

The BUSINESS

JOURNAL
VOLUME 16



TOOWOOMBA
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE



Special Edition: ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

WHAT'S THE FUSS
ABOUT ESG?

HOW CAN YOU
BE GREENER?

MEET OUR
ENVIRONMENTAL
STARS

plus

people, projects,
product and
lots more



FACT SHEET TOP 10 WORKPLACE TIPS

Cut resources costs across your business

DEVELOP A PLAN

Plan to reduce, reuse and recycle by getting everyone in the company involved. Set targets and reward achievements.

REDUCE ENERGY

Start by making simple changes like:

- Turn off computers at the end of the day
- Turn off power to equipment & lights not in use
- Turn off screensavers and install standby on computer equipment
- Install energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs

SAVE WATER

- Fix leaking taps or pipes
- Install flow restrictors on taps
- Review & adapt cleaning methods to save water

REDUCE WASTE

- Reuse or recycle cardboard, waste paper or packaging
- Sell your excess waste to companies that want it
- Buy remanufactured printer cartridges and recycle used cartridges
- Use mugs, glasses and cutlery instead of plastic, paper or styrofoam

ADJUST YOUR AIR-CONDITIONING

- Use natural ventilation & fans when possible
- Close all windows/doors when air-conditioning is on
- Switch off heating and cooling after hours
- Set air-conditioning between 24°C and 28°C in summer

CUT DOWN ON TRANSPORT

- Source local goods and services
- Use public transport or car-pooling
- Form workplace cycling or walking groups
- Use phone/video conferencing
- Coordinate company dispatch and receipt procedures

MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

- Track progress against agreed targets
- Measure and evaluate results on a regular basis
- Modify or expand the program to meet new targets

SEEK UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION


- Get up-to-date information from business sustainability organisations in Australia and overseas.
- Check local council information and services.
- Use industry associations for industry-specific information.

GET HELP TO GET STARTED

Participate in business partnership programs like Business Chamber Queensland ecoBiz is a great way to build knowledge and support

CONNECT WITH SUPPLIERS AND SERVICES

- Find local recycling companies and services
- Establish a business leaders' forum
- Attend environmentally focused business forums

 1300 731 988

 ecobiz@businesschamberqld.com.au

 ecobiz.businesschamberqld.com.au



This project has received funding support from Queensland Government

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Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, the Jagera, Giabal and Jarowair people. We extend that respect to the elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and the hopes of Australia's First Peoples.

The BUSINESS | JOURNAL VOLUME 16



TOOWOOMBA
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Send your story ideas and submissions to communications@toowoombachamber.com.au

Editorial team: Todd Rohl and Ally Martell with assistance from Lucas Wegener.
Graphic Design & printing by Greenridge Group

ON THE COVER

With more than 30 years servicing Toowoomba and Goondiwindi Regions, E&E Waste are local leaders in waste disposal. They also operate our local Containers for Change depots.

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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Monday to Friday



The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is one of Queensland's largest regional Chambers. Together we represent a significant voice and as a group we can make a positive difference for our local business community. Contact our Chamber team today to learn more on how we can help you. We work for business. Email: admin@toowoombachamber.com.au

PRESIDENT'S *message*

There was once a time when I thought green was just a colour, ESG were three random letters and sustainability referred to the shelf life of my milk! Now these things are hot topics, can keep us up at night and have a very direct impact on businesses large and small.

The definition of sustainability that I like, though am deeply challenged by, is this one: sustainability focuses on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

From a business perspective, the Chamber is also about sustainability, the circular economy and how we can support our members to navigate this increasingly complex space.

I do not think there is anyone in business today that doesn't have one eye on horizon in terms of cash flow, projects, staffing, growth, strategic planning... and now sustainability, carbon footprints and the circular economy are in the mix. It will not be too far away that a 'green' tick or some sort of sustainability accreditation will be key to

engaging customers, product development, tendering etc – but it can all feel quite overwhelming.

We are convinced that it is vital that SMEs become part of the energy transition solution, and not get left behind – but that's easier said than done!

We know that most SMEs are aware of the issues and the impact of their businesses, but do not have the time or resources needed to pursue significant, long-lasting changes to their businesses. Many of us cannot afford the specialist staff or departments required to focus on low carbon emissions, nor the capital to invest in the infrastructure needed to maximise energy savings.

So, the Chamber is exploring all sorts of opportunities to directly or indirectly to work with our

members and others – and in this edition of the Journal, there are local experts who have shared their knowledge, provided real life ideas and support and will be part of the ongoing conversation with us all in our region.

KATE VENABLES

President Toowoomba Chamber

“We cannot choose between economic growth and sustainability – we must have both.”

Paul Polman.



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BRING ON AUTUMN 24!

And another signature Festival for the Toowoomba Region. That is what the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and our Food & Agri Network Advisory Committee have firmly in their sights this month as they submit a detailed request to the Toowoomba Regional Council to support Autumn Feast 2024.

The Chamber in conjunction with local Food Tourism platform Dine Darling Downs have been working for over 12 months to bring this concept together, and the momentum across the business and tourism sectors to create another big event for our city is building fast!

Toowoomba Chamber, Chief Executive Officer, Todd Rohl said, *“This is long overdue, we love Carnival of Flowers but feel strongly that Toowoomba has room*

for another festival, and it’s definitely time we celebrated more than just one season in our beautiful region.”

The concept of the Autumn Feast is to encompass three elements - Food, Art, and Music all under the one brand. The proposal is not just for the city of Toowoomba but is to include the surrounding towns and hamlets of our region. From Yarraman to Crows Nest to Pittsworth to Millmerran to Oakey and everywhere

in between, the Autumn Feast will be for every regional community to enjoy and participate in.

Organisers are planning a 9-day festival in April 2024 that will see our region bathed in Autumn colour with vibrant art installations in shop windows and iconic buildings right across Toowoomba City and surrounding townships. There will be live music in local pubs and cafes, filtering down sidewalks. If Kristen O’Brien from Dine Darling Downs has her way, restaurants, streets, and laneways will be full too, with enthusiastic diners from right across



Australia, all here to sample the very best our region has to offer.

Kristen O'Brien from Dine Darling Downs said,

“Toowoomba is definitely one of the premiere foodie destinations in Queensland.”

“Our robust farming sector and café and restaurant scene make this the perfect place to sample a true paddock to plate experience and Autumn Feast will give us the opportunity to really showcase that to the rest of Australia, and the world for that matter.

“But it’s not all about the food, the Autumn Feast festival aims to support our thriving music and arts community too,” expressed Kristen.

Todd expressed, “If we can get the support we need, this event will bring a surge of visitors to our region in April next year.



“It will be fantastic for our economy, not to mention our community spirit” Todd Rohl said.

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce & Dine Darling Downs have been circulating a letter of support for businesses and community members to sign. To add your support to Autumn Feast 24, go to www.toowoombachamberofcommerce.com.au and add your signature.



The future is here... AND YOU ARE VERY MUCH PART OF IT.

