the proposed activities identified in this strategic plan reflect the changing narrative.

Karen Roberts
Healesville CoRE President

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Vision

Our Community is sustainable and resilient

Purpose

To assist our community transition to renewable energy

Values

Trust – we build trust through engaging with the broader community and providing research-based information and support.

Inclusivity – we welcome and value all peoples' perspectives in achieving our purpose to assist our community transition to renewable energy.

Accessibility – we aim to ensure all members of our community can access relevant information and affordable renewable energy solutions.

Leadership – we actively engage and collaborate with other leaders to tackle challenges, influence policy and support innovative approaches to change energy use away from fossil fuels to renewables.

Learning – we are committed to sharing information, leading by example, and creating awareness about sustainability and renewable energy options.

Adaptability – we understand the rapidly changing environment in which we operate and are committed to keeping up with moving priorities, policy settings and technology.

Who we are

Healesville Community Renewable Energy was established in 2017, after a town meeting attended by over 230 residents, one of the largest community meetings in the town's history. We are a passionate group of volunteers committed to helping accelerate the transition of Healesville and surrounds to renewable energy. We run regular free events, provide advice on home energy efficiency, help not-for-profit community groups install solar solutions through our Community Energy Revolving Fund, and engage with local residents and businesses through a range of projects to help them find practical and affordable solutions to meet their energy needs.

Our membership and services are open to all residents within the Yarra Valley including those living in Healesville, Badger Creek, Chum Creek, Yarra Glen, Dixons Creek, Steels Creek, Coldstream, Wandin North, Seville, Seville East, Woori Yallock, Yellingbo, Launching Place, Don Valley, Hoddles Creek, Yarra Junction, Gladysdale, Three Bridges, Gilderoy, Powelltown, Wesburn, Millgrove, Warburton and Yering

We welcome opportunities to collaborate with communities across the Valley to identify and help address local needs and aspirations in relation to renewable energy options and solutions. We are particularly interested in engaging with young people, schools, community organisations and local businesses to:

1. Build the understanding of the people living and working in the Yarra Valley about renewable energy options that will make a positive contribution to the health of the planet and save them money.
2. Provide practical advice and support to community members on how to make their homes more energy efficient.
3. Provide renewable energy information, advice and practical experiences for students in our community to empower them to make informed decisions about how they can be involved in future proofing our community.

Our achievements so far

In the last three years alone we have:

- Run six free community events at Healesville Memo Hall to provide information and advice on renewable energy options such as electric vehicles, electrification, solar installations and electric heat pumps.
- Organised the installation of solar systems on two local community groups, continuing to use our Community Energy Revolving Fund
- Conducted over forty Home Energy Efficiency Advice assessments.
- Trained another four Home Energy Efficiency Advisors – bringing our total number of Advisors to eight
- Merged with YarraGlenergy
- Taken over the general running and maintenance of the EV charging station in Yarra Glen
- Received a \$60,000 grant from Sustainability Victoria
- Retrofitted Badger Creek Hall with energy efficiency improvements
- Retrofitted a community home with energy efficiency improvements.
- Participated in over ten community events to spread awareness of renewable energy options.
- Engaged a consultant to research sustainable options in order to update our website with clear, reliable information.
- Appointed a consultant to engage with local businesses to explore challenges and opportunities for installing solar and produce a report of the findings.
- We strengthened our partnership with Yarra Ranges Council by being awarded a four-year partnership grant, holding regular meetings with the sustainability department, attending their microgrid proposal focus group, and inviting staff to present at some of our events.
- Developed a strong relationship with Rewiring Australia
- Collaborated with and supported other nearby renewable energy groups such as Clean Energy Nillumbik, 2030 Yea and Repowering the Dandenongs
- Designed and produced two promotional brochures.
- Produced quarterly newsletters for over 700 people on our mailing list.
- Successful delivery of the Yarra Valley Community Power Hub, achieving a range of initiatives in less than a year
- Maintained a strong committee to enable delivery of renewable energy projects and events.

Goals - The next 3 three years

Our Goals for the next three years are:

1. **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS – Promote** renewable energy information and practical solutions for the community.
2. **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES – Deliver** programs and services that support the adoption of renewable energy solutions and practices by residents, community groups and businesses.
3. **PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS – Strengthen** our current partnerships and networks and source appropriate new ones for the future.
4. **ADVOCACY – Advocate** on behalf of the community to accelerate the transition to renewable energy.
5. **SUSTAINABILITY – Achieve** resource sustainability that enables Healesville CoRE to achieve its goals.

GOAL 1: Education and Awareness

Promote renewable energy information and practical solutions for the community.

Strategies:

1. Engage with and inform the Yarra Valley community of developments and practical solutions in the renewable energy space.
2. Engage with schools to provide opportunities for students to learn about the importance of renewable energy to the achievement of a healthy and sustainable environment.
3. Ensure credible research studies and information on renewable energy developments are shared with our community.
4. Ensure our communication channels and methods are relevant and targeted.

Key Actions:

1. Deliver a minimum of two community information events per year.
2. Develop and implement a diverse communication strategy.
3. Refresh and maintain our website.
4. Investigate the possibility of delivering information sessions, workshops, or practical experiences for primary and secondary students.
5. Regularly identify and source credible research and information on renewable energy developments and distribute to community members via our website and our other communication channels.
6. Participate in other community events.

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GOAL 2: Programs and Services

Deliver programs and services that support the adoption of renewable energy solutions and practices by residents, community groups and businesses.

