



## **Public Meeting of the Community Renewal Association**

The Association's first public meeting since the committee was formed will be held on Sunday 11 October at 4pm, at the Arthurs Creek Hall. Please come along and hear the committee report about what is going on, and how you might influence things, and then catch up with each other afterwards. A roast meal will be catered for everyone after the meeting, so just bring your own drinks.

## **Family Fun Day**

Mark Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup> on your calendar – it's the Strathewen Family Fun Day!

The day will include food and soft drinks, rock climbing, sumo suits, novelty races, tug of war, and face painting. There will be massage treatments available and a Backgammon tournament. Red the Clown will also be there.

The day starts at 11:00am and runs until 4:00pm and its all free! Come on down at any time and join in the fun !

## **Dr Rob Gordon**

We are very happy to announce that Dr Rob Gordon will be giving a presentation at the Strathewen Community Centre on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00 pm.

Rob is a highly regarded specialist in trauma recovery, and his presentation should not be missed. Rob will cover topics that include: the effects of trauma on children and young adults, men's health and wellbeing, and grief and bereavement.

Staff from the Australian Centre for Bereavement will also be in attendance.

## **The VBRRRA Planning process**

The Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRRA), headed up by Christine Nixon, have asked all community organizations to prepare project proposals that VBRRRA can pull together and evaluate before deciding where to make the first phase of funding commitments as part of a collective Community Recovery Plan.

The Authority is aiming to focus on projects that are key to the social and economic recovery of the community.

Inevitably, not all project proposals will receive funding (some 800 have already been prepared across the bushfire affected areas), but VBRRRA is working with a number of charity organizations that may have a particular interest in supporting projects that VBRRRA is unable to support.

## **Strathewen's Project Proposals**

Attached to this newsletter is a summary of the list of project proposals that have been submitted to VBRRRA on behalf of the Strathewen community. The public meeting on 11 October will provide an opportunity for you to learn more about many of these projects, for example how the committee sees a proposal for a memorial for Strathewen being developed.

## **Strathewen Hall**

The Annual General Meeting of Strathewen Public Hall Inc. will be held at the Strathewen Community Centre on Monday 19th October at 7.30pm.

For membership forms and other enquiries, ring Jean Sayner on 9714 8418 or email [jeansayner@bigpond.com.au](mailto:jeansayner@bigpond.com.au)



### Show us the money

The Association has applied to the ATO for a grant of charitable status, which will make it easier for charities to contribute towards some of the projects that we want to see undertaken.

However, charities law draws a clear line between public and private benefits, which means that charities are unable to make grants that provide benefits to individuals (like direct assistance with rebuilding of houses), but can provide assistance with the rebuilding of community infrastructure that is of public benefit.

Similarly, although the Association has attracted some generous private donations, as an Incorporated Association we are prevented from making payments to individual members to directly assist them to re-establish themselves, but we can fund initiatives and activities that are designed to be of practical assistance to everyone in getting our lives back on track.

The series of building seminars organized by our Building Facilitation Sub-committee are a very good example of what the community has been able to do to assist ourselves in a practical sense. We have also benefitted from the generosity of the Lions Club in funding the Tool Library, and of Diamond Creek Rotary in providing a fending trailer for use in Strathewen.

The Association is continuing to discuss with a number of potential donors how we might support people who want to return to live in Strathewen, thereby strengthening the community, rather than having to rent accommodation elsewhere.

### Resident Survey

In August we mailed out a resident survey, and we were very pleased with the response – many people took the time to complete the survey and return it to us.

The survey results indicated a high level of interest in the community with regard to the provision of services and activities, allowing us to identify the types of activities and services wanted and to rank them according to levels of interest as indicated by the community.

The results in order from highest to lowest interest were:

- Social Activities
- Activities Specifically for Children
- Do It Yourself Sessions
- Entertainment
- Professional Speakers
- Art & Craft
- Book Club

We also received a number of suggestions including; fitness & well-being sessions, a men's shed, community get-togethers, and environmental education.