ESG – environmental, social and governance

By Todd Rohl and Ally Martell

Toowoomba Chamber is gathering information to help keep members informed about Net Zero and ESG and what it all means for business. We're finding out about grants, conferences, websites, consultants, workshops and so on. We want to help all businesses make a just transition that is as fair and uncomplicated as possible. Stay tuned to Chamber announcements and please check our website for regular updates.

The Albanese Government has made a strong commitment to Australia's Net Zero emissions by 2030/2050. That means we'll be hearing a lot more about it in the coming months and years. In fact, since the change of government, things are moving swiftly with a whole raft of new resources and grants rolling out over the coming months. From now on if you attend conferences and workshops, you'll be given some information about sustainability (and ESG) relevant to the matter. When you attend major events, you'll find out how the event is "Climate Active Accredited" and you'll notice that universities will incorporate ESG across courses.

It's all designed to help us (governments, industry and households) transition to a new way of living so that we can achieve Net Zero. This is not a local phenomenon. The whole world is involved, taking action and making a difference. It's here. And it's here to stay.

ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance

But first things first, let's talk ESG. What is it and why do you need an ESG Strategy?

ESG is an acronym for "environmental, social and governance". It is a framework for conscious consumerism. Through an ESG Strategy businesses can define and measure their impact

on the environment and on society while remaining transparent about governing practices. ESG is customer driven, economically driven and environmentally driven and it is gaining immense popularity around the world. The global goal is that ESG will soon be part of regular business planning as the world transitions to Net Zero.

Why? Socially conscious stakeholders - including employees, board members, customers, regulators, suppliers and distributors – demand to know a company's stance on socioeconomic factors and its sustainability efforts before investing in, buying from or working with the company. If you're not part of the solution, your customers will support someone who is.

So, your ESG Strategy should outline your environmental sustainability policies providing measurable data on energy consumption and improved efficiency, responsible procurement as well as waste management, recycling and so on. It will also incorporate your employment strategies such as diversity in the workplace and how you support your local community. How you govern your business also needs to be open to scrutiny.

What is 'Net Zero'?

We hear a lot about Net Zero and how it will transform the way we live for the better making the world a healthier, safer place for future generations – so what is it?

'Net Zero' is when the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we put into the atmosphere are measured against the amount we're able to take out and the result is zero. Our first step is to reduce emissions by changing our actions and processes ie through our ESG strategies. When it comes to emissions we cannot avoid, we must offset them by planting trees, restoring the environment, paying for carbon credits or technology like carbon capture.

What are Greenhouse Gases?

The greenhouse gases that are of most concern include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆) and specified kinds of hydro fluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons. This is a complicated area so please read more about Scope 1,2 and 3 Emissions at www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au

ESG vs CSR

Many of you will have heard of CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility. Is it still relevant and how is it different compared to ESG? CSR refers to the methods companies use to prioritize environmental and social concerns. In contrast, ESG clearly defines those methods and measures the impact of environmental, social and governance efforts. ESG includes specific criteria businesses must meet.

Useful links:

- Australian Government Climate Active www.climateactive.com.au
- Australian Government Clean Energy Regulator www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au
- The 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations Member States in 2015 provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet. www.sdgs.un.org/goals
- Toowoomba Regional Council on Sustainability www.tr.qld.gov.au/environment-water-waste/sustainable-living/sustainable-council/13855-sustainable-toowoomba-region
- Sustainability is among the five goals outlined in TRC's Corporate Plan 2019-2024. TRC promotes sustainable business practices in both its own operations and those of regional organisations.
- TRC is partnering with other Councils through the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) and the Department of Environment and Science (DES) to plan for and respond to changes in our climate. Read more about the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils program at www.qcrc.lgaq.asn.au
- RENEW in Toowoomba www.renew.org.au/branches/toowoomba-branch/
- Toowoomba for Climate Action – go to Facebook page
- Regional Development Australia Darling Downs and South West – www.rda-ddsw.org.au
- AusIndustry – www.industry.gov.au



E&E WASTE – HELPING CREATE A *low carbon life*

Most of us know E&E Waste as a container refund point which pays us some cheeky dollars while helping to stop billions of containers from ending up in landfill. But there's a whole lot more to this family business than recycling containers and it's inspiring stuff: there's waste management, disposal services including domestic kerbside, industrial and construction waste; then there's demolition and salvage, portaloos and even emergency clean-up services. It's a comprehensive and skilled outfit with a history of helping locals and the environment. We caught up with the team at E&E Waste to find out more:



It's hard to believe Shane and family began this business back in 1986 (because he doesn't look anywhere near old enough!). Thanks to a lot of hard work, the McGuire's waste disposal services took off in Goondiwindi and grew to cover the Darling Downs and South-West Region. In 2022 there was an opportunity to really grow, when E&E Waste began the domestic waste contract for Goondiwindi Regional Council.

E&E Waste's Toowoomba operation is run by a dedicated team and Shane describes the business as a locally focused, domestic and commercial waste removal company. With a large fleet of trucks and equipment supported by a dedicated team of more than 75 highly trained staff, they certainly have come a long way.

Business Operations Manager Jaime McGuire says the company is committed to a sustainable future and has a dedicated fleet of recycling trucks that roll out of the depot every day.

"With bottle collections, E&E Waste does more than 500 pick-ups per month from Toowoomba and surrounds" he said. "In Goondiwindi our recycling trucks complete over 3,300 services of recycled products each month, and our vehicles have onboard computers to ensure no bin is left behind."

"In fact, we have installed the latest technologies in our kerbside recycling trucks including onboard cameras to monitor the waste and protect against contamination, ensuring the maximum volume of waste is recycled and does not reach landfills." Drivers can monitor what's coming into the truck, live via

inbuilt cameras. They can even take a snapshot and email it to customers.

"Contamination is something we treat very seriously, and bins with non-recyclable items that could contaminate the rest of the load are labelled with "non-compliant" stickers. This label means we will not collect them until we resolve the issue."

A wide range of Goondiwindi's recycled waste is sent to the Challenge Community Services Recycling Facility in Narrabri, including cardboard, drink and food containers, plastics, steel, and other metals.

The Challenge facility is a social enterprise employing people who live with disability. The facility processes over 10,000 tonnes of these recycled materials. Once sorted, the materials are then sent to specialist recycling facilities in the local region.



Service is our Business

Experience the difference with E&E Waste

We have over 30 years experience in the waste industry. Starting in 1986 with a commercial front lift bin service we have grown to service both Toowoomba & Goondiwindi regional areas. We provide a diverse range of services across the region. At E&E we pride ourselves on providing the highest level of service and attention to detail.

E&E Waste can offer tailored made waste management solutions to provide customers with clear environmental, social and financial outcomes. By working in partnership with our customers we provide the confidence that services are being managed in the most effective and sustainable way possible.

Our core value 'Service is our Business' defines just what we stand for



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Why Do Businesses Need to Manage Waste?

Jaime McGuire says it's important to remember that waste management involves many legal requirements, so businesses have got to get it right.

