

The Summer Heatwaves and Sustainability project

This project assisted Geelong's elderly to improve their energy efficiency, manage heatwaves better, and at the same time reduce their energy bills. It built on the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and commitments in the Geelong's Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17.

Leveraging local networks, CoGG partnered with Surf Coast Shire and Kildonan Unity Care, to deliver a project that worked with internal Home and Community Care staff, as well as Kildonan's local connections, to improve the energy efficiency and heatwave management of the local elderly.

Understanding objectives

This project delivered on a number of CoGG's objectives.

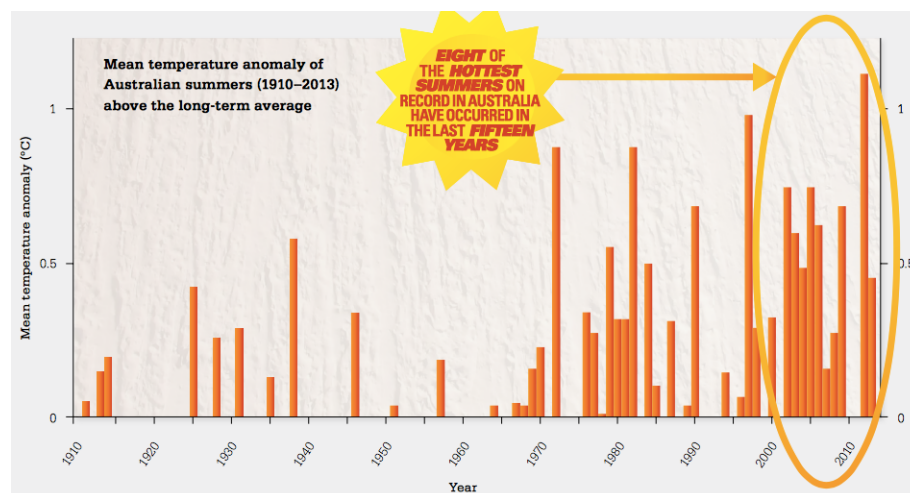
Overall, the City of Greater Geelong is committed to work to positively impact on the health of our local community. The core roles of local government are to contribute to health protection, promotion and prevention (Geelong Public Health & Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017).

Vulnerable groups were also an identified priority for action in CoGG's Adaptation Strategy – with vulnerable people were a key priority work area and leading the community in adapting to climate change a strategic objective of the Strategy.

Finally, CoGG has a commitment to assist its community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Understanding climate change interactions with CoGG objectives

Heatwaves impact our community significantly, but most of all our socially vulnerable. Heatwaves compound many social issues such as social isolation and high living costs, and illness. Under climate change, heatwaves have and will increase in number, as we have seen over the last few years highlighted below.

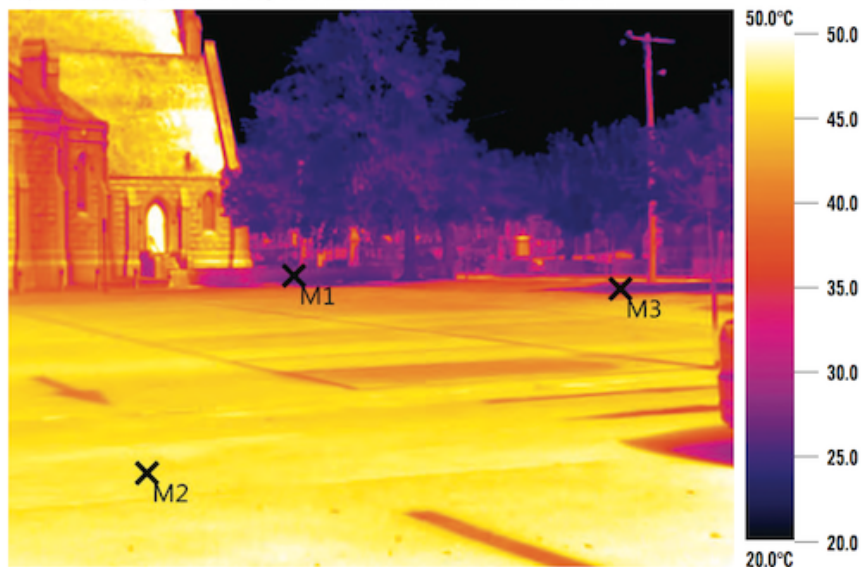


<http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/ff37af7492b4b698420c1aebdaed54a0.pdf>

Assisting individuals to manage the extremes (particularly heatwaves as they are likely on the rise), is important to ensure that Geelong continues to have a healthy and vibrant community.