The survey results have provided valuable information and have allowed us to engage the services of organisations who are keen to help the Strathewen community. So far, Nillumbik Shire, Nillumbik Community Health Service and Centacare have all put up their hands to assist.

### Sing in Spring

After the success of the Really Terrible Choir, a number of locals wanted to continue the good vibrations. With choir leader Lil' Fi relocating to a place further north, a new choir leader was needed.

Step in Nerida Kirov. Nerida is from the Chocolate Lillies Community Choir and has set up the Sing in Spring choir sessions at the St Andrews Hall. Everyone is welcome – even if you sing like a bull-frog! Sessions will commence on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October through to 28<sup>th</sup> November from 12:30pm – 2:30pm.

Contact Nerida on 9439 4816 or

[neridakirov@gmail.com](mailto:neridakirov@gmail.com)



### Old fence wire

Organising an effective pick up from the side of the road hasn't worked because a machine is needed to lift and crush the wire. Graham Timms has offered to organize a Simms Metal pick up from the concrete pad of the tennis court at Strathewen Primary School. Joe Hollyoak has offered to load it and the proceeds will be donated back the Renewal Association. We will stockpile the wire first before ordering the bin because it is important that we load it fully and crush it in to get enough weight. Please leave your old wire and ruined steel stakes in a neat pile, remove the wooden droppers, plastic and any other rubbish so nothing contaminates the scrap metal.

### Fencing Trailer

Our fencing trailer funded by the Diamond Creek Rotary Club should be operating by the time you receive this newsletter. The trailer is an 8x10 tandem with half tradie canopy and racks. It will be equipped with a Stihl post hole digger, 2 kva generator, post boring wood drill, gas fired steel stake driver, electric jack hammer, 2 wire spinners, wire strainers, and appropriate small tools.

The trailer is intended for use by fencing working bees to help people make the best use of volunteers. It will be managed by the Strathewen Landcare Group and can be booked by contacting Eric South who will also run through how to care for and safely use the powered equipment.

Contact Eric on 0423 263 003.

### Keeping in touch with us

Please ring Bronwyn South on 0414 882 946 or email [scra@tpg.com.au](mailto:scra@tpg.com.au) if you want to update your contact details.

### Tool Library

The Tool Library supported and managed by the Warrandyte Rotary Club is up and running. To use the tools residents will need to complete a membership form which are available at the library, the community centre and on the Strathewen website. The library will be open Saturday and Sunday morning at 8.30 attended by members of the Warrandyte Lions Club. During the week residents should contact Dennis Spooner 0419311603 or Malcolm Hackett 0427356803. The list of tools currently available is provided below. Power tools and specialized equipment will be added when possible and as demand increases so don't hesitate to point out particular needs.

Chainsaws, Crowbars, Wheel barrows, Rakes, Post hole and Square mouth shovels, Sledge hammers, Pinch bars, Star picket drivers, Fence Strainers, Yard Brooms, Axes, Mattocks, Pitchforks, Hammers, Nails, Screws, Rivet guns, Cordless drills, Tin Snips, Hand Saws, Mash hammers, Fubars, Drill Bit Sets, Leather gloves, Dust masks, Ear muffs, Safety glasses, Torches. See the website for details.

### Building Facilitation

The Building Facilitation Sub-committee is continuing to meet weekly, and has continued to work co-operatively with our St Andrews colleagues, especially at our presentations and forums.

So far there have been well attended presentations on:

- Thinking About Building
- Septic and Plumbing
- Power and Electricity
- Energy Efficiency and Ratings
- Building Materials
- Planning and Building Approvals



We have another presentation planned for Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September at the St Andrews Community Hall regarding the engagement of builders and what to look for when engaging a builder. This will cover areas such as contracts and some of the issues that can come up during the building process.

There are other presentations being planned, including further sessions on Bushfire Attack Levels 40 and FZ (which we will organize when some of the new roofing and window systems are finally tested and results are released), Steel Framed Housing, and another materials presentation.