"Waste created by a business must be handled professionally to ensure companies stay within the law and within workplace health and safety regulations," he said.

"The correct disposal of waste, minimising waste and recycling waste are part of a modern ethical business operation. We are all trying to lower our carbon footprint by keeping as much waste out of landfill as possible.

"We are pleased to see that the bigger construction companies are being good corporate citizens by thoughtfully disposing of waste materials with wood and metal especially going to recycling.

"We help businesses manage their waste by providing and collecting a wide variety of bins including large hook-lift bins, smaller skip-sized bins and wheelie bins to cater for all kinds of waste products."

"Organisations can also markedly reduce their waste bill and help compliance by separating their returnable containers for diversion to Containers for Change; and of course we provide a pick-up service and they'll get a refund on top of their saving"

E&E Waste Services:

- Liquid Waste
- Domestic Waste
- Recycling
- Commercial Waste
- Industrial Waste
- Portable Toilets
- Construction waste
- Demolition and salvage
- Provide variety of bins: roll off, hook and some skip bins
- Emergency work when there are waste spills etc
- Collection of waste



E&E Return'em for Cash:

- Qld Containers for Change Container Return Points (CRPs)
- Qld Containers for Change Returns Processing Services

"You've just got to minimise your footprint."

Jaime McGuire

E&E Waste and Containers for Change

Queenslanders use around 3 billion beverage containers every year and most end up littered around the state. Well they did until the introduction of the state-wide container refund scheme, Containers for Change. The scheme gives people an incentive to collect and return containers for recycling, in exchange for a 10-cent refund payment, thereby helping to massively reduce litter and increase Queensland's recycling rate.

Containers for Change, which commenced on 1 November 2018, is a product stewardship arrangement with the costs of operating the scheme and recovering the containers for recycling, paid for by drink manufacturers. This means that drink manufacturers take responsibility for ensuring that the environmental impacts from the empty drink containers are reduced.

The Queensland Government appointed the industry-based, not-for-profit group Container Exchange (CoEx) as the Product Responsibility Organisation (PRO), to develop and run the container refund scheme in Queensland. CoEx chose E & E Waste to provide collection points in Toowoomba and Goondiwindi.

To ensure the public were aware E&E Waste were taking up this challenge, they created the brand 'Return'em for Cash' and set up CRPs in Toowoomba and Goondiwindi, alongside their waste operations. There's no doubt that E&E's Return'em for Cash Refund Depots are impressive; brilliantly designed by Shane & Jaime with the help of local technicians and the latest tech, and very positive and very popular. Last year Return'em for Cash assisted customers to return more than 35 million containers at the Toowoomba Refund Point, and in the past four years they have processed over 121 million containers. What this

means, is their customers have earned more than \$12 million in that time!

Employing 15 staff, the Toowoomba refund point is busy all day, every day but Jaime says during school holidays, they are always flat out!

"Collecting containers has become a popular activity for children and their grandparents and we love that!" Said Jaime. "We love to hear what they're saving up for by collecting containers."

Member Number (Scheme ID) – choose your favourite charity

When you drop off your containers at E&E Return'em for Cash, you can take the refund in cash, put the funds into your own account or donate it to a charity of your choosing. Go to the Containers for Change website and find the Member Numbers of your favourite charities and donate your refund to them (it's very simple). Not-for-profit organisations range from wildlife to major hospitals, with plenty of local charities participating.

Where do the containers end up?

During the refund process, your used containers are instantly sorted into various categories using state-of-the-art visual recognition technology.

Once collected, these containers are transported to various recycling centres and made into new products.

- Plastic Bottles are sorted into plastic types, baled up, sold at auction and sent to a plastic recycling facility. Here they are shredded, washed and reformed into pellets like grains of rice. These pellets are sold to be made into other plastic products including new plastic drink bottles, fruit punnets as well as textiles.
- Glass Bottles are washed, crushed and melted down. The glass is used to create new products such as bottles, jars, and windows (You can even buy Coca-Cola in 100% recycled bottle now). Glass can be recycled repeatedly. Companies like Visy buy most of the glass.
- Aluminium doesn't degrade during recycling and around 75% of all aluminium ever made is still in circulation. Recycled cans are melted into ingots and manufactured into new cans and other items.

THE ANNEX

A conference venue with *character*

Located in the heart of the Toowoomba CBD, The Annex is a stunning art deco space with original light fittings, sconces and brickwork. There are two spaces to host professional events of different sizes, from a small brainstorming workshop to large conference.




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TOOWOOMBA REGIONAL COUNCIL -CREATING A LIVEABLE AND SUSTAINABLE SPACE FOR *generations to come*

Toowoomba Regional Council is one of the largest local government areas in Queensland, covering over 13,000 square kilometres with a population of over 166,000. To ensure the Toowoomba Region remains a liveable and sustainable place for generations to come, Council is committed to implementing environmentally responsible policies and programs.

What is Council doing to be sustainable?

Through partnering with other Councils involved in the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) and the Department of Environment and Science (DES), Council is planning and responding to ongoing changes in our climate.

In addition to these partnerships, the following activities are progressing.

Energy management

Council aims to implement new technology for energy management in facilities. One way of doing this is by using solar panels for energy production.

Solar panels are installed in several locations across our Region. Some of the major ones include:

- Highfields Sport and Recreation Park
- Toowoomba City Library
- Greater Toowoomba Waste Management Facility
- Kleinton Waste Management Facility
- Toowoomba Regional Council's Principal Depot.

Energy re-use project at Wetalla

The energy reuse project allows a gas-fired generator to supply up to 70% of the power to run the Wetalla Water Reclamation Facility. Methane gas from landfill is captured and then used to offset power to the facility, a far better use of the gas than simply flaring.

The site produces approximately 600m³ of gas per hour, enough to run a 1,000-kilowatt generator.

During the testing phase over two years, 7.3 million cubic metres of biogas have been captured, helping Council reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 69,000 tonnes.

Technology utilisation

New technology implemented in the waste branch helps staff monitor and track waste streams in different locations and times of the year, assisting in identifying and resolving process issues.

The Smart Water Meters project is another example of how new technology assists with improving sustainable practices across the Region.

The Region-wide roll-out of customer water meters remotely collects water usage figures, providing usage information directly to the customer through an app. This technology can identify property leaks early on, alerting users and the Council of inefficiencies and protecting against unnecessary water wastage.

Parks, gardens & green infrastructure

All horticultural activities are in progress focusing on best practice methodologies to limit water use and achieve quality horticultural outputs.

Trees are managed with the following approaches:

- Drought tolerance, the suitability of soil type and adaptation to local climatic conditions are all important considerations when selecting trees for planting. Where possible endemic, native or drought-exotic species are used.
- Our tree planting program is adjusted according to climate conditions, including suspending planting during extreme heat and limited rainfall.
- Trees are well mulched to retain soil moisture.
- When establishing new trees watering is kept to levels that ensure establishment without excess water use. After an establishment period, trees are typically self-sustaining, requiring no watering.
- Long-lived tree species are commonly used as long-term investments for the neighbourhood.
- Wherever possible, water for tree planting is sourced from local collection points.

