

Perth Hills Climate Change Interest Group (PHCCIG)



Annual Report

October 2022 to October 2023

From the Committee

The last twelve months have been constructive and busy, thanks to the passion and commitment of committee members, members and volunteers. So many have been involved in some way, and every contribution, no matter how small, has counted towards a sustainable, carbon neutral and positive future for the Perth Hills, and for our planet.



Left to right Jim Thom, Helen Lynes and Patrick Crichton

The effort made by PHCCIG Committee members – Ailsa Paterson, Cathy Levett, Denise Sweetman, Michael Hoy, Lynda Winter and Basil Lambert has been terrific. And a big thank you also to Brian, Margaret and Elizabeth for helping at the stalls.

After ten years of community building for sustainability, Mundaring In Transition wound up in 2023, and gifted its assets to the Perth Hills Climate Change Interest Group, its offspring. Thank you.

A life membership award ceremony was held in late February for Patrick Crichton and Jim Thom, two founding members, in honour of their contributions to climate education and advocacy in the hills.

Lots of wonderful connections have been made with many people who live, work and/or play in the Perth Hills, and with other environment and community groups, the media, and Local, State and Federal politicians.

After careful consideration we proudly decided to support the campaign for a 'yes' vote in the referendum.



PHCCIG recognises and values the importance of Indigenous knowledge and Caring for Country practices to climate change adaptation and mitigation. There is a large body of evidence that shows that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people know best and understand the best way to deliver real and practical change in their communities. There is a large body of evidence to support this.

The focus (or action areas) of our work has been to engage with local communities; draw on scientific evidence and the wisdom of lived experience and promote local participatory action research; and to advocate. We've also operated in accordance with the principles of sound governance.

Thank you everyone,

Helen Lynes, Chair

Activity Report

Community engagement

We've been informed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum for public participation in our community engagement work – to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower. We've listened deeply to young people and adults. The main community engagement activities carried out from October 2022 to October 2023 follow.

Youth Voices – Agents of Climate Change

A very inspiring Deliberative Democracy youth workshop about making a difference was held in March 2023 with Millennium Kids. This project was funded by the Shire of Mundaring and supported by PHCCIG. See <https://phccig.files.wordpress.com/2023/05/article-2-mundaring-deliberation-outcomes-document.pdf> for a report with recommendations from the workshop. This program has since grown to become a leadership program, with training for more youth facilitators, and is now funded by the RAC.



Talks Blue Sky Festival

Mundaring in Transition invited PHCCIG to speak at the Blue Sky Festival in March 2023 about 'Mundaring's people - living and taking action towards a carbon neutral, sustainable future'. A big thank you to the speakers Jenny Currell and Rhiannon Hardwick – two very inspirational Hills residents.



Above pic - Cathy Levett (left) and Lynda Winter

Climate Action Stalls

Stalls were held at the Mundaring Rotary Markets in September and October, and a stall was held in October at the Kalamunda Farmers Market. A stall was also held at the Save Perth Hills rally along with a social media campaign about the Safeguard Mechanism – called Safeguard our Climate. Lots of people expressed an interest in the information provided at the stalls, and many people subscribed to the newsletter and a number of people joined as members following each of the stalls.

Collaboration – PHCCIG has collaborated with Climate Action Network Australia, the Australian Conservation Foundation's Perth and Darling Range Communities, the Conservation Council of WA, Doctors for the Environment, Citizens Climate Lobby, the Nature Reserves Preservation Group, Transition Town Kalamunda, Mundaring in Transition and a network of local and Australia-wide environment and climate action groups throughout the year on the range of campaigns mentioned in the Advocacy section of this Annual Report. Special thanks for the auspice support given to Mundaring and Kalamunda stalls held in 2022-2023 are offered to Maureen Phillips and the ACF Perth Community team.

Newsletters – 8 web-based newsletters (see <https://phccig.wordpress.com/newsletters/>) were published from Oct-Nov 2022 to Oct 23.