Please send feedback and suggestions about forums to the Sub-committee (Karl Apted: [apted@activ8.net.au](mailto:apted@activ8.net.au) 0418 350 345 or Callum Donoghue [cmdonoghue@activ8.net.au](mailto:cmdonoghue@activ8.net.au) 0414 932 051 or any other Association committee members).

Also, any queries regarding the rebuild process can be sent to the Sub-committee and we will endeavour to help or pass them on to others who will be able to help.

We are also looking at running additional forums on any previous topics if there is sufficient interest.

We are hoping to organise a Supportive Suppliers Expo in mid-November, where suppliers of goods and services who have offered support to help rebuilding will be in attendance to discuss offers and assistance that they are able to provide.

A list of all the offers which we have received will be placed on the website. For further information on offers available please visit the website [www.stathewen.vic.au](http://www.stathewen.vic.au) or contact the Callum Donoghue or Karl Apted.

The Sub-committee is also working at other issues, including attempting to discuss with

relevant government departments the availability of solar electricity rebates which have been modified since the fires. Rebates have recently been extended to bushfire affected people for hot water systems (solar and heat pump), following active lobbying by bushfire community organizations.

VBRR Building Advisers are able to visit residents on site and answer questions. They can be contacted through Hurstbridge Hub (Greys Harps Road) on 9433 3111.

### **Solar and Heat Pump Rebates**

The Environment Minister Peter Garrett has announced special arrangements for the 2,000 homes estimated to have been destroyed in the February 2009 bushfires, as well as the 1,400 that were left uninhabitable.

“We’re offering \$1000 back on heat pump systems which can start at around \$3000, and a \$1,600 rebate on solar hot water systems which start at about \$4,200.

“We know there will be some people affected by the transition - people who can show they bought their heat pump prior to 5 September 2009 can apply for the higher rebate.”

The special arrangements for Victorian bushfire communities require that households:

- are rebuilding a home they lost in the fires,
- are installing a solar or heat pump hot water system that is eligible for at least 20 renewable energy certificates, and
- are also installing a rainwater tank at the property that meets the criteria for the Victorian five star building standards.

Guidelines are available from the website [www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency](http://www.environment.gov.au/energyefficiency) or by calling the hotline on 1800 808 571.



## **Telstra progress**

The mobile phone transmitter on the tower in Eagles Nest Road and the mini-exchange at the Community Centre have both been commissioned. There is still some work to be completed at the Arthurs Creek exchange before they are enabled for use. This should happen within the month.

The new exchange box will allow delivery of ADSL to properties within 4kms. Properties within 1-2kms will have access to ADSL2. This upgrade also applies to properties on the Strathewen Road.

Telstra reminds residents that to take full advantage of the new services they may need to upgrade their mobile phones and computer communications equipment. They will prepare information brochures for circulation before the services go live.

## **Gardening**

It has been suggested that a Garden Recovery Working Group be formed, which can focus on issues specific to your garden - such as landscaping, vege gardens, drought-proofing and indigenous flowers - and sponsor activities around the healing aspects of gardening. The group will be facilitated by Nillumbik Council, but will be the responsibility of Community Associations in the area.

The aim is to work closely with Sustainable Gardening Australia.

For more information about SGA see [www.sgaonline.org.au](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

If you are a member of the Association and would like to be part of the Garden Recovery Working Group, please contact Bronwyn South on 97148451.

## **Erosion and Land Management**

Tim O'Donnell is the Rural Extension Officer working with you on erosion and other and management problems.

Tim can be contacted on 9433 3207 or email [tim.odonnell@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:tim.odonnell@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

Nillumbik Council has advertised for a Volunteer and Contractor Liaison Officer to assist with the coordination of volunteers and contractors undertaking works on private land for bushfire recovery.

These works are mostly those which are identified through the site visits that Tim undertakes with landholders and which landowners would like assistance with. Tim has visited around 60 properties so far. We are seeking funding from VBRRA to continue this program when the current funding runs out.