Irrigated parks are classed as 'Category A' sports fields, high-profile lawn areas and shrub beds, tree establishment and annual plantings. Most parkland across the Region is not irrigated.

Responsible irrigation practices are used when irrigation is required to maintain a park-related area.

For example:

- Staff follow water restriction policies and water conservation plans prepared by branches of Council that use large amounts of water.
- Irrigation systems are regularly checked, maintained and improved to ensure water-efficient design.
- Garden display beds include annual flowers, xeriscapes, artworks or a combination of all three depending on the current water restrictions.
- Ponds and fountains are designed to look attractive even when empty or switched off.

Best practice water use is used for the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers - balancing the maintenance and development of the Region's largest event with efficient water use.

Green infrastructure (Green.IS) is another example of Council commitment to sustainability. Green.IS is an approach that recognises the value of nature and greenery to our community and culture. It treats natural elements as infrastructure, just as with roads or bridges.

As part of Council's commitment to Green.IS, we planted more than 3,500 trees in 2018 and have strategies for improving Council-owned parks, street trees and open spaces.

Strategies shaping the community

Sustainability is among the five goals outlined in Council's Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024. To ensure this goal is achieved, several strategies have been developed to address the challenges of the growing Region's population. These include:



- Green Infrastructure Strategy – sets the direction and actions needed to support how green infrastructure is valued, protected and enhanced across the Toowoomba Region.
- Open Space Strategy – maps out a vision for the open spaces across the Region. It delivers a connected and distinctive open space network that enhances the unique character of each locality.
- Sustainable Transport Strategy – guides Council’s transport policy, integrated land use and transport planning and future transport investment decisions.
- Waste Management Strategy – with a growing population comes increased waste generation and landfill challenges. This strategy identifies these challenges and ways to overcome them.
- Waste Infrastructure Plan 2020 – deals with how service levels are achieved to support resource recovery over landfill disposal and sets the principles for how Council transforms the way waste is managed.
- Water Vision 2050 – report outlines a water security strategy that meets Toowoomba’s water supply service needs for the next 30 years.
- Toowoomba Region Futures Program – designed to build a community vision for growth and development in our Region for the next 30 years, managing sustainable and affordable growth.
- Street Tree Masterplan provides guidance for selecting street trees and urban design principles, taking into account particular aspects of the Toowoomba Region.

Introducing new machinery or technologies across waste facilities

With further technological advancements, new machinery is available to assist in the reuse and recycling space. One example of this is the installation of the expanded polystyrene machines at the Council’s Waste Management Facilities.

Users take their polystyrene waste to the facility, where it will be turned into smaller pieces and sold to a manufacturer who can repurpose and reuse it for cladding, roofing and flooring products.

The machines have diverted more than 17 tonnes of polystyrene from landfill.

Future plans

While these initiatives ensure Council’s sustainable business practices are heading in a positive step, there is still more work to do.

Currently, Council is working towards:

- Aiming to include expected increases in flood and stormwater into our modelling for future planning.
- Develop a climate risk management strategy following the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Climate Risk Management Framework for Queensland Local Government.
- Looking into climate-responsible design guidelines to inform new home regulations and increase energy efficiency and resilience to climate change.
- Exploring ways to reduce fuel consumption across Council owned vehicles.



To learn more about Toowoomba Regional Council’s sustainability initiatives, visit www.tr.qld.gov.au.

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‘Our people do amazing things’



recycling mattresses

FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL GOOD!

It's a fact that End-of-life (EOL) mattresses are a growing problem not only in Australia but globally. Did you know that approximately 1.8 million mattresses are discarded each year in Australia alone? Placed end-to-end, they would stretch from Darwin to the tip of Tasmania.



Local Not for Profit organisation Ability Enterprises has partnered with the Toowoomba Regional Council, and more recently in a trial with the Lockyer Valley Regional Council to not only recycle mattresses and divert these large waste items from land fill, but to also provide jobs for local people who are facing barriers to employment.

“It's a win for the environment and a win for our staff”

said Ability Enterprises CEO Tracey Scanlan

Mattresses are problematic items to send to Landfill with each mattress taking up approximately

0.75 cubic metres of space. They are not only bulky, but the wire in the mattress can cause damage to the compaction machinery. The good news is most components of a mattress can be recycled.

Typically, a mattress is built of 12.5kg of steel, 2kg of timber, 1.5kg of foam and the rest is wadding and other fabrics. When recycled,

springs can be melted down into new steel and used in buildings, vehicles, and appliances. Recovered timber can be reused as woodchips to manufacture particleboard, animal bedding and mulch. Foam, wadding and latex can also be used to make up carpet underlay.

Ability Enterprises proudly provides meaningful employment opportunities to marginalised individuals living in regional Queensland, and they have the runs on the board when it comes to recycling mattress.

“Our team successfully process approximately 180 mattresses every single week, and we are very excited to expand our services, working not only with the Toowoomba Regional Council, but now with the Lockyer Valley Regional Council too”, Ms Scanlan said. “Mattress Recycling just makes sense. It’s great for the environment, financially it reduces capital expenditure on creation of new landfill sites, and from a social perspective it creates jobs for those needing extra support”.

To find out more about Ability Enterprises please visit their website abilityenterprises.com.au



Connagh Peat (left) and Kelly Pearce (right)

STOP WASTING RESOURCES ON *non-essentials*

According to the Qld Department of the Environment website, balloons are in the top three most harmful waste items to wildlife and the environment.

Balloons are made from two main materials:

Mylar: foil-coated plastic balloons which are not biodegradable and stay in the environment forever.

Latex (rubber): typically degrade more quickly than other types of plastics (much slower if in water) but can take years to fully break down depending on the conditions and the chemical and dyes used to manufacture.

Balloon accessories like plastic clips and ribbons are also not biodegradable.

Be a positive celebrator and look for alternatives: bubbles, paper tissue pom poms, candles, kites or pinwheels, flags, banners, streamers or dancing inflatables, flowers or planting a tree in memorial.



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National Recycling Week

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2023

National Recycling Week (NRW) is one of Planet Ark's flagship campaigns and every year aims to educate and empower people to do the right thing when they're at the bin.

Since the campaign was established in 1996, the focus has been on the waste

hierarchy – reduce, reuse, recycle - to minimise strain on finite resources.

Planet Ark connects with individuals, community groups, schools, businesses and government to provide them with the all the tools they need to help educate their network and run their own National Recycling Week events.

There are many ways to get involved and help make a difference whether

you work in an office, for government, at a school or retail centre or even at a community group. Visit the website and register your business and don't forget to download the Workplace Toolkit www.planetark.org





SUSTAINABLE RETAIL CENTRES: *Building for the Future*

As the retail industry continues to evolve, so too have the requirements for retail centre construction, with a growing emphasis on environmental sustainability.

