

ECOVILLAGE RESIDENTS' BULLETIN

26 October 2023

#11



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Editor's Comments

By Jo Thierfelder

Seasons have come and gone since our last Residents' Bulletin, such is the busy nature of WEV's small professional office and the myriad balls we juggle. But much has happened in the last six months, and we have plenty of updates and important information for our Ecovillage community.

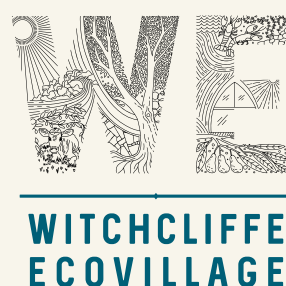
On behalf of the WEV team, let me say "welcome" to all the new residents to the community. By our rough count, we are at about 55-60 households now living in the Ecovillage with at least as many homes under construction.

Changes to the WEV Team

The WEV team itself has changed this year too. We farewelled landscape architect **Nicola Anastas** and bookkeeper **Sheena Cole-Bowen** who retired in July, and welcomed efficiency dynamo [Rachel Pearce](#) in the Accounts chair.

Landscape architect, **Chad Elton**, has pulled back to one day a week in the office now that we've broken the back of the landscaping and civil works programs. **Jodie Passmore**, sales admin and office manager extraordinaire has exited stage left and we are currently recruiting for her part-time

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replacement. [Karen Millar](#) has stepped up to three days in her crucial role managing all things strata, liaising with residents and providing admin support.

[Clare Hamilton](#) is heading up the Design Reviews process, supported by [Jeff Thierfelder](#), who has turned his attention to design and planning of the 'micro clusters' in 3E and 4E.

[Jo Thierfelder](#) (me) remains in the role of marketing, communications and sales. [Michelle Sheridan](#), our omniscient General Manager, and I are also Licensed Sales Representatives for Ecovillage-based real estate agency, Village Homes Realty.

Mike Hulme is spending more time in the WEV office in his "everything-everywhere-all-at-once" project manager capacity. Importantly, he captains the energy ship with an unparalleled understanding of our complex renewable energy systems and is also taking on a more hands-on role out in the field dealing with water, irrigation and landscaping. For any enquiries to the WEV team, call the office on (08) 9757 6688 or email info@ecovillage.net.au

WEV Community Facebook Group usage

A gentle reminder that the WEV Community Facebook Group is a community forum and not a communication channel for the WEV office. Any WEV team members that belong to the FB group are wearing their residents' hats when they visit or engage in the group; it's a place for us to catch up on news and activities in our community.

We don't engage with FB when we are at work (except as WEV), so if we are personally tagged into a question or an issue, it will come to our FB feed when we are at home relaxing at night or on the weekend, or even when we are on holidays.

Please send all queries for the WEV team to info@ecovillage.net.au. If you see something on the page that looks like it could be better answered by the team, you can always gently advise the person posting to email us, or just ignore it, but please don't tag us to alert us to the query.

Building Design Guidelines updated

By Clare Hamilton

The Sustainable Building Design Guidelines is a key document that guides development at WEV and has so far been invaluable in achieving the sustainability and design outcomes that make this a unique place to live.

We have applied the document for some time now during design reviews of homes and from this we have learnt what works well and where we can make improvements. As such, we have recently reviewed the document to identify where processes can be streamlined, further clarity provided on design requirements and where flexibility in design requirements can achieve greater cost savings to owners, while not compromising design and our industry leading sustainability outcomes.

We are happy to announce that this process is now complete, and the updated document has been released. It can be downloaded on our website under Document Library > [Sustainable Building Design Guidelines \(Oct 2023\)](#).

The amended Design Guidelines will be used by the WEV Design Team going forward as the standard from which to assess the design of lots, along with the relevant Local Development Plan (LDP). Please ensure that you, your designer, and builder have thoroughly read the Design Guidelines for your lot before starting the design review process with us.

The update includes previously noted changes as well as amendment of a few design requirements where we deem improvement or flexibility can be provided while maintaining desired outcomes. For ease of reference, the most recent changes made, and all historic amendments are now summarised in a new document [Sustainable Building Design Guidelines – Record of](#)

[Amendments](#). This can also be downloaded from the Document Library.