## **Indigenous Plant Nursery**

The need for a local seed bank and access to indigenous plants has prompted a proposal for an indigenous plant nursery in the northern part of the Shire.

The Nillumbik Environment Working Group is preparing a plan for the nursery. In the meantime we have included the proposal in our Bushfire Recovery Plan.

Strathewen and St Andrews Landcare Groups are also applying for Community Group Support funds so that seed collection can begin.



## Equipment for loan

For loan to all residents for bushfire recovery

work: Tandem trailer

Box trailer

Fencing trailer

From Strathewen Landcare:

Spray Unit

Back pack sprayer

Equipment trailer (planting and weed control)

Contact Eric South on 0423 263 003.

## Strathewen at the MCG

Following on from the Resident Survey results, the Resident Support sub-committee with the assistance of Nillumbik Shire, Centacare, and Nillumbik Community Health Service set about organising a number of social outings.

We mailed out information to parents of children and young adults to ascertain levels of interest in the first round of activities. Plans were developed for a daytrip to the snow, and a trip to the Royal Show, but time was against us and these trips had to be cancelled.

However, we did get an AFL finals trip organised and twelve Strathewen residents enjoyed a night at the MCG – many thanks to the above-mentioned organisations for their help. Also, a big thank you to Tom Pohl for driving the bus to the footy.

## Future Social Activities

With the help of the numerous organisations and individuals who have offered us their assistance we will be able to provide a wide range of activities for children and adults.

These will range from day outings to weekend (or possibly longer) camps. We also plan to have professional speakers as well as Do it Yourself sessions covering a wide range of topics.

However, for any of these activities to be viable we need participation from the community and even more importantly, we need to plan for the right sort of activities. If you would like a particular event to be arranged or would like to be part of any of the planning groups, please contact a Resident Support Sub-committee member – kids and young adults especially wanted (some of us are getting old and out of touch!)

## Computers and electronic goods

At Soup Night last Thursday some executives and staff of the computer and electronics company Centre Com displayed some notebook computers and addressed the gathering. Centre Com have donated a digital projector, two notebook computers, a colour printer and a universal card reader to our association. The company would like to develop a long-term relationship with our community and have been very genuine in their support. They have offered their buying power to our community in all areas of computer and home entertainment electronics. Residents looking at making such a purchase are invited to contact Derek at the Bundoora warehouse.

## ABC Catalyst Program

The highly regarded ABC science show Catalyst will be making a program with CSIRO fire scientist Justin Leonard, on how house materials and design can contribute to survival during bushfires. Any residents who would like to assist with a survival story in which building materials or design played a part should contact Malcolm Hackett asap on 0427 356 803. The Catalyst crew will be in Strathewen on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> or Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> of September.

## **Summary of project proposals (with estimated costs) submitted to VBRRRA by the Strathewen Community Renewal Association Inc, to be considered for funding and inclusion in the State-wide Community Recovery Plan**

### **1.Rebuilding of Strathewen Community Hall; \$1,200,000**

Strathewen residents loved their historic, rustic hall and rebuilding it is central to the community's sense of renewal. The site is symbolic historically and acts as a marker of having returned home. Discussion has taken place concerning the relocation of the Hall but feedback from the Hall Trust Committee and at the community vision discussions strongly favoured rebuilding on the original site and with the some additional facilities to accommodate storage, concert change rooms adjacent to stage, meeting rooms, studio space and off road parking. A new hall will need to be in harmony with the environment and sympathetic to our small rural community. It is essential that the design capture the spirit of Strathewen, that the building is of materials and a scale which are in harmony with the environment.

### **2. Rebuilding of Strathewen Primary School; \$2,200,000**

The school has provided a daily focus for community life since 1917 and was much loved by past and present students. Community meetings conducted to investigate what residents valued about the old Strathewen and to develop a vision for its future were universal in support for rebuilding of the school. While this is principally a matter for the School Council and the Education Department the wider community also has an interest in access to a flexible community facility. Fortunately the Government and Education Department have pledged the funds and the planning process is well underway.