From High Street Shopping Centre to our most recent development Yamanto Central, the approach to building materials, energy, water, waste management, and social inclusion has changed significantly over the years. Resulting in the construction of an environment that caters to the needs of all customers and tenants alike, promoting diversity and equality.

JMK Retail, a leading retail development company, is committed to investing in sustainable initiatives within their assets, recognizing the importance of environmental

sustainability in the retail sector. With a forward-thinking approach, JMK Retail has embraced sustainable practices in our retail centre construction, operations, and tenant engagement, paving the way for a greener and more sustainable future.

One of the key areas of focus in modern retail centre construction is the use of sustainable building materials and methods. JMK Retail incorporates sustainable building materials such as recycled steel, reclaimed wood, and low VOC paints in their construction projects, minimizing the environmental impact of their buildings. They also prioritize efficient construction methods, such as prefabrication and modular construction, to reduce waste and lower their carbon footprint.

Renewable energy sources, particularly solar energy, are

integrated into JMK Retail's retail centres. Solar panels are installed on rooftops, generating clean and renewable energy to power lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. This commitment to renewable energy helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contributes to a more sustainable approach to energy consumption in retail centres.

Water management is another critical aspect of sustainable retail centre construction. JMK Retail incorporates water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling, and low-flow plumbing fixtures in our retail centres to minimize water consumption and reduce their impact on local water supply and infrastructure.

Waste management and recycling are also integral to JMK Retail's

sustainability initiatives. Recycling stations, waste separation systems, and composting programs are implemented in their retail centres to promote recycling and resource recovery, reducing waste sent to landfills. JMK Retail also promotes circular economy principles, where waste from one business becomes a valuable input for another, fostering a closed-loop system that minimizes waste and promotes sustainability.

Social inclusion is another important aspect of modern retail centres. Ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for people with disabilities, as well as catering to diverse needs, is a priority. This includes providing accessible parking spaces, drop-off areas, ramps, elevators, and low-touch toilets, among other features. Retail centres strive to create an inclusive environment that caters to the needs of all visitors and tenants, promoting diversity and equality.

We recognize that sustainability initiatives are not only beneficial for the environment and society, but they also play a crucial role in maintaining asset values. With the increasing focus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors by investors, tenants, and customers, sustainability has become an essential aspect of the retail industry. Property owners who fail to invest in sustainability initiatives are at risk of being left behind and ultimately devaluing their assets.

JMK Retail also works closely with tenants to promote their consideration of the possible sustainability initiatives within their own business operations. Tenants are encouraged to adopt sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient

lighting, water-saving measures, and waste reduction strategies. JMK Retail have implemented and provide support, education, and resources to assist tenants in implementing sustainable practices, recognizing that sustainability is a collective effort that requires the participation of all stakeholders.

JMK Retail is committed to being at the forefront of sustainability in the retail industry, and we actively seek out opportunities to incorporate sustainable practices into our retail centre designs and operations. We collaborate with industry leaders, architects, engineers to identify new and cutting-edge sustainability advancements and promote green building practices, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) or Green Star.

The future of retail and commercial property is to take the lead and develop sustainable assets that are environmentally responsible, inclusive, and resilient. We prioritize eco-friendly materials, energy-efficient technologies, renewable energy sources, water conservation, waste management, and inclusivity in our retail centre construction and operation. We are committed to ongoing research and investment in sustainability initiatives within our assets, recognizing that sustainability is essential to maintain asset values and ensure long-term success in the ever-evolving retail industry.

As the retail industry continues to evolve, JMK Retail's commitment to sustainability initiatives in their assets is a testament to our forward-thinking approach. By incorporating sustainable building materials, renewable energy,

water management, waste reduction, and social inclusion practices in our retail centres, JMK Retail is leading the way in building for a more sustainable future. We recognize that sustainability initiatives are not only essential for the environment but also crucial to maintaining asset values in the long term.

In conclusion, the requirements for retail centre construction have evolved significantly, with a growing emphasis on environmental sustainability and social inclusion. JMK Retail's commitment to investing in sustainable initiatives in their assets demonstrates their dedication to building for a greener and more sustainable future. By embracing sustainable practices in our construction, operations, tenant and customer engagement, JMK Retail is setting a positive example for the retail industry and encouraging others to follow suit. In a rapidly changing retail landscape, sustainability initiatives in the retail industry will become essential to maintain asset values, and retail centres must keep up with the changing landscape to ensure a resilient and sustainable future.



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Jeremy's Book Exchange

Jeremy's Book Exchange in Uni Plaza is a grown-up cubby house filled with books, comfy chairs, and BYO wine. It used to be a hidden gem but now it's a Toowoomba institution, with a devoted following.

Avid reader and writer, Jeremy Rohde, opened the shop three years ago with the goal of keeping books from landfill. It quickly became a readers' hang out. Fabulously cluttered and simultaneously organised, the shop is a vibrant, engaging and slightly zany community.

As Jeremy explains, the life of a book monger can be a wild ride.

"We have our own book clubs on the first Tuesday and Wednesday of each month with a cosy five to ten people in attendance and then there are a few private book clubs throughout the week – they do their own catering. And then, Friday nights are big here – whether it's date night, waiting for your take-out or just wanting to be around other readers."

With its proximity to UniSQ, the shop has become a popular haunt for local academics. One mathematician calculated Jeremy's Book Exchange saves around two cubic metres of books from landfill every month.

How does it work? When you buy a book instore, you can bring it back for credit to make your next read cheaper. Jeremy also donates books to charity shops and school fetes. The main thing is to keep books circulating.

Jeremy knows his clientele very well. Avid readers, for sure, but he can drill down even further.

"Caravaners who stock up before they go on a long road trip – they might take 50 books with them and then swap them along the way which they trade with other vannies who pop instore with their return book for credit. Then there are the truckies who love the western paper backs, tough old farmers who like a bit of rural romance and home-schooling mums who create their own reading lists.

"Crime is huge but rural romance is bigger. We can't get enough children's books or cookbooks. We have a section for local writers too which is also growing in popularity."

Jeremy has calculated that the most number of books he can read during the remainder of his life is around 10,000 so he is quite busy achieving that goal. However, he still finds time to enjoy his old favourites including *The Little Prince*, *Biggles* and other yesteryear adventure books.

Uni Plaza, West Street Toowoomba

Open: Fridays 4pm – 7pm;
Saturdays 9am-11am;
Tuesdays 4pm-6pm;
Wednesday 4pm – 6pm



Jeremy has written and published three beautifully illustrated and entertaining children's books.



Toowoomba Grammar School

SUSTAINABILITY



Toowoomba Grammar School is one of Australia's leading boys' boarding schools with approximately 300 staff and 1,200 students from Prep to Year 12. The School is home to almost 300 boarders and a further 50 staff and their families also reside onsite. TGS also operates an indoor aquatic centre with a large Learn to Swim program catering to approximately 1,400 swimmers each week.

In alignment with the School's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 which includes an initiative to Strive for Environmental Sustainability, we are taking significant steps towards becoming more environmentally sustainable. We have implemented a range of initiatives that aim to reduce our carbon footprint, including the installation of solar panels, LED lighting and timers for lighting and air conditioning systems.