Advocacy

Submission to the Federal Minister for Environment - North West Shelf Extension

In this submission PHCCIG asked that the Minister reconsider a 2019 decision to approve the North West Shelf Extension, located on the Burrup Peninsula, given new information about the extensive and irreversible impacts that the magnitude of the fossil fuel extracted would have on countless places of national significance. The submission included a request that the findings in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s Sixth Assessment Report, that the Northern Jarrah Forest (which is across the whole of the Perth Hills) is at risk of collapse due to climate change impacts, be considered.

Shire of Mundaring's Streetlight Change – Carbon Emission Reduction

The PHCCIG was one of the community voices that lobbied and worked with the Shire to change the streetlights of Mundaring from incandescent to LED lights to reduce emissions and mitigate climate change risk. PHCCIG strongly advocated for the Shire to undertake this important initiative and is delighted with their splendid response. With thanks to Ailsa Paterson and Stephan Millet for their advocacy work on this!



Safeguard

Perth Hills Climate Change Interest Group, along with grassroots groups across Australia, partnered with Solutions for Climate Australia to advocate for the big fossil fuel polluters, who make up the Dirty Dozen to do their fair share of emission reduction.

Mechanism

As part of this campaign, PHCCIG visited the offices of the big polluters in Perth, spoke to local federal politicians, and contributed to a national media campaign.

Committee member Denise Sweetman (pictured above in white) represented PHCCIG at meetings that Climate Action Network Australia (CANA) organised with politicians at Parliament House in Canberra.

Submission on the Draft Position Statement – Child Care Premises

PHCCIG put the following points into a submission to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) about its draft *Position Statement Child Care Premises*: That (1) the proximity of childcare premises to sources of ambient air pollution levels should not be allowed, especially where the children are at risk of exposure to fossil fuel exhaust particulates, particularly from highways, busy intersections, and petrol stations; (2) outside play areas need to have enough shade, including trees, to keep outdoor areas cooler than they would otherwise be in summer to minimise the risk of heat stress to the children and staff, and to optimise the amount of time available for play outside; (3) public transport is accessible, where possible, so that the pollution and greenhouse gas emissions of staff and parent vehicles are minimised, and so that low-income parents can afford to readily access childcare premises; and that (3) air filters be required to be included in the design of childcare premises (just as they are in schools in WA), to minimise risks of disease spread and pollution within buildings.

A big thank you to Meg Wilson and Cathy Levett for the content of this submission.

Perth Hills Climate Change Interest Group Advocacy Position Papers

The PHCCIG Local Government Advocacy Position Paper was updated this year, as was the PHCCIG Federal Government Advocacy Position Paper. The PHCCIG WA Government Position Paper was prepared this year and released in September 2023. These are available on the website - <https://phccig.wordpress.com/advocacy/>

WA Climate Adaptation Strategy

PHCCIG contributed to the WA government's consultations on climate adaptation, in which water risk management plans, and an independent risk monitoring body, and local government bio-region risk management plans were advocated. A copy of PHCCIG's Local Government Advocacy Position paper, which described Perth Hills climate risks and mitigation and adaptation measures tailored to Perth Hills climate risks was also submitted.



Senator Louise Pratt Meeting

Committee members Lynda (pictured left) and Ailsa (pictured) met with Senator Louise Pratt (centre) about the strengthened Safeguard Mechanism Act - which will deliver better emissions cuts than had the previous legislation.

They advocated that the government should see the Safeguard Mechanism Act as a cornerstone for more ambitious emissions reduction and that Australia should work to exceed its 2030 target and take an optimal, as informed by science, decarbonisation ambition to the 2035 target.

The Senator was given a copy of the most recent IPCC report and Lynda and Ailsa advocated for: (1) No new fossil fuel projects; (2) the need to strengthen environmental laws; (3) the need to set limits on offsets; (4) the establishment of a National Energy Transition Authority as an independent public body; (5) legislation for contemporary fuel efficiency standards; and, support for Paul Griffiths' concept of 'Rewiring Australia – Electrify everything'. A copy of the PHCCIG Federal Government Advocacy Position paper was also given to Senator Pratt.