Also now provided on the website is an updated document [Guidance Document – Design Review Process & Approvals \(Oct 2023\)](#). This should be read in conjunction with the Design Guidelines, as it sets out, in detail, the design review process that must be completed with our WEV Design Team prior to owners making application to the Shire for building permit approval. It identifies the key design review stages, including timing, and provides detailed information on documentation required.

We have also updated checklists associated with the Building Design Guidelines that are required to be submitted to us during the design review process. These can all be downloaded from the Document Library.

We are so very pleased to see that by following the Design Guidelines closely, Ecovillage residents across the stages are creating highly energy and water efficient homes which are carbon negative, accessible to all, and are beautiful, healthy and comfortable to live in.

If you have any questions on the updates, please contact Clare in the WEV Design Team on (08) 9757 6688 or email clare@ecovillage.net.au

Stage 1 energy systems - GO!

By Mike Hulme

We want to take this opportunity to update Stages 2 – 4 on the progress we've made with the solar and battery connections in Stage 1.

Stage 1 has finally received approval from Western Power to turn on all installed solar systems and their batteries. The batteries have been commissioned by Tesla (last week), and the Power Quality Testing (PQA) of the batteries was completed today (24/10).

The PQA results on the batteries will be packaged up and sent to Western Power this week and we expect

final sign off to turn them on in the next couple of weeks.

Phew, what a journey this has been!

Stage 2 and 3 are next in line and given they are identical systems we expect that they will not be far off being finalised by Western Power.

It will be great to see the EV chargers in 1A, 1B, 1C turned on now that they can be run off solar, and see these chargers identified as ready for use by all EV owners using the Charge Fox app.



For everyone in Stage 2 and 3 who haven't installed solar systems yet, I recommend getting your systems installed before the STC rebate reduces in 2024. This will also ensure that your solar system is assessed under our PQA when the approval comes through, as opposed to having to add this cost to your solar system.

Now that we finally have a clear understanding of all of the new Western Power requirements for our large solar and battery systems, I have been busy updating all of the Energy Spec Sheets for each

cluster, and the Energy Handbook, which are being sent to each cluster as they are completed and will be available for download on the [Residents' Library](#) (password: Ecoresinews123).

Please don't hesitate to contact Mike at the office if you have any questions once you've received the updated Tech Sheets and Energy Handbook.

Avocado Handover

By Mike Hulme

Last Sunday saw the first handover of avocados in the wastewater irrigation orchard to Cluster 1A, 1B and 1C. It was a fun and informative couple of hours where all who attended received a summary of the irrigation and the simple maintenance and feeding / mulching requirements of the avocado tree, and an amazing avocado-shaped cake (thank you, Jodie)!

The avocado orchard consists of 28 rows and 761 trees. The rows have been divided up in a manner that enables each cluster to have three trees per lot.



Due to the differing size of the clusters and orchard rows, it wasn't as simple as providing two rows per cluster, starting at 1A and moving along. As such we've had signs made up identifying which rows belong to each Stage 1 cluster. With regards to the



tree numbers per lot, this does not relate to your strata unit entitlements, as the common land owned by Ecovillage Commons Ltd provides share/vote per lot. Therefore each lot gets three trees regardless of size/value of your lot. We did this intentionally, and given we are averaging two people per lot, regardless of lot type/size, I am so glad we did.

As explained on Sunday, the avocado tree is a gross feeder that thrives on animal manure and mulch, so the first step is to weed around the drip line (will literally take around 20mins per tree, then add some animal manure, then cover the manure with mulch,

Mark will also undertake bi-annual leaf analysis to make sure the trees are getting all the nutrients and trace elements, which we will continue to apply through organic foliar spray.

The wastewater treatment plant is now treating around 12,000 litres per day (averaging 100L/person, as we expected) which is irrigated straight out to the avo orchard. The controller is set up so that it simply rotates to the next value after an hour on each station, but I'm about to change that to a volume rate so we can better assess how much water we're allocating per square metre. As there are around



and bob's your uncle!