To understand how climate change may impact on Geelong's vulnerable, CoGG completed heat vulnerability mapping. This provided insights into how surface air temperature hot spots aligned with suburbs and streets with higher numbers of socially vulnerable.

Asphalt shaded by trees is 19 degrees Celsius cooler than unshaded asphalt.



CoGG understood that the risks of heatwave are immediate risks, that the community are already dealing with. Therefore, action now was needed.

The hedge - Project overview

A state government funded project, the Summer and Heatwaves and Sustainability project is a joint initiative of the City of Greater Geelong and Surf Coast Shire in partnership with Kildonan UnitingCare.

The project targeted building the capacity of Home and Community Care clients and staff to manage the temperature of the clients; houses, particularly focusing on heatwaves.

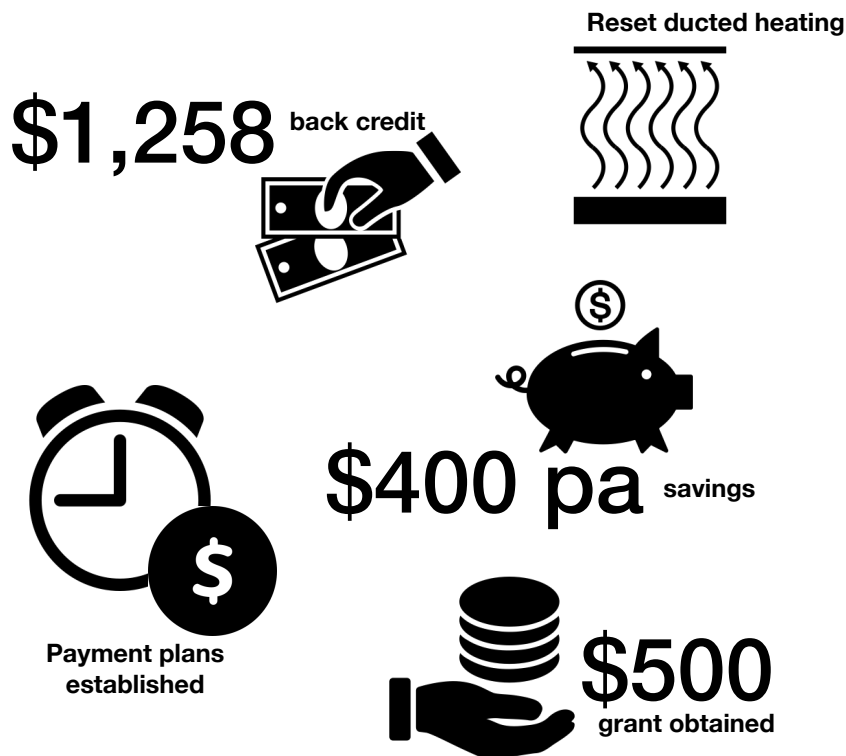
To build the capacity of Council Home Care staff to assist their clients in managing heatwaves. The objectives of the course was to assist Home Care staff in helping their clients:

1. Manage the heat
2. Understand energy basics
3. Learn about how to make their household more energy efficient – and therefore save money
4. Best practice myths versus facts about energy usage
5. Learn about concessions and contacts that may assist them.

Training of Home Care workers was originally delivered in late 2014 and refresher staff training for City of Greater Geelong staff took place during September / October 2015. Seven sessions were delivered and 310 staff attended.

The project also delivered home sustainability visits to clients to provide advice on how to reduce their energy consumption and bills, and improve their ability to manage the internal temperature of their homes.

In most instances, the outcomes for the clients have been clear. They have saved money, and been empowered to better manage the thermal comfort of their homes.



Meeting adaptation objectives

This project or hedge, meets a number of the adaptation objectives. This project does not limit the actions that CoGG can take in future to manage the impacts of climate change on vulnerable groups within the municipality.

This project also represents no regrets due to the multiple benefits that were available to the clients – reducing energy use, improving thermal comfort and decreasing energy bills. Without the impacts of heatwaves on the community, this project would still represent good value for money. However, as is often the case, the project has been adjusted to also help mitigate the risk of heatwaves to the elderly, as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy bills.

CoGG was also opportunistic with this project. In 2013, when the State Government announced funding for climate change adaptation actions, CoGG with directions from its Adaptation Strategy and Public Health and Wellbeing plan could easily pull together an innovative, successful grant application.