Tania Lawrence MP, Member for Hasluck, Letters and Meeting

A letter requesting a commitment for stronger environmental laws on Nature of World Environment Day 5th June was sent to Tania Lawrence the Member for Hasluck on the 2nd June 2023.

A meeting with representatives from PHCCIG, Doctors for the Environment and the Nature Reserves Preservation Group was held with Tania Lawrence in October 2023. The following climate change and biodiversity issues were asked about and advocated for:

- Clarity about the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) review process and timing, and
- that the revised legislation should have climate change risk at the centre; and that
- the revised Act should provide for at risk areas of high biodiversity in Hasluck - including the northern jarrah forest ecosystem and the remaining bushland and wetlands in the Perth Metro area and in and around Perth Airport, and the Greater Brixton Street Wetlands.
- The groups also called for fracking in the Canning Basin and West Kimberley to be banned, and
- that the EPBC Act Water Trigger be amended forthwith to include shale gas risks in addition to the current provision for coal seam gas risks to water, with the urgency of this to ensure Beetaloo fracking risks to water and health are avoided. Finally,
- the group discussed the WA Climate Bill. Questions were asked about what capacity the Commonwealth has to ensure that WA Climate Act does not risk the achievement of Australia's National Emission targets.

Questions were also asked about barriers to harmonisation between State and Federal jurisdictions – and what is in place, or that needs to be done, to ensure Australia meets its emission reduction targets.

Climate Change Authority 2035 Emissions Consultation

A submission was made in June 2023 calling for the Australian government to adopt a minimum of 75% emissions reduction by 2035.

Beetaloo Basin Fracking Risks

PHCCIG partnered with Doctors for the Environment to call for the proposed Beetaloo Basin Hydraulic-Fracking gas field be stopped in its tracks by: a (revised) federal law for risks to climate, health and water; a cessation of government subsidies to the fossil fuel industry; the delivery of Health Impact Assessments; and, that the interests of Aboriginal stakeholders be properly considered.

Go Beyond Gas

PHCCIG also partnered with CCWA's campaign to keep gas in the ground, secure strong climate legislation to WA, and to plan for WA to become a renewable energy superpower.



EPA submission - Public Environment Review of Alcoa's Bauxite Mining

PHCCIG advocated that a public assessment and full environmental review would be appropriate given the extent of public concern about deforestation and the impact on the environment because of mining operations across the Darling Ranges, and the value of forests and native vegetation in mitigating climate change.



Appeal - Great Southern Landfill

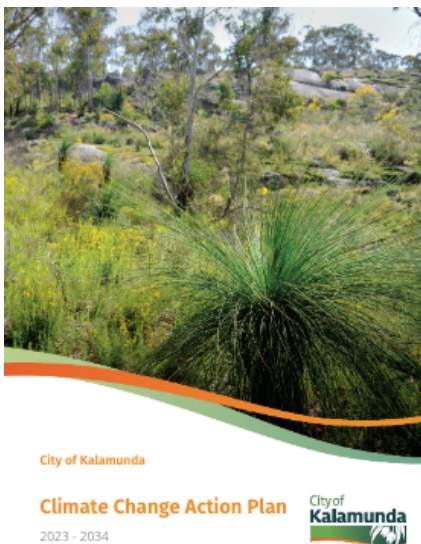
Appealing the report from the EPA, Report No 1738

The landfill proposal referred to the transport of 250,000 tonnes of waste a year for up to 28 years some 80 km from its source in the Perth metropolitan area through Mundaring to St. Ronans (near York).

On this basis each transport truck will undertake a 160 km return trips a day from Perth to St Ronans and back.