If each home weeds their trees a few times a year, and adds manure and mulch three times a year, you will be amazed at how quickly they will grow and flourish! Shelle took this photo of me and one of my two avocado trees at home last night. This tree is only five years old and has been fed nothing but, you guessed it - goat poo, mulch and water! It produced around 200 avos last season and has many more on it this season.

another 40 homes under construction, it won't be long before that volume increases to 20,000L/day.

While Tony tells me the treated water is so clean he'd be happy to bath in it, and it's micro-dosed with chlorine, it's important to remember that it is treated wastewater.

So, avoid getting it in your eyes, or any cuts, and wash your hands

afterwards. I also recommend that you, and your children, wear shoes in the orchard.

Each cluster can set their own rules around tree distribution. Some may decide to manage their trees as a whole, but I personally think that as each home gets three trees each, you are more likely to give your trees extra special care if you know which trees are yours. If you're anything like me, hopefully not for your sake, you will get very attached to your avo trees as they are such a wonderful species, which respond so well to TLC and will supply your home with incredibly healthy protein and nutrients.

If some residents don't have time to get involved there will no doubt be others in each cluster that

special when we know we're watering them from our treated wastewater, as it doesn't get more sustainable than that!

As mentioned to the group on Sunday, I'm happy to do another Sunday afternoon with the group, or each cluster, for those that couldn't attend last week, in the near future.

Ecovillage Commons Update

By Michelle Sheridan

The WEV team has recently submitted the final subdivision plan to WAPC that will amalgamate the balance land of the Ecovillage into the Ecovillage



might like to manage their trees in exchange for the fruit. I think it's important that such 'orphan' trees are still available for the lot in case the homeowner's get more time in the future. But we'll let each cluster work out how they want to manage this.

It's very exciting to be getting to this stage of the project, to be handing over the first portion of the ECL land, and getting involved with our community in creating healthy, productive, landscapes. Especially

Commons lot. This is the final subdivision plan. I believe we have gone through about 26 individual subdivision applications and clearance processes since the Structure Plan was approved in 2018. In its final form, the Ecovillage Commons land will be titled Lot 9507 Bussell Hwy, and measure 39.8066ha. It will be an unusually shaped lot with several seraphs (which are like invisible

surveying paperclips) joining four discrete parcels of land that are separated in places by public roads and POS. It will include:

- the wastewater treatment and irrigation land
- creeklines
- dams
- conservation areas
- future amphitheater area
- future education precinct
- the community centre and parking bays

It does not include the Public Open Space:

- Village Square
- Oval
- future Nature Playground
- Olive grove area to north of 3C
- Bussell Hwy earth bunds

Or privately owned land:

- the Agricultural lots, Goat lot, and Vineyard
- Superlots around Village Square, etc, still undeveloped

Once the amalgamation is approved by WAPC (90 days) then we can begin the process of transferring the title to the Ecovillage Commons Limited ownership. The management of the Ecovillage Commons company remains under the directorship of the Witchcliffe Ecovillage joint venture partners until the last strata schemes in the Ecovillage are created.

However, in the meantime, we would like to invite interested Ecovillagers to become involved in the management of some parts of its operation, for example, planning for the long-term management of the parcels of conservation land, applying for land care or community infrastructure grants, dam

management and aquaculture opportunities, or learning how to operate the dam pumping stations.

Please let us know at info@ecovillage.net.au if you are interested in being involved.

Understanding Ecovillage water systems

By Michelle Sheridan

Many of you may not be aware of the background to our incredible stormwater management system, and the unique ability it gives us to provide stored dam water to irrigate our strata clusters gardens, Ag lots and landscaping across the Ecovillage.

Generally, there are WA State Government policies that restrict the provision of water from one titled property to another property. Neighboring farms, for example, can't just pump water from their dams across lot boundaries to each other.

Providing water from the Ecovillage dams to the Ecovillage clusters is a special Ecovillage Commons arrangement that we were able to negotiate with the AMR Shire and the Dept of Health. It was hard to negotiate and very unusual to have this arrangement approved in a subdivision situation.

In order for water from the Ecovillage Commons dams to be provided to the clusters' Common Property gardens, the strata companies must be members of the ECL company, and the ECL company is obliged by its constitution to accept the memberships of the strata companies. They have a permanent mutual relationship, and it is only with this relationship that the ECL has permission (and is obliged) to provide non-potable water in perpetuity to the strata's common property areas.