One of the most significant sustainability initiatives that we have undertaken is the installation of solar panel systems. These are on the roof of the Glen McCracken Sports Centre and over the coming months, they will be complimented with further panels installed on the Junior School roof. They generate a significant amount of renewable energy that can be used to power the School's facilities and are providing a

reliable and clean source of energy, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels and minimising our carbon footprint. This has not only been beneficial for the environment but has also helped the School save on energy costs.

In addition to solar panels, we have also replaced the majority of traditional lighting with energy-efficient LED lighting. The LED lighting uses less energy, lasts longer, and emits less

heat than traditional lighting. By switching to LED lighting, we have been able to significantly reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions while also lowering our maintenance costs. The LED lighting has been installed in all the classrooms, boarding houses, and other common areas throughout the School, creating more energy-efficient and sustainable learning and living environments.

We are also undertaking a significant number of refurbishment and construction projects. Some of our guiding principles in approaching these works is to:

- Refurbish and repurpose existing buildings wherever possible to retain the School's traditions and history
- Include sustainability and environmental considerations such as solar and stormwater catchments in all future building projects.

We also have many other smaller sustainability initiatives, such as



reduced printing, composting, and sustainable waste management practices and we plan to expand our School recycling program this year.

Along with these corporate initiatives, TGS has a student-led Environmental Committee which has been encouraging students and staff to be more environmentally conscious and

responsible, promoting sustainability as a core value of the School.

TGS is committed to environmental sustainability and by incorporating these practices into the School's culture, we are proud to be creating a more environmentally friendly future for our students, the wider community and generations to come.



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It's true by keeping your carpets and upholstery clean and free of mould and pests, you'll be extending their lifespan and therefore reducing the need to throw out old furniture and buy new items. At the end of the day, that's good for reducing landfill.

Dust2Clean is a locally owned business that is famous for making old furniture look like new. It offers a wide range of cleaning, restoration and pest control services for homes, commercial and retail facilities.

Owner, Don Adikari has been in the cleaning business since 2008 and is Toowoomba's first master textile technician. This means he is an expert in treating delicate fabrics and leather. He is also a carpet inspector so he knows in and out of carpets. He can certainly help you with all your carpet issues.

"The detergents and cleaning products we use are tested for domestic use," said Don. We always use the highest quality chemicals and we also use the latest in specialist equipment to reduce the amount of chemicals used.

"We are IICRC certified and Wool Safe approved for carpet cleaning."

www.dust2clean.com.au



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HOW CAN SMALL BUSINESS FUTURE-PROOF AGAINST THE NEXT COVID-STYLE CATASTROPHE?

Building resilience needs to be the key priority for Australia's SMEs, research shows

Small businesses still in post-pandemic recovery mode can take action to future-proof against the next big shake-up.

University of Southern Queensland professor Dr Tapan Sarker's latest research explores how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can survive disruption – whether it's a pandemic, another financial crisis, or a natural disaster.

The research paper, produced in collaboration with researchers across the world, details the challenges of post-pandemic business.

Dr Sarker said small and medium businesses played a key role in regional development and were the centre point of the Australian economy and must be supported if the country wanted a healthy economy.

He said many enterprises were left exposed to financial hardship during the economic challenges of Covid-19.

This left them at risk of closing down or floundering to recover, leading to macro effects across the Australian economy.

Dr Sarker's research proposes key solutions to building capability within business models, including collaboration with other businesses and embracing hybrid operating modes.

He said smart financing models were crucial for the sector and that finance fine-tuned for smaller businesses would be key to increasing resilience in SMEs.

This could include innovative public-private financial

partnerships, facilitated by legislation or public collateral.

“Building resilience is the key to helping enterprises survive.” Dr Sarker said.

“This is the difference for businesses that make it through challenges such as the recent floods across eastern Australia, compared to those who are forced to close.”

SMEs' Changing Organisational Landscape: Strategising the Workplace of the Future is available at European Business Review.



LITTLE MIRACLES COMMUNITY KINDERGARTEN SHOWS US HOW IT'S DONE!

“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.”

Robert Swan



Congratulations! This fabulous little business has earned a coveted ecoBiz Star Rating. This means they have worked their way towards sustainability through energy efficiency as well as better water and waste management. We caught up with the Director Nicole Edmondson to find out more:

How did you find out about the services of ecoBiz?

It was quite some time ago, but from memory EcoBiz contacted us and we took up their offer of services.

How did ecoBiz services happen - and did they include a one-on-one consultant?

We arranged a time for a visit and had a coaching session with one of their representatives. We had to provide some documentation such as electricity bills and water usage. We went through a series of questions and from that a report was created and sent to us later.

Once you received advice, was it difficult to put into practice?

It did take some time to be able to put all the things into place as

there was a significant financial cost involved. The initial visit was in 2018 and we completed the changes by September 2021.

What does the star rating mean?

It means we are a more sustainable business. To give an example, we are saving around 75% on electricity bills due to solar panels and LED lighting throughout. Our electricity bill now ranges from nil to \$100 (in winter months).

Would you recommend the process to other small businesses?

Yes as it got us thinking more about how we could become more sustainable and how to do this effectively under the guidance of ecobiz.

Feed the Bees & WE FEED THE NATION

Roger and Hayley Mason have developed a full-time business feeding the nation's bees. It all started with two backyard beehives in Toowoomba and a whole lot of creativity.

While working as a carpenter, Roger, and wife Hayley who worked in events management, kept backyard bees at their home in Toowoomba. Their interest in flowers for bees lead them to begin an online seed business as a sort of side-hustle. Settler Hives grew and grew enabling both to focus on the world of seeds, bees and honey fulltime.

The Mason's Settler Hives seeds are chosen because of their special popularity with bees. The range

includes Australian natives and a variety of edible flowers too. Seeds are sourced locally where possible and packaged in compostable sachets.

Roger says most customers live in capital cities and many like to support their local bee population by growing flowers in pots. It's not so much about being an expert gardener, it's all about feeding bees!

The Settler Hives website also has a honey directory which is a

genius concept allowing people all over Australia to find their local suppliers of fresh honey.

Roger and Hayley Mason were recently featured in Outland Denim's Good Humans Journal and they have big plans for collaborations and expansion in the coming months.

www.settlerhives.com.au





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LOVE ME FOREVER *Boutique*

Pre-loved designer fashion on consignment – it's a total win-win supporting the circular economy and stopping garments from going to landfill.

Who: Leanne Burgess has worked in the pre-loved fashion business for more than four years. She knows how to find good homes for quality garments at the right price.

What: Love Me Forever accepts designer and high-end fashion labels including shoes, handbags, hats and accessories. Her stock varies weekly but has literally featured Louis Vuitton, Calvin Klein, Prada, Zimmerman, Anthea Crawford and more. All sizes welcome.

How: Bring clean, undamaged quality items to the store for assessment. The team will work out a sale price and if your garment sells, you receive 40 per cent of that price. If it doesn't sell within a reasonable time, you can reclaim your garment.