PHCCIG's main objections to the Great Southern Landfill at Allawuna Farm proposal included:

- (1) The calculations used to estimate Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GGs) by type and level of emissions are not made explicit. Underestimations needed to be corrected and omissions rectified, and evidence-based strategies to mitigate GGEs must be explained in full, and similarly, evidence of, and reporting for, compliance;
- (2) waste minimisation strategies to demonstrate a reduction in waste disposal over time needed to be explained in full, including a consideration of all local, State and Commonwealth waste reduction and mitigation strategies that are in place in the area, and those that are in the pipeline (and likely to be adopted in the foreseeable future);
- (3) noise and ambient air pollution issues associated with the transport of waste needed to be considered and described, as well as how they will be mitigated; and ,
- (4) A full rational as to why the Allawuna Farm proposal was being considered, with a fulsome analysis of all other options, with comparisons, for the disposal of Perth's waste was (and still are) needed.



City of Kalamunda Climate Action Plan

In August 2022, City of Kalamunda residents and the Nature Reserves Preservation Group (NRPG), and Transition Town Kalamunda (TTK), and PHCCIG made submissions about the City's draft climate action plan. In the lead up to the submission deadline of the 10th August PHCCIG, NRPG and TTK members across the City of Kalamunda were sent a submission guide, which had been prepared by these three community groups.

PHCCIG representative and City of Kalamunda resident Helen Lynes also gave a deputation to at a Public Agenda Briefing Forum on the 14th February 2023, prior to the adoption of the Action Plan, alongside deputations given by Vickie Laurie, Chair, Kalamunda Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee, and NRPG and TTK representatives Steve Gates and Dr Bunn.

Hills Candidates Climate Survey – Local Government Elections October 2023

Perth Hills Candidates across the Perth Hills, including the City of Swan, the Shire of Mundaring, The City of Kalamunda, the City of Armadale and the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale, were sent the survey. They were asked 4 questions, as follows:

1. What do you consider are the top three priorities of your local government authority to ensure effective action on adaptation to climate change and to achieve a net zero carbon footprint by 2030?
2. What do you hope to achieve for climate policy, and for the environment and biodiversity, in your term in office, if you are elected?
3. What track record do you have in taking action to address the climate emergency? (please list up to three of your main actions and/or achievements)
4. How do you see your climate and environment priorities for local government as leading to the development of more vibrant and sustainable businesses and communities in the Hills?

The responses of candidates were published in the October newsletter (see the website for this). There were outstanding responses from candidates- but overall the low level of climate change literacy across the field of candidates in the Perth Hills is a concern.

WA Climate Bill

A submission was quickly put together in October due to the small window of time for community consultation on the Bill.

Some of the key points in the submission included a call for: a public consultation; an explanation as to how the WA climate legislation and policies will harmonise with Australian climate laws; a just transition; the right to a safe climate, an independent expert panel; and integrity in decision making.

PHCCIG was also party to a joint letter from CCWA and numerous other climate and environment groups to the WA Government calling for a public consultation.



Marketing and Media

Newsletter subscriptions, and Facebook followers - have continued to grow, with a reach across the Perth Hills. FB & Website reach 31 Oct 22 to 28 Oct 23 - FB 5,150 reach, followers 360. Website – 1,498 visitors - 4,449 pages views.

Published articles and print media features

As follows:

Dear Dirty Dozen – Australia’s biggest fossil fuel polluters: It’s time to pull your weight on climate. PHCCIG was a signatory to this feature letter, along with 47 other community groups. The West Australian, December 17th 2022.

Shire Shines – LED lights, Shire of Mundaring – Echo Newspaper Edition January 27, 2023. Page 2.

Groups Push for Climate Change Action – Echo Newspaper Edition August 12, 2023. On line.

Perth Hills Climate Change Group Says Yes to the Voice - Echo Newspaper Edition October 6, 2023, Page 11.



Marketing resources

A Shire of Mundaring grant funded a pull up sign, which has already been used at the stalls held by PHCCIG in 2023. Many thanks to the Shire.

Mundaring in Transition also donated trestle tables and other resources which have been used for talks and the 2023 stalls. With thanks.

Governance

A revised Strategic Plan, and Operational Plan, was released in March.

Operational policies have been prepared and endorsed by the committee, with thanks to the OurCommunity.com policy bank.

The committee has met monthly.

The membership of the PHCCIG has continued to grow, as has interest and support for the group’s aims.