### **3. Establishment of a Memorial Garden and Chapel; donation or purchase of land \$250,000 ; Garden and chapel structure \$100,000**

As there is little public land in Strathewen and that which exists is felt to be unsuitable a site will need to be purchased or donated. A simple chapel structure on the site would allow for more formal commemorative activities. Thirty five people who lived in or were connected closely to the Strathewen Community died in the fires of 07/02/09. The relatives and friends of these people as well as the community at large feel an overwhelming need to establish a stand alone, peaceful, memorial garden on a site removed from passing traffic and distractions. It is proposed that this project needs to be developed sensitively and with the support of those families who suffered the loss of loved ones.

### **4. The Blacksmiths' Tree and Labyrinth; site preparation and material costs up to \$20,000**

The Blacksmiths' Tree is an international project conducted by the Victorian Chapter of the Australian Blacksmiths' Association which has donated a eight metre forged steel and copper gum tree to the Strathewen community. The labyrinth is a medieval, contemplative path used to symbolise a journey, offered by the Australian Labyrinth Society. These structures will act as public memorials to the wider community's loss, the dedication of our CFA brigade and the resilience of the community

The Australian Blacksmiths' Association attended a community soup night with residents and formally presented the gift of the tree. Labyrinth Society has offered to help plan and implement the project which could connect harmoniously with the forged tree.

### **5. Rebuilding and co-location of cricket and tennis facilities including pavilion; \$ 1,000,000**

It is proposed that the facilities of the Strathewen Cricket and Tennis Clubs be co-located on the Strathewen oval and that they share a flexible club space including change rooms and social area. Further that Strathewen oval is developed to include appropriate parking, public toilets and BBQ facilities. This project endeavours to make better use of the social facilities and parking and will bring new life to club and informal recreation in Strathewen. Nillumbik Shire have already engaged consultants to master plan the site as part of their commitment and the building company Australand have offered to build a structure up to \$750,000. State Government through various departments have provided \$100,000 each to the tennis and cricket clubs. Pro-bono offers for services have also been received for some design works.

### **6. Path from the school to the hall; \$100,000**

In the community and school consultations concerning a vision for Strathewen this idea was frequently raised by school students. The primary school use the community hall and would do so more often if a footpath linked the two locations. Road traffic has increased significantly and makes pedestrian access to the hall hazardous. A footpath would link the two locations and make movement of children much safer. The path would be about one kilometer in distance and its construction would require a formed crushed rock along the road verge, some excavation and retaining works.

### **7. Temporary Children's Playground at the Temporary Community Centre; to build \$35,000 and relocation cost of \$5,000**

The Strathewen Community Centre has been in operation for just two months and in that time has become the focus of social interaction for the community. It is used for community and committee meetings and a very successful "Soup Night" which brings up to 60 people together each Thursday night. There is a need as the weather improves for a play area and equipment where children can play together under the supervision of parents. The equipment would eventually be relocated to the community hall site or the oval. A well designed playground would provide enjoyment for children and a place to interact socially, normalizing their attendance at the community centre.

Community feedback and responses from primary age students indicated strong support and urgent need for such a facility.

**8. Communications strategy : Newsletter, Website and SMS contact; SMS messaging x 3 per week x 30 months \$10,800 , Newsletter printing , emailed and some postage 25 editions \$5000, Web hosting and maintenance costs x 3 years \$12,000.**

Communications is one of the highest priorities identified by residents. Effective communication has been at the heart of Strathewen's recovery efforts to date and residents have indicated a high degree of connectedness and responsiveness. The Strathewen Community Renewal Association (SCRA) has operated a successful communications strategy since its formation which involves use of SMS messaging, a maintained website, email and an association newsletter. The facilities to operate these forms of communication have been provided free or at a greatly reduced rate but it is now time to fund them in an ongoing manner.