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B&A TECHNOLOGIES

Part of the Solution

What kind of world do we want to leave for our children? That is the reason behind the brand Stirling & Truffles which is a Toowoomba-based business – sustainable through and through.



Stirling & Truffles Head Honcho, Petria Cumner, explained that their hero product, the water bottle carriers, started them on a mission to reduce single use plastic water bottles.

“One of our leather bottle harnesses and refillable water bottles has the potential to remove 1,217 - 600ml single use plastic bottles from our environment from one person in one year!” she said.

“That’s 100,983 single use plastic bottles removed from the environment in an average lifetime.”

“Since then, we have expanded to more lifestyle products including picnic blanket carriers, yoga mat carriers, wallets, glasses cases, wine bottle holders and dog accessories.”

Before embarking on their new business, Petria and partner ... undertook extensive research on the Australian Government’s Net Zero Policy as well as trends on the sustainability bell curve, the public’s opinion on the importance of sustainability and being plastic free.

“We started from day one as a sustainable business considering all facets from office, vegetable ink, calico packaging, compostable mailers right through to the product itself,” said Petria.

“We use Australian vegetable tanned leather. This is a more artisanal, gentle method of tanning which uses natural tree tannins and water, rather than the damaging chrome tanning, PVC plastic vegan leather or plastic-coated plant vegan leather.

“Our products are deliberately not mass produced, nor machine made, instead handcrafted and unique. We also offer a lifetime warranty on all our products (excluding Dog Collection) to encourage people to choose quality over cheaper plastic alternatives which ultimately add to landfill.

“We don’t need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly, we need millions doing it imperfectly.”

Anne-Marie Bonneau

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Toowoomba for Climate Action

SOME OF OUR LOCAL CLIMATE-SMART BUSINESSES

Toowoomba for Climate Action inspires and supports emissions reductions, and adaptation for more extreme weather events in Toowoomba Region - in businesses, industries, and residences - in line with the UN's recommendations for a safer climate (a 45% reduction in emissions by 2030).

Follow Toowoomba for Climate Action on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, or join the active Facebook group. We share positive stories about local businesses and tag them with #ClimateSmartToowoomba. We are always looking for more such stories to share, and it would be great if business owners and staff used the hashtag to give themselves a public pat on the back for reducing their business emissions - or celebrate someone they know who is!

Darling Downs Brick Sales

Motivated by costly electricity bills, Darling Downs Brick Sales joined the state government's free ecoBiz program to learn how to reduce their energy bills ...and therefore reduce their business' emissions.

Their achievements include: reducing electricity use by changing to LED lights and better managing when they were used; linking their air conditioners to the burglar alarm system to prevent them running while the office is unoccupied; introducing a take-back program for excess bricks from building sites at no charge and then reselling them. This reduces waste from sites that would otherwise be transported to landfill; washing vehicles with rainwater

Knights Commercial Laundry

In response to the drought, Knights Laundry adopted a water recycling program that reduced their water usage by 75%.

Delivering water to our taps requires an immense amount of electricity, as our water supply is pumped up a mountain, so by reducing water use, you also reduce emissions from electricity use!

Toowoomba Solar Centre

Toowoomba Solar Centre are suppliers and installers of solar hot water, solar power, battery storage, and smart energy management technologies. They are the Solahart dealer for the Darling Downs and also energy reductions specialists, conducting energy efficiency audits for residential homes and small and medium businesses using Australian Standards.

Toowoomba Solar is an ecoBiz 1-star partner in energy, meaning they have reduced efficiencies by at least 10% or are implementing best practice measures.



Eco Blueprints

Eco Blueprints provides energy efficient building design, using passive heating and cooling principals for homes with star ratings in excess of 6 stars (meaning cosy to live in and very cheap to heat and cool) for new house design, as well as retrofitting of existing houses, particularly Toowoomba's heritage character houses.

They conduct Thermal Performance Assessments using BERS Pro software, and provide advice on other sustainable principals such as rainwater collection, solar power systems, energy efficient appliances, etc.

Zero Waste Matters

Toowoomba resident Graeme Snell is closing the loop to make blue plastic pallet strapping recyclable. Graeme is on a mission to reduce the tons of plastic waste currently going into landfill in Toowoomba Region, and recycle it where possible.

Graeme purchased a \$15,000 granulator machine to shred the blue plastic strapping that is used to bind boxes and parcels. The machine compresses the strapping by more than 90% and is believed to be the only one operating in Queensland.

Another company then melts the shredded plastic and turns it into small pellets which can be used to produce new plastic products such as compost bins, crates, floor mats, containers, plant pots and more. Graeme is currently working with the University of Southern Queensland exploring new ways to use plastic in construction materials.

www.zerowastematters.com.au

St Vincent's Private Hospital Toowoomba

St Vincent's Hospital is reducing their waste. After a trial 'challenge' of PVC plastic recycling in 2020, PVC recycling bins are now a permanent feature on each ward.

ELIA Architecture

ELIA Toowoomba places special emphasis on creating environmentally sustainable designs that maximise usability and cost effectiveness for their clients.

www.elia.com.au/toowoomba

Bartercard Australia Toowoomba office

Bartercard is a system where you can barter your business' goods and services with other members.

Bartercard Toowoomba have achieved a 3-Star ecoBiz Partnership with an extensive solar setup which allows them to offset their grid use entirely and export additional power back into the grid.

www.bartercard.com.au

Garden City Dental Practice

Garden City Dental Practice near St Andrews Hospital is one of just a handful of dental practices in Toowoomba Region that work towards a friendly environmental footprint.

They designed the practice with the health of the environment in mind since the beginning, with a holistic approach to dentistry, treating the mouth, the body and the environment with the most friendly 'green practices' they possibly can.

Big Tyre

Big Tyre supply, service, develop and manufacture tyre, wheel and rubber track products for agriculture and mining. They also repair and rebuild to reduce tyre waste into landfill. Over the past 20 years they have reconditioned over 1,200 agricultural tracks, rebuilt over 7,000 wheels, and repaired or retreaded over 15,000 tyres! Reconditioning is a cheaper alternative to buying new tyres.

Big Tyre reached out to the free state government ecoBiz program to see if they could improve their energy management. They reduced their usage by 44% by installing a 100Kw solar array for their daytime manufacturing; exploring using unusable electricity for pre-heating

of boiler feed water; replacing all 400W high bay and low bay lights with LEDs; installing daylight detection on security lighting, dimming lighting unless motion is detected.

Reviva Tip Shop

Recycling isn't enough - we need to also use recycled products. Reviva Tip Shop at Toowoomba's waste management facility on O'Mara Road helps residents reuse items to keep them out of landfill - landfills are significant sources of methane, a potent greenhouse gas which contributes to climate change.

Reviva is also a social enterprise, helping people who are experiencing employment barriers.

Toowoomba Showgrounds

Toowoomba Showgrounds offers picturesque, versatile venue spaces for a variety of agricultural, gardening and equestrian expos.

