



The official newsletter of
Surf Coast Energy Group

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Image source: GT Alliance Facebook

REFLECTIONS ON LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Local council elections has provided a timely opportunity to raise the significant issue of saving Spring Creek from further development as an overhaul of our local government representatives shows.

20 candidates stepped up to be voted into 8 councilor positions within the Surf Coast.

Graeme Stockton personally met with a number of our new councilors and found all of them committed to listening to the community at large and not be swayed by the developers.



Image source GT Alliance Facebook

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This year has been full of challenges, but in amongst that difficulty some truly exciting opportunities have emerged. Firstly, I want to emphasize that SCEG's mission to locally tackle climate change and sustainability issues has always been a daunting task. If you dear reader were given the job of making your community sustainable, what would you do?

After many years of research, the SCEG committee has reached a genuinely exciting point where we can involve the broader community in that collective sustainability and climate planning task. SCEG is partnering with a leading research group, the Post Carbon Institute from the United States in delivering their incredibly insightful online course called Think Resilience which is explicitly directed at community response. For more details see page 7.

A second significant project is an evolving community vision for Spring Creek valley. Whilst developers want urban sprawl and a financial windfall, we know our community can deliver a superior outcome based on key criteria learned in Think Resilience. For more about Spring Creek see Update on Saving Spring Creek on page 3. If you are against residential development west of Duffields Road, on pages 4, 5 and 6 we provide step by step instructions to ensure you feel empowered to have your say.

Finally, whilst much of the committee's time has been focused on creating a space for community leadership and transition in this time of unfolding system shocks, another SCEG committee member, Adrian Ford has been quietly working with SCEG as the lead organisation in a consortium of climate and community energy groups to secure solar systems for 5 Barwon region schools. More on that in our next newsletter issue.



Graeme Stockton
Surf Coast Energy Group
Founder & Chair



UPDATE ON SAVING SPRING CREEK

It feels like all hands on deck for our Save Spring Creek campaign. The Distinctive Area Landscape (DAL) has started and will continue till the 22nd of January 2021. It is a once-off, unique opportunity for our community to secure a permanent protection of Spring Creek and a permanent town boundary at Duffields Road.

If you are against residential development west of Duffields Road you must make your voice heard on the draft statement of Planning Policy website. We provide step by step instructions on the following pages.

Pro-bono support from Fluid Design has resulted in the development of a modern and professional marketing campaign 'Hands of Spring Creek Valley'. Visit www.protectspringcreek.org for more vital information. We are asking businesses to support the campaign. You can do that by putting a poster up on your window, or even better taking a photo and putting it up on Instagram. If you want a poster and a bumper sticker contact Graeme Stockton on 0425 752 648.

Beyond the agenda to protect Spring Creek SCEG are working to evolve a long term Community Vision for Spring Creek Valley. Graeme has been meeting with Commercial Lawyer, Brett Pomroy to discuss the legalities of governance, whilst Matt Fox has been working to develop the economic value of the alternative vision. Perry Mills is bringing these ideas to life visually by sketching the sustainable landscape vision.



[Comment Now](#) [Take Action](#) [Join Us](#) [f](#) [@](#)



Hands Off Spring Creek Valley

The developers want to get their hands on Spring Creek to build more and more houses. In doing so destroying a unique ecosystem that supports remnant yellow gum woodland and threatened flora and fauna species.



Image source GT Alliance Facebook

HOW TO SAVE SPRING CREEK

Among the key proposals contained within the Surf Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape 'Draft Statement of Planning Policy', we have a clear choice about where the Torquay-Jan Juc protected settlement boundary should be located.

Option 1 would result in our township effectively expanding westward by 1km from Duffields Road, resulting in more than 200 hectares of rural lands converted to new residential development, adding more houses and cars to our community.

Option 2 would maintain what community considers to be the current western edge of our township at Duffields Road, locking in a permanent green break where nature and community can thrive.

The Protect Spring Creek group supports Option 2. Below is a step by step guide to make a submission if you also support protecting Spring Creek.

1: Click this link to make a submission: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/distinctive-areas-and-landscapes-program/surf-coast>

2: Scroll down and read the Privacy Collection Notice and tick yes to the four boxes.

3: Fill in your details. Your submission and name will be public, but not your contact details.