This is a fantastic situation, and one that allows the Ecovillage to achieve the very important sustainability objective of providing sufficient land

and water resources so that every community garden cluster can provide a huge amount of its residents' fruit and vegetable needs.

However, if the ECL wanted to provide water to individually owned lots, it would legally need to have an expensive (and difficult to get approved) water license and would likely need to chlorinate the water to potable standards.

It has come to our attention that builders and some owners are continuing to disperse water onto some private lots and this must now come to an end. We run the risk of having our permission to provide water to the clusters revoked, as the water is dispersing in these situations onto a private lot.

In addition, the clusters' irrigation tanks are periodically topped up by the ECL's pumping stations, in line with the current estimated usage for each community garden. They are not topped up every day, and they are not topped up as residents turn on their EUA tap. If a builder turns an EUA tap and leaves it running on a concrete pad for days and days, this will likely run the cluster tank dry, and potentially burn out the cluster's pump. This would be an expensive item to repair, and it would not be covered by the pump warranty.

So, if you are building, please let your builders know that they must provide their own water. This is the case at any building site in the region that is not serviced by scheme water, so it's not at all unusual. If your builder needs water to build your home, the best option is to install your water tank and have it filled by one of the two water cartage companies in Margaret River that service Witchcliffe. When you are connecting to the ECL water in your EUA, remember it is only for use on your EUA, not your housing lot garden, and please always be waterwise. The less water we use, the more we can swim in!

Any lot owner who has incorrectly connected their internal lot irrigation to ECL dam water must disconnect it and provide irrigation instead from their private water tanks. This is a non-negotiable

requirement that is made clear in the bylaws, (Governance Bylaw 15.3.d), and can't be changed by a strata company without consent from the AMR Shire (Governance Bylaw 15.4.)

We will very soon be providing each stage 1-3 strata company with an ECL water use agreement that will be signed by the strata councils on their residents' behalf. A copy of these signed agreements and the ECL constitution will be added to the [Residents' Library](#) (password: Ecoresinews123).

Wastewater update

TMC's Ecovillage wastewater plant is continuing to progress through its commissioning process and is currently treating all of stage 1, 2 and 3 residents' blackwater—12,000 litres per day. The avocado orchard is now relying solely on water from the wastewater treatment plant, closing another loop in the Ecovillage sustainability objectives.

TAKE CARE WHAT GOES DOWN THE DRAIN

Help to protect our Ecovillage Wastewater Treatment Plant as a finely-tuned sustainable water recovery facility and keep our wastewater rates down!

In the toilet



Poo, pee, toilet paper



Wet wipes, cotton buds, tampons, sanitary pads, paper towel, tissues, dental floss, condoms, medications, food, nappies, plasters, chlorine (hypochlorite) bleach

In the kitchen, bathroom and laundry



Make your own using white vinegar, baking soda, borax, lemons - reduce cost & plastic waste and keep the air clean too! Hints: eg <https://www.watford.com.au/2-quick-to-natural-cleaning>
Ecofriendly cleaning, dishwashing, laundry, personal care products
eg Ecolore, Koh available in local shops (more expensive but use less), abode (Australian Organic Products)



Grease, oil, fat, chlorine-based bleach laundry and cleaning products

Irrigating with greywater



You can find info on gardening with greywater at Sustainable Gardening Australia www.sustainablegardening.org.au/greywater-info/
Lanfax Labs www.lanfaxlabs.com.au



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One of our Stage 1 residents has created this poster as a handy reminder for you and your guests to help protect the integrity of the system and avoid any problems for TMC.

For anything at all to do with sewerage, we remind you that TMC Witchcliffe is the owner and operator of the wastewater treatment plant and the main point of contact. Your first port of call is Tony Johansen on 0418 267 959 or Ryan McGentty on 0488 792 604. Please do not contact the WEV office in relation to wastewater issues.

Friday Gardening Group welcomes all

By Mark Tupman

Spring is underway and the garden group has recommenced Friday morning sessions. This group is a lot of fun and really gets things happening. All residents are welcome to join in and there is a WhatsApp group set up for communication purposes.