Strategies:

1. Strengthen and expand our programs and services to support the uptake of affordable renewable energy options by Yarra Valley residents.
2. Develop and support initiatives that support local businesses with commercial leases to invest in solar solutions to address their energy needs and reduce their operating costs.
3. Explore and develop offers to increase the uptake of renewable energy solutions across the Yarra Valley

Key Actions

1. Strengthen and expand our Home Energy and Efficiency Advisory Service
2. Identify and engage organisations who could benefit from practical and affordable payment arrangements that will enable them to install solar power panels and batteries.
3. Investigate the feasibility of offering support to businesses on commercial leases with practical financial arrangements for installing solar power panels and batteries.
4. Contribute to the expansion of public Electric Vehicle Charger stations in the Valley.
5. Develop and promote a program to assist residents establish “Climate Safe Rooms” in their homes.
6. 2024 projects - Follow up energy efficiency retrofitting at Badger Creek Hall and Don Rd community home.
7. Measure the solar uptake of Healesville since 2017
8. Continue to engage in innovative projects that contribute to the transition to renewable energy and resilience.

Goal 3: Partnerships and Networks

Strengthen our partnerships and networks.

Strategies

1. Review and refresh our partnership with Yarra Ranges Shire Council
2. Continue to support and collaborate with similar groups in relation to issues of mutual interest and concern.
3. Increase our connections with local groups to increase our understanding of renewable energy issues that are important to them.

Key Actions

1. Collaborate with Council to review and agree our partnership purpose, goals, and actions for the next two years.
2. Strengthen relationships with renewable energy groups such as Rewiring Australia, Clean energy Nillumbik, repowering the Dandenongs etc. to share knowledge, information and identify opportunities to collaborate on projects and/or advocacy.
3. Establish contact, digital or otherwise, with local community groups to share information about developments in the renewable energy space and the role that Healesville CoRE has in helping our community transition to renewables.

GOAL 4: Advocacy

On behalf of the community to accelerate the transition to renewable energy

Strategies

1. Identify key leaders and influencers in the renewable energy space and advocate to them on behalf of the community.
2. Develop a targeted campaign to ensure that the transition to renewable energy and practical solutions are elevated in political and policy making discussions.
3. Participate in forums, networks etc. where the needs of our local community can be presented and our successes promoted.

Key Actions

1. Engage with community to ascertain their key issues and priorities.
2. Participate in opportunities to collaborate with like-minded organisations and leaders to advocate for the changes needed to help our community transition to renewable energy.
3. Regularly engage with Federal, State and Local politicians to share information and seek responses on renewable energy related issues impacting our community including their policy positions on supporting communities, individuals, and businesses to uptake renewable energy solutions
4. Promote the findings of our Solar 4 Business project to relevant politicians, government, other funding bodies and like-minded organisations.

GOAL 5: Sustainability

Achieve financial and human resource sustainability that enables us to achieve our goals.

Strategies

1. Diversify HCoRE's income streams.
2. Strengthen governance structure and practices.
3. Increase HCoRE volunteer/outsource participation to facilitate deliverables.
4. Extend our reach and impact across the Yarra Valley

Key Actions

1. Register HCoRE as a Charity under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC)
2. Investigate alternative income streams such as installing an additional EV charger.
3. Identify and pursue relevant funding opportunities – government, philanthropic, benefactors.
4. Increase the number of financial members.
5. Undertake a Board Skills audit to inform succession planning and Committee governance training
6. Analyse HCoRE's databases to inform HCoRE's membership recruitment and community connection strategies.
7. Review HCoRE IT systems.
8. Identify ways to improve operational efficiency through employment of staff and/or outsourcing of back-office functions, and extra volunteers.
9. Prepare a budget for the next year.
10. Update our policies

PRIORITIES 2025 - 2026

In the first year of this strategic plan, we aim to:

<p><u>Goal 1: Education and Awareness</u></p> <p>PROMOTE renewable energy information and practical solutions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the community’s awareness and profile of HCoRE through community outreach and publicity campaigns. 2. Host two community information sharing renewable energy events. 3. Engage with local schools to identify how HCoRE can add value to building student knowledge about renewable energy and climate change. 4. Develop and implement a communications strategy utilising a range of channels relevant to different demographic groups.
<p><u>Goal 2: Programs and Services</u></p> <p>DELIVER programs and services that support the adoption of renewable energy solutions and practices by residents, community groups and businesses</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen our Home Energy Efficiency Advisory Service program by extending its reach and providing a follow-up contact after providing an Assessment report. 2. Develop and promote a program to assist residents establish “Climate Safe Rooms” in their homes. 3. Undertake a project that will assist at least one Healesville business adopt solar power solutions to meet their energy needs.
<p><u>Goal 3: Partnerships and Networks</u></p> <p>STRENGTHEN our partnerships and networks</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and refresh HCoRE’s partnership with Yarra Ranges Shire Council with a focus on ensuring activity and support is aligned with our 3-year goals. 2. Engage with State and Federal government departments who are responsible for tackling climate change and supporting the transition to renewable energy. 3. Review our current participation in networks and explore opportunities for new networks, partnerships, and collaborations, particularly community groups in

	the Yarra Valley and like-minded organisations across the State
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<u>Goal 4: Advocacy</u> ADVOCATE on behalf of the community to accelerate the transition to renewable energy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regularly communicate with / contact local Federal and State Members of Parliament about HCoRE priorities and activities and invite them to HCoRE events. 2. Promote the findings of our Solar 4 Business project to relevant politicians, government, other funding bodies and like-minded organisations.
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<u>Goal 5: Sustainability</u> ACHIEVE resource sustainability that enables HCoRE to achieve its goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement a membership drive. 2. Undertake a skills audit of the current committee to inform the development of training/upskilling and succession plans. 3. Develop a budget for the 2025/26 financial year. 4. Review our IT systems. Apply for DGR status through registration with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission 5. Identify and apply for funding to support projects and capacity building.
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