4: For your OPINION to COUNT you must support OPTION 2 "Green break area to protect Spring Creek" and add your OWN views on why YOU don't want residential housing in the Spring Creek Valley.

5: Please DO NOT COPY and paste the example text into the submission box otherwise it will only count as one submission.

(Example submission)

I support Option 2: Green break area to protect Spring Creek.

I believe that Spring Creek should be outside of the protected settlement boundary and form part of the surrounding green break between Torquay-Jan Juc and Bellbrae. A protected settlement boundary should be applied at Duffields Road and the area between Duffields Road and Bellbrae should be rural land. This is the only way to retain the distinctive character and heritage of Torquay and Jan Juc.

5: Press "Lodge your submission"

Why 'Option 1' is not in the community's interests.

You may consider incorporating some of the following points in your response.

Our natural environment

- Option 1 directly contravenes our own state conservation planning measures intended to protect Yellow gum woodland, and other species of state significance contained in the Spring Creek valley.
- Our community has a responsibility to protect nature, and Option 2 provides the best opportunity for us to do so – in line with Victoria Government's Biodiversity 2037 strategy.
- Option 1 includes further adverse impacts beyond the immediate site, including the crowding of fragile coastal environments and facilities. There will additional cost to the state and to our community in managing these assets.
- Wording contained within the SPP itself states that the Surfcoast Declared Area Framework Plan should 'conserve and enhance the declared area's significant landscapes' including the Spring Creek valley, west of Duffields Road (under a state significant landscape overlay). Option 2 supports this aim, whereas Option 1 clearly contradicts it.

Our built environment and way of life

- More residential development in Spring Creek under Option 1 will result in hundreds, if not thousands more houses being built. Logically, this seems to directly contradict the aims of the Distinctive Area Landscape process.
- Under the SPP, 'Option 1' fails to provide any detail on total numbers of additional houses and residents in our community, nor how it is meant to be 'ecologically sustainable'.
- Option 1, more residential development, will mean thousands more cars on our roads, in a township that already struggles under the summer traffic.
- Option 1; the business-as-usual, developer-led approach has resulted in the 'vast sameness' apparent along the drive from Melbourne to Torquay. We don't want this for our unique community.
- We believe that our township has already carried more than our fair share of Victoria's development burden.

Our local economy

- Contrary to what developers may say, more housing estates is not the only economic option for Spring Creek. Option 1 might provide short-term employment, but doesn't address long-term employment needs of our community.
- Option 2 could support a sustainable and diverse local economy through various ways; community-owned solar, ecotourism businesses, carbon offsetting, regenerative farming, expansion of the emergent arts and culture precinct, and more.

The Surf Coast Community has consistently requested a comprehensive and independent study into the impacts of development on the coast, community and environment. This urgently needed and long overdue study should develop a series of sustainable planning tools to set limits to growth along the coast that reflect community values and expectations whilst protecting the Surf Coasts unique environment and assets.

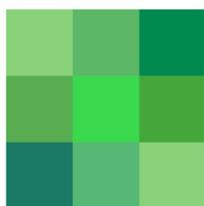
Front page of the 23rd October 2020 Surf Coast Times presented a one sided narrative for the future of Spring Creek. Graeme penned a Letter to the Editor on behalf of SCEG which featured on the front page of the Surf Coast Times dated 29th October [<Read here via link>](#).

Please consider writing your own letter to the Editor, contact details are below.



Letters to the Editor may be submitted to the Surf Coast Times and Bellarine Times by writing to **PO Box 714, Torquay, Vic, 3228**, emailing editor@timesnewsgroup.com.au or faxing **5264 8413**.

Your letters should not exceed 250 words. Please provide your name, address and telephone number; only your name and town will be published with your letter. As publication space is limited we may not be able to publish all letters received. We also reserve the right to edit letters that we publish.



think resilience

POST CARBON INSTITUTE THINK RESILIENCE PARTNERSHIP

SCEG has invested in an initiative to make it easier for all Surf Coast Shire and Greater Geelong Resident to take part in the acclaimed Think Resilience course.