If you're interested in joining the group, get in touch with Tim Dwyer (0437 286 462) or Veronique Florec (0401 868 885) via WhatsApp.

Current activities include planting seedlings, renovating EUA's and setting up new beds, installing reticulation and, last but not least, discussing pertinent matters over a cup of tea and cake at morning teatime.

Horticulturalist, Mark Tupman, who usually facilitates the group, is finding his business, Productive Ecology, increasingly demanding of his time. However, Mark will

still be joining the garden group on a fortnightly basis to carry out seasonally relevant sessions. He is also slowly establishing another garden for demonstration purposes on Mike's agricultural lot. This evolving space will eventually be used to run workshops, as well as grow some delicious fresh food.

If you haven't started already, it's the season to get your warm season vegetables growing. Now is the time for tomatoes, eggplants, capsicums, chillies, zucchinis, cucumbers, pumpkins, corn, beans, basil and summer flowers. I'd suggest putting in a round of the above every few weeks to ensure an ongoing supply come harvest time.

Bare garden beds bake in the hot dry summer so endeavour to either fill them up with plants or mulch them deeply to protect that soil. See you out there.



Fencing and lot maintenance

WEV Internal Fencing Rebate

All Ecovillage lot owners are responsible to organise and pay for their own fencing. Honouring a promise that we made in 2020 before the construction cost increases, WEV is providing a \$1,400 rebate for each internal dividing fencing to current Stage 1-3 lot owners. This is a fixed price rebate and is not transferrable to any other party, including a new owner if you sell your lot. It is also contingent on you building within the building commencement and completion dates in your sales contract.

The fence must comply with the Building Design Guidelines and Local Development Plans. As per



the *Dividing Fences Act*, adjoining lots share the cost of adequate fencing between them, so the Rebate (and any additional fencing cost) would be shared by both lots. To receive the Rebate, your fence must be installed by a fencing contractor and the Rebate applied for before the original completion date specified by your contract (36 months after settlement), and you must provide us with:

- a paid invoice from a fencing contractor with an ABN showing the location and date of the

installation

- the lot numbers that receive the benefit of the fence (e.g., 1A-1 and 1A-2, not street address)
- name and payment details of the owners for each lot benefited

Please note, internal fence rebate only applies to internal side fences between adjoining strata lots. Any fence that adjoins Common Property, EUA, laneway, or the council verge doesn't qualify. Due to OH&S requirements and Consumer Law obligations, we can't provide a rebate for an owner-built fence.

New fencing contractor in Ecovillage

Cluster 2B residents, Niall Casey and Severine Roberts, have established a new business, South West Landworks, providing:

- Fencing
- Medium to large projects in your garden e.g. irrigation, landscaping, earthworks, drainage.
- General garden maintenance

To enquire, contact Niall on 0477 371 203.

EUA exclusion fencing

The strata bylaws in each cluster exclude the fencing of EUAs, aside from temporary fencing (black pool fencing with a safety gate) if you have young children. The intention of this bylaw was to ensure that the EUA's didn't just become an extension of people's backyards, and that they remain proper community garden spaces where universal access, productivity, social cohesion, cooperation and collaboration are prioritised.

However, most of us are aware by now that we currently have a build-up of rabbits in the Ecovillage that are causing havoc in EUA gardens, so we are seeing that exclusion fencing around EUA's is becoming commonplace. Rabbit populations in the

region do tend to be cyclical, and as we are coming out of a few good winters into an El Nino cycle, it is likely that the population will peak and decline this summer, especially if Calici virus is deployed by nearby farmers.

Britta Sorensen recently started a great discussion on the EUA fencing topic on the WEV Community Facebook Group. In the absence of other control measures, most of the commentators seem to agree that temporary, low-level fencing, properly installed with accessible gates (that exclude rabbits, not people) is a reasonable solution to the problem of vegie patch invaders. Other options are raised beds, and individual temporary low fences placed around beds and sections, leaving paths open and accessible to visitors.

This seems like a practical approach that would still maintain accessibility for those with mobility issues (prams, wheelchairs, compromised mobility) and continue to encourage neighbourly participation. It may be that the cluster councils and residents could consider making a “house rule” that would allow for temporary low rabbit fencing—this may comply well enough with the intention of the current fencing strata bylaws and so not require a Landgate amendment of the bylaws.