**9. Temporary Residential Accommodation; \$80,000 per family over 30 months**

Rebuilding in Strathewen is going to be a challenge for those who are now spread across Melbourne's northern suburbs. As the rebuilding process is likely to take the next 24-30 months and people's insurance supported rent will cease within the next few months, temporary accommodation on site has become an imperative. To support the return of Strathewen residents temporary on-site accommodation is a high priority.

This project aims to provide temporary, transportable accommodation on individuals' land for up to thirty families for the next 30 months. If VBRRRA policy can't be changed we intend to pursue non-government benefactors. It will allow the community to come back together more quickly and in more normal surroundings. It will allow the community to support one another more naturally and in an ongoing way. It will enable families some breathing space in the rental and rebuilding phase. It will make on-site supervision and property security a far less stressful issue.

**10. Communications: provide reliable telecommunications including thorough mobile coverage and high speed broadband; cost unknown.**

Communications have long been an issue for Strathewen residents and this was highlighted during fires when contact was lost and in the days following when Telstra quickly established a portable 3G tower and network. This project seeks priority support for the installation of underground telephone cables and provision of high speed broadband to every household and completion of upgraded of mobile coverage to include all areas of Strathewen. These improvements would benefit education, business, safety and community connectedness. This was one of the highest priority areas identified through the community consultations and vision for Strathewen.

**11. Fire Safety Plan for Strathewen ; cost unknown.**

Understandably, fire safety ranked amongst the highest concerns in feedback about Strathewen's future. It is proposed that funds be allocated to establish a fire safety plan for Strathewen following recommendations of the Royal Commission and advice from the agencies responsible for fire safety, fire prevention, native vegetation management, roadside management and road accessibility. This emotionally charged

and potentially divisive issue should be dealt with as a matter of urgency by those with statutory responsibility. It would increase the community's sense of safety and preparedness for future fire seasons and it may defuse tensions concerning native vegetation and road access. It would clarify and reaffirm relevant laws. It may result in increased resources for our CFA brigade particularly if community refuges are identified.

## **12. Safer Roads; \$60,000 plus implementation costs**

Traffic has increased markedly in recent years and since the fires. Tourist, cyclist and heavy truck traffic, speed, road design and road surface are of particular concern. It is proposed that the community supported by Nillumbik Shire Council and appropriate consultants be involved in the development of a road safety plan for Strathewen which focuses on signage, vehicle access, road width, roadside vegetation, speed restrictions, pedestrians and cyclists. Such a plan would address a number of traffic and access concerns and thereby increase the community's sense of safety. It would address also tensions concerning dangerous roadside vegetation, road width and vehicle access.

## **13. Rebuilding support :**

### **Planning for a Sustainable Strathewen; \$120,000**

Sustainable building has been a major concern at our Rebuilding Forums and the issue of additional costs for 5 star energy rating, power reconnection and waste water treatment are causing concern. Residents rebuilding their homes have been faced with electricity re-connection, solar energy, potable water and waste water costs which may undermine their desire to build a more sustainable dwelling. With so many homes needing to be rebuilt an opportunity exists to ensure that Strathewen becomes a model of energy and water efficiency. While the VBRRRA building support team is a welcome addition to the community's rebuilding resources there is also a need for specialized and coordinated planning which takes account of sustainability issues including identification of specific grants or rebates for fire affected residents. We propose a Sustainable Community Planning Team funded with consultancy support appropriate to the rebuilding task. This group would provide a focus and implementation plan for building a sustainable community. Identify cost effective practices, collaborative projects, sources of funding.