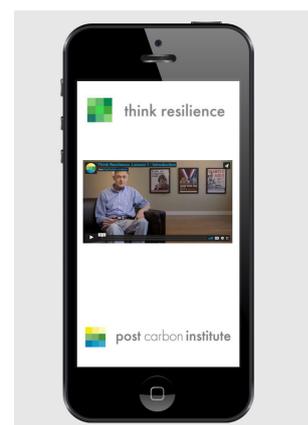
In partnership with the Post Carbon Institute who have made all the videos and content from the Think Resilience course available to SCEG to use in a SMS campaign wherein residents of Surf Coast Shire and Greater Geelong can subscribe their mobile phone number to receive 2 short videos per week over a 12 week period.



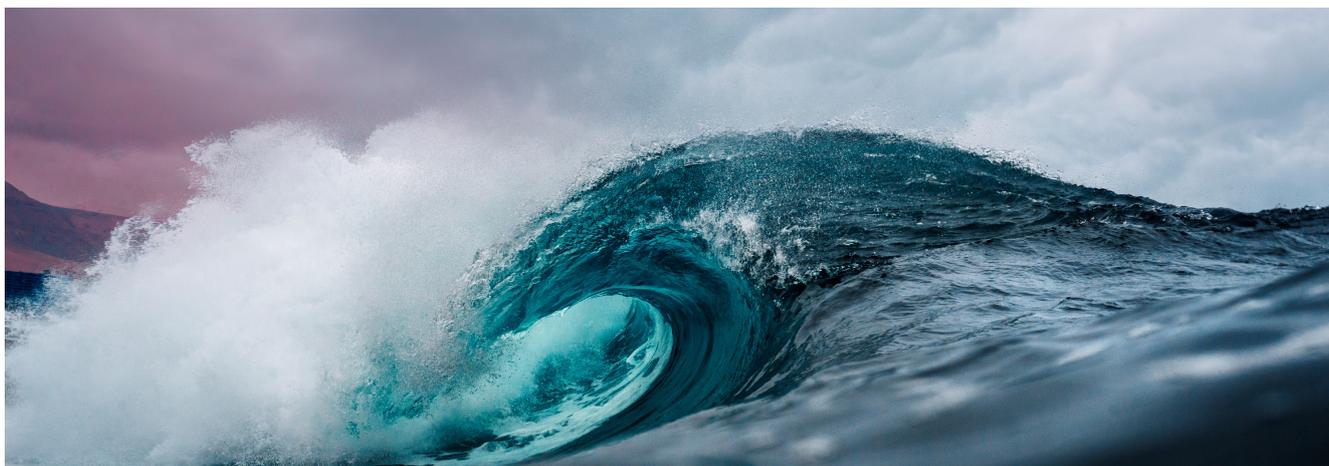
A collective effort between representatives of Post Carbon Institute, Geelong Media, Surf Coast Shire and SCEG has produced a landing page for subscribers to register their mobile phone number to receive weekly links to the Think Resilience videos and a webpage with links for further reading content.

A trial run of the sms campaign within the SCEG committee over the coming weeks will ensure the initiative runs smoothly prior to the official launch.

Due to commence mid January 2021 we are aiming for 500 subscribers across the Surf Coast Shire and will be inviting local Councilors, our SCEG Mailing list, local school communities, and social media networks to help us achieve this goal.



For more information on this initiative and to register your participation please visit www.sceg.org.au/TR



NEW LEADERSHIP

After four successful years as Chair of SCEG, our good friend Pat Onesta has stepped down. We take this opportunity to thank and congratulate Pat for a long list of achievements during his time as leader. Graeme Stockton, SCEG founder and long-time committee member has stepped up into the role as Chair. Many of you will be aware that Graeme has been an inspirational leader to many over the past twenty years, spearheading numerous community campaigns and local action. We look forward to continuing SCEG's important work under Graeme's leadership!

AGM FIN YEAR 19/20

As members will know, in past years we've gotten together in October to hold our Annual General Meeting. However, due to the challenges we've all faced during the COVID lockdown, we've had to delay this year's catchup. We'll let all members know once our AGM is planned - most likely to be in the new year. It is unclear whether we'll be able to meet in person, or remotely - but rest assured we'll do our best to provide an entertaining and thought-provoking program.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Some of you will have realised that issues with our website-based payment system have meant that we have been unable to receive PayPal payments recently. For those who tried and failed to renew, we sincerely apologise. We've since repaired the system, and those who haven't yet been able to pay are welcome to try again! (And remember, we also accept payment via direct deposit).