It's a good reminder that everyone does needs to read and understand the bylaws that apply to Common Property, EUA's and your lot to avoid being outside of the bylaws.

If anyone would like to have a “getting to know your bylaws” Q and A session with Michelle at the office, please let us know. She is starting to feel a bit rejected that no-one has taken her up on her offer to do this yet. What could be more fun than an hour drinking tea with Michelle and talking about strata bylaws? ☺

Mandatory slashing and lot maintenance

It is an AMR Shire requirement (see Firebreak Notice Requirements and Bushfire Information 2023–24) that grass and weeds are slashed and kept shorter

than 10cm by 30 November. With all this spring growth as the weather warms, and with snakes present and active throughout the Ecovillage, now is the time to ensure you slash your lot to give the snakes nowhere to hide. This is of particular concern to parents of young kids who run and play throughout the clusters.

The Ecovillage Commons land and any remaining WEV owned lots are booked in with our regular slashing and firebreak contractor, and you will see them out and about during the second half of November. We always leave it until late November, so it doesn't need to be slashed twice, as slashing while there's still moisture in the ground in October inevitably means it needs to be done again in late November. The fire breaks around the Ag lots will be done by the same contractor, and some Ag lots may remain un-slashed to provide summer feed for the sheep and goats, which is allowed on rural land under the Shire fire regulations.

Please remember that maintaining your front verge is also your responsibility.

Renting your home: your responsibilities to tenants and the Ecovillage

By Michelle Sheridan

Several homes in the Ecovillage are now being rented out to tenants, so we thought it could be timely to discuss the ins and outs of renting out your Ecovillage home.

First things first: finding a tenant. Even if you are using a real estate agent to manage your property, it is worth posting your home's rental availability on the WEV Community Group FB page and your cluster's messaging app, and letting the WEV office know. Word of mouth might just find you a perfect tenant and provide an interim home to someone who



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is already familiar with the Ecovillage bylaws and community expectations.

We recommend that you always have a tenancy agreement and bond in place for any rental tenancy. It protects you and your tenant from any misunderstandings. You don't need a real estate agent to set this up for you, forms and guidance are available on the DMIRS website: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consumer-protection/rental-forms-and-notice>

As part of the rental agreement, you need to provide your tenant with:

- a copy of your cluster's bylaws
- a Code of Sustainability Conduct pledge to sign (Conduct Bylaw 17, Annexure E)
- specific advice regarding the 'no cat' and 'dogs inside' bylaws
- advice regarding any services (e.g., sewer rates; water tanks; not using EUA water on the lot, etc.)

As part of your obligations to your strata, you need to provide details of your tenants to your strata council.

You should also consider and discuss:

- providing a summary of the bylaws that will affect your tenant, so the rules are very clear and easy to follow
- whether tenants are obliged to look after your EUA area, remembering that it is your responsibility as lot owner that the EUA area is kept neat and productive.
- your expectations of their involvement in busy bees, etc., on your behalf
- maintenance of any adjacent verge landscaping which is the lot owners' responsibility
- if you have solar panels, will the tenant pay you something for the power that your panels

generate for their use, or is that already included as a consideration in the rent?

- if you are renting privately, do you have contact details for local handypersons / electricians / plumbers lined up who can assist if there are any issues that you need to fix quickly?

Animals in the Ecovillage

By Michelle Sheridan

Dogs

A reminder to all residents and visitors, including your builders and tradesmen, that dogs are to be kept on leads in the Ecovillage, as per each cluster's Strata Bylaws and also the Shire's dog policy. We are frequently seeing dogs off lead throughout the Ecovillage, and have had incidents where dogs have chased goats, sheep, other dogs, and native birds, gotten stuck where they shouldn't, pooped where they shouldn't, interacted with cars, barked their heads off at pedestrians, and just been a bit of a nuisance.

There are also snakes and kangaroos around as we all know, and a dog on a lead is much easier to pull away from danger than one that is free ranging. To be fair, a lot of these incidents have involved builder's dogs, but we see lots of Ecovillage dogs off lead too.