## **14. Strathewen Catchment Management Plan**

The community consultations and vision for Strathewen showed the community placed the highest priority on the environment. With almost no public open spaces, relatively large landholdings and a long tradition of supporting landholders to help themselves we are seeking funding for a Catchment Management Plan. Weed and feral animal control, pasture management, fencing as a land management tool, erosion control, protection of threatened species and high value habitats, monitoring etc. are the recommended activities. The plan will gather all the advice and knowledge about our catchment together and allow us to prioritise our activities. The plan will assist our community to understand the changes to their properties and to prioritise their activities in order to minimise the environmental impact of the bushfires, drought and changed community attitudes towards 'living in the bush'. The emphasis is on

mapping our natural resources, evaluating the impact of our land management practices - including agriculture and horticulture and working on priority activities.

- Strathewen Landcare Catchment Management Plan; \$80,000 one off
- erosion and sediment control; \$150,000 annually for 3 years
- land/pasture rehabilitation; \$80,000 annually for 3 years
- pest plant and animal control; \$200,000 annually for 3 years
- protection and rehabilitation of threatened species, habitats and EVCs; \$50,000 annually for 3 years
- monitoring and understanding natural regeneration; \$50,000 annually for 3 years
- reconnection with, and appreciation of, the natural environment via property planning and design; \$80,000 annually for 3 years

### **15. Community Strengthening; \$180,000 over three years**

The community visioning activity identified that connectedness was a key community value. Indeed there has been an expressed desire to increase the level of community activity.

The bushfire event has disassembled and reshaped social networks. It is vital that community based activities are established so that community bonds are reestablished both short term and long term.

It is highly likely that there will be significant turnover of population in the next 2 years so welcoming new residents and maintaining the sense of community will be of vital importance. It is critical to the rebuilding and sustainability of Strathewen that a strong and resilient community is rebuilt.

We propose the development and maintenance of a range of community activities aimed at fostering a strong community spirit and enhancing connectedness. These activities will include a focus on well being, commemoration and celebration

### **16. Establish the Strathewen Business Association; \$160,000 over 2 years. On-going cost to be self funded.**

Establish a group of local business owners that provides mutual support to re-establish bushfire impacted businesses and identifies appropriate professional development and joint marketing opportunities. The association will enable ongoing networking and business assistance and encourage industry clusters suitable for the community. Over time the association would become self-managed and self-funded and would create a definable business community within Strathewen leading to a more sustainable local economy. The association would help to address:

- Difficulties individual business owners are experiencing in returning to income generation.
- Loss of momentum or motivation for business owners needing to restart or redirect their businesses.
- Disconnections between fire affected individuals and others in the community.
- Lack of awareness of local product and services with other locals and their extended networks.

### **17. Local Mobile Business and Contractor Directory and Buy Local Campaign; \$100,000 On-going cost to be self funded**

Build a local directory of businesses offering local products and services using appropriate media (website). Conduct a Buy Local campaign and facilitate cross-marketing between appropriate businesses. Administer and manage the content, directory performance (buy local), and marketing. This project would help to address:

- Loss of local clients to recent free or subsidized but non-local businesses that have worked in the area as part of the recovery effort.
- Loss of income due to changed circumstances of clients
- Loss of clients due to equipment and facilities lost or damaged by fires
- Lack of awareness of all local product and services
- Lack of local marketing cooperation
- Lack of local cross marketing
- Lack of local branding

### **18. Community Supported Agriculture;**

**\$135,000 over 2 years On-going cost to be self funded**

Connect local food producers and processors. Connect local consumers with a common desire for local sustainably produced food. Establish an organisational structure for harvesting, processing, and distributing food to meet local demand and to share the risk involved in food production. Advocate and encourage a food cluster that works collectively to produce a mix of complementary produce and value-added products throughout the year to satisfy local consumer demand. Explore the feasibility of establishing a for-profit Community Supported Agriculture enterprise with food farmers in adjacent areas including Kinglake and St Andrews.

### **19. Community Renewal Executive Management;**

**\$210,000 over 2 years**

The implementation of any of the plans proposed will require significant organizational expertise, time and effort. It is not reasonable to expect such a workload from volunteers, many of whom are attempting to rebuild lives and homes. It is proposed that an executive position is funded, accountable to the Strathewen Community Renewal Association and responsible for the implementation of the community development plan.