The Showgrounds achieved a 28% reduction in energy consumption, and a 27% reduction in waste production after participating in the free ecoBiz program. Some of the key initiatives they learned about from the program, and implemented, include: reviewed tariff structures with their energy provider; engaged caterers to switch off idle equipment; replaced older air conditioning units with more energy-efficient models; improved waste sorting to reduce the amount sent to landfill.

Geoff Gibson Homes

Geoff Gibson Homes' goal for any new home they build is to achieve a minimum of 7 Star Rating.

Your new home could be up to 80% more energy efficient, which also means it's more comfortable to live in, as well as saving a ton in electricity costs over your lifetime

www.geoffgibsonhomes.com.au

Tilma Group - Regional Tourism Consultants

In January Toowoomba tourism development consultancy Tilma

Group used the free resources provided by ecoBiz to write an emissions-reduction plan for the home office-based business.

Actions included reducing flights only to essential travel, offering clients the cost savings of remote project delivery, which COVID restrictions revealed results in the same quality of deliverables.

Tilma Group found it easy to arrange for business emissions offsets for its remaining emissions with Greenfleet which plants biodiverse native forests nationally, including close to Toowoomba. Learn more at www.greenfleet.com.au/offset

Zilch Waste Recyclers

Zilch Waste Recyclers are a locally owned business providing solutions to the construction and landscaping industries. They provide high-value, sustainable solutions through innovative closed-loop production and recycling systems.

Zilch recycles - greenwaste and timber into mulch,; soil (by screening); bricks, tiles and cement into aggregate; metals, asphalt, road surfaces and gyprock; even mixed waste from construction; renovation or demolitions - any combination of timber, plasterboard, steel, bricks, plastic, bitumen, concrete, and green organic materials.

These are sold as new products including – roadbase; aggregates for landscaping, fill, erosion mitigation and retaining walls; crusher dust as a sub-base; mulch and soil

www.zilchwaste.com.au

Community Group: Flourish PYO (Pick Your Own) Community Garden

Recent floods and the resulting impacts on vegetable supply have highlighted the importance of having local food supplies.

Flourish PYO is a community garden in Glenvale that anyone is welcome to harvest from at any time. It is maintained by volunteers every Tuesday morning during school terms. Visitors are welcome to join in and learn skills such as growing food and composting.

TOOWOOMBA Green Guide TO WASTE DISPOSAL

Recycling, upcycling, repurposing...

these are all ways to reduce our carbon footprint. Knowing how to correctly dispose of items locally is key. Have a look through Toowoomba Chamber's "Green Guide" on our website and let us know if we need to add more information to it.



Also, keep up with news on the following websites:

- Climate Active - www.climateactive.org.au
- AusIndustry - www.industry.gov.au/science-technology-and-innovation/industry-innovation/ausindustry
- ecoBiz - www.businesschamberqld.com.au/sustainability/ecobiz/
- Toowoomba Action for Climate Change
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Planet Ark
- Facebook: #tlcfortrc, Toowoomba Buy Swap Sell



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WHY JOINING CHAMBER MAKES GOOD SENSE FOR

Tourism & Hospitality Businesses

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce & Dine Darling Downs have joined forces to promote our food tourism and hospitality sector taking locals and visitors alike on a journey of the best places to eat, play and stay in Toowoomba and the Darling Downs.

The collaboration is a perfect opportunity to further celebrate and promote our region locally, nationally, and internationally as an outstanding foodie destination.

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is Toowoomba's largest, most well established business community. The Dine Darling Downs Digital Platform includes a website / directory with an ever growing list of places to try and of course Social Media channels dedicated solely to good food & dining inspo.

Here are just some of the benefits of joining Chamber:

- Be a part of and engage with Toowoomba's largest business community (530+ Member Businesses)
- Make connections at our monthly networking events (150+ attendees regularly)
- Invitation to members only events
- Support and representation at all levels of government
- Opportunity to participate in advisory groups
- Directed introductions to other member businesses
- Ability to share specials, member2member offers and promote events on the Chamber website
- Social media callout through the Chambers channels
- Listing in Toowoomba Chamber Directory
- Advertising in the quarterly Business Journal at member rates



JOIN TODAY

Membership is fully tax deductible

Bonus Dine Darling Downs Membership!

At no extra cost you receive Dine Darling Downs Membership too including:

- Your business listed in the Dining Guide Directory on the Dine Darling Downs website, check it out at www.dinedarlingdowns.com.au
- Monthly Social Media mentions of your business on Dine Darling Downs Facebook and Instagram - the largest digital food platform in the region
- An opportunity to promote your business via an article / blog on the Dine Darling Downs Website - let us tell your story

For more information contact Lucas Wegener 0450 386 575



Dining Guide

Check out our easy to use Directory for the best places to eat, drink, stay this weekend!

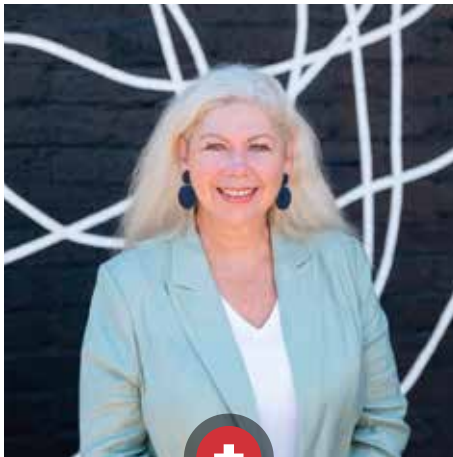


dinedarlingdowns.com.au

Cost:

Per year Based on number of full time equivalent employees

Sole Trader	\$203
Micro Business	
2 to 4 Employees.....	\$407
Small Business Level One	
5 to 10 Employees.....	\$580
Small Business Level Two	
11 to 19 Employees.....	\$866
Medium Business Level One	
20 to 50 Employees	\$1031



Welcome!

Nicole Sweeney

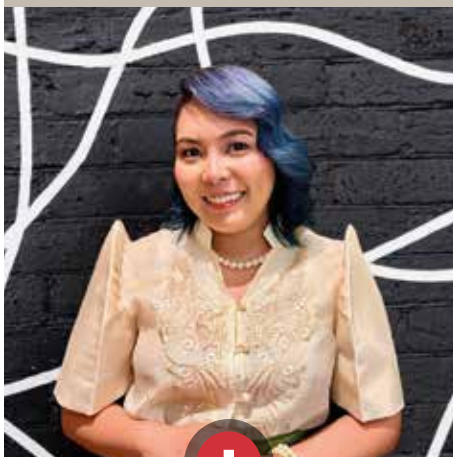
Senior People and Culture Consultant



Welcome!

Rikki Gainey

Junior Consultant and Client Services Coordinator



Welcome!

Abi Davidson

Receptionist and Administration Support



Jessica, Naomi, Alistair, Alisa and Kyssa are so pleased to introduce you to the newest members of our small (growing) but mighty team!



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Your people and culture consultants.

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