We love dogs and believe that they are all good boys and girls, but it is up to their owners to manage their behaviour so they don't impact on other people, dog and wildlife. If your builder is allowing dogs on site, please discuss the Ecovillage and Shire's strict on-lead requirements directly with them, as they are generally not listening to us. If you are a neighbour being impacted by a builder's dog and you don't feel comfortable ringing the owner or builder, please call the Shire Ranger.

On a brighter note, so far, the Shire doesn't seem to have noticed that the POS

oval behind the office has become an unofficial fun-for-all, off-lead dog area. So, as long as owners keep picking up poop and managing their dogs' very good behavior out there, we hope that this great use of the space will be able to continue. At this point, this is the only off-lead area in the Ecovillage. We will likely also make the amphitheatre an off-lead area when it's completed; to be considered by the ECL council in due course.

Snakes

It is that warm time of year again, and the snakes are out and about and exploring parts of the Ecovillage that used to be their undisturbed paddock habitat with just a few cows to contend with, not all these pesky people.

Snake bite education is vitally important to anyone living in WA. This St John's First Aid pamphlet is a very good start: https://stjohn.org.au/assets/uploads/fact%20sheets/english/Fact%20sheets_snake%20bite.pdf. Advice does get updated from time to time, which is why we're not going to add this pamphlet to the Resident's Library. The St John's app "St John's First Responder" is an excellent app which accurately pinpoints your location if you are out walking.

Ideally, everyone should complete a First Aid Course, which is the best preparation you can have.

Please keep an eye out for our slithery friends, educate yourself and your family, and keep your lot and gardens clear of snake-promoting habitat (long grass, piles of building materials, etc.,) as much as you can. Always have your phone with you in the garden and on a walk. At this time of year, wear sensible shoes and clothes, and avoid snakey environments like long grass and reeds.

It is great to have multiple snake bandages and a print-out of the St John's pamphlet in your home and car, and these are both located in a red tool box at the gate to Stingray Dam and in the WEV office. If you get bitten by a snake:

DO:

- Follow DRSABCD (first aid basics)
- immediately phone 000 for help and follow instructions
- lie down, be as still and quiet as possible and wait for help to come to you. Snake venom moves via your lymphatic system, which is "pumped" by movement.
- If you have assistance and a bandage, apply the bandage for immobilization, as per instructions
- Note the time of the bite

DON'T:

- try and identify or catch the snake, it's not necessary to know
- walk or drive back to locate a bandage yourself
- wash the bite area

Defibrillator at Community Centre

The WEV office recently had a visit from St John's Ambulance staff who are arranging the installation of a defibrillator at the east entry of the Community Centre. Now would be a great time for interested Ecovillagers to sign up for a First Aid course or do a refresher. To enquire about St John's Ambulance training, please call 08 9334 1222.



Butchered Ecovillage lamb available

By Mark Tupman

By now I'm sure all our WEV residents are familiar with our resident flock of babydoll Southdown sheep. Every year a new batch of lambs are born and the original flock has grown to a sizeable 60, which is around about all we can manage with our facilities and grazable area.

As such I'm excited to say that this spring, for the first time, we will have our first batch of rotationally grazed, organically managed, grass-fed Ecovillage meat, exclusively available for residents.

We'd like to take orders ASAP so that we can process and dispatch everything at once. If you're interested or want to find out more, get in touch with Mark on 0401 240 115. This is strictly an offer to Ecovillage residents and owners only as we can legally only sell to owners of the ECL land.

Keeping our Ecovillage beautiful

Spring is a good time to pull out winter weeds before they seed. As you walk around the Ecovillage, keep an eye out for thistles, capeweed and cats' ears which



are currently setting flowers. You can pull them out, shake off the roots and just lay them on the ground or take them home for your compost or green waste bin. Feel free to get stuck into kikuyu when you see it in the wrong place, too!

As the grass is slashed and dies down, it's also when we see the evidence of the builders' waste and plastic rubbish which has blown out of skip bins around the Ecovillage over winter. While it's a bit frustrating to have to pick this up, remember that your building site no doubt spread a bit of rubbish around before you moved in, or will spread some around in the future if you haven't started yet. So, it's great if we can all do our bit to keep rubbish out of the dams and conservation areas, and away from wildlife.

