



# Cornish College

## The Cornish College EcoCentre



'Make a Difference' is the Cornish College motto. Central to this motto are the values of sustainability that underpin its curriculum; personal, socio-cultural, urban and natural sustainability.

To make this motto a reality requires a unique learning environment, the Cornish EcoCentre.

Built using a range of recycled and local materials, the Cornish EcoCentre allows students to learn and create outdoors and build their knowledge base around sustainability, flora and fauna, food production, horticulture, and waste management.

The EcoCentre has a range of features provided for the students. These include a nursery, flower, vegetable and native plant propagation garden, fire-pit gathering space, aquaponics system, chicken, duck and guinea fowl enclosures, wetlands, an orchard, worm farms, composting zone and bee hives.

All elements of the EcoCentre have a dual use, acting as a learning resource for all year levels, while enhancing environmental value. Furthermore, many of the features are self-sufficient including all produce and eggs used for home economics classes and plants self-propagating.

"Our students' hunger for knowledge combined with dedication and passion from staff, and support from our parent and alumni community has fuelled development at such a startling pace," says Tom Humphreys, Grounds Manager.



# Noble Park Community Centre

## Noble Park Community Garden Club

The Noble Park Community Garden Club is a group of residents with green thumbs. The vibrant garden club members come from a variety of backgrounds and age groups but are all connected by one love, gardening!

Starting off as a small group of dedicated gardeners, the club has now expanded to include other activities including a community swap meet, art and craft days and specialist workshops for everyone.

The expansion in programs has resulted in participation from young children and families, to seniors with decades of experience. Aside from an easy way to learn and share tips and goods, the group offers companionship and social inclusion.





# Athol Road Primary School

## Closing the Loop on Waste

Athol Road Primary School's latest sustainability project, Closing the Loop is aimed at cutting waste at the school and reducing waste sent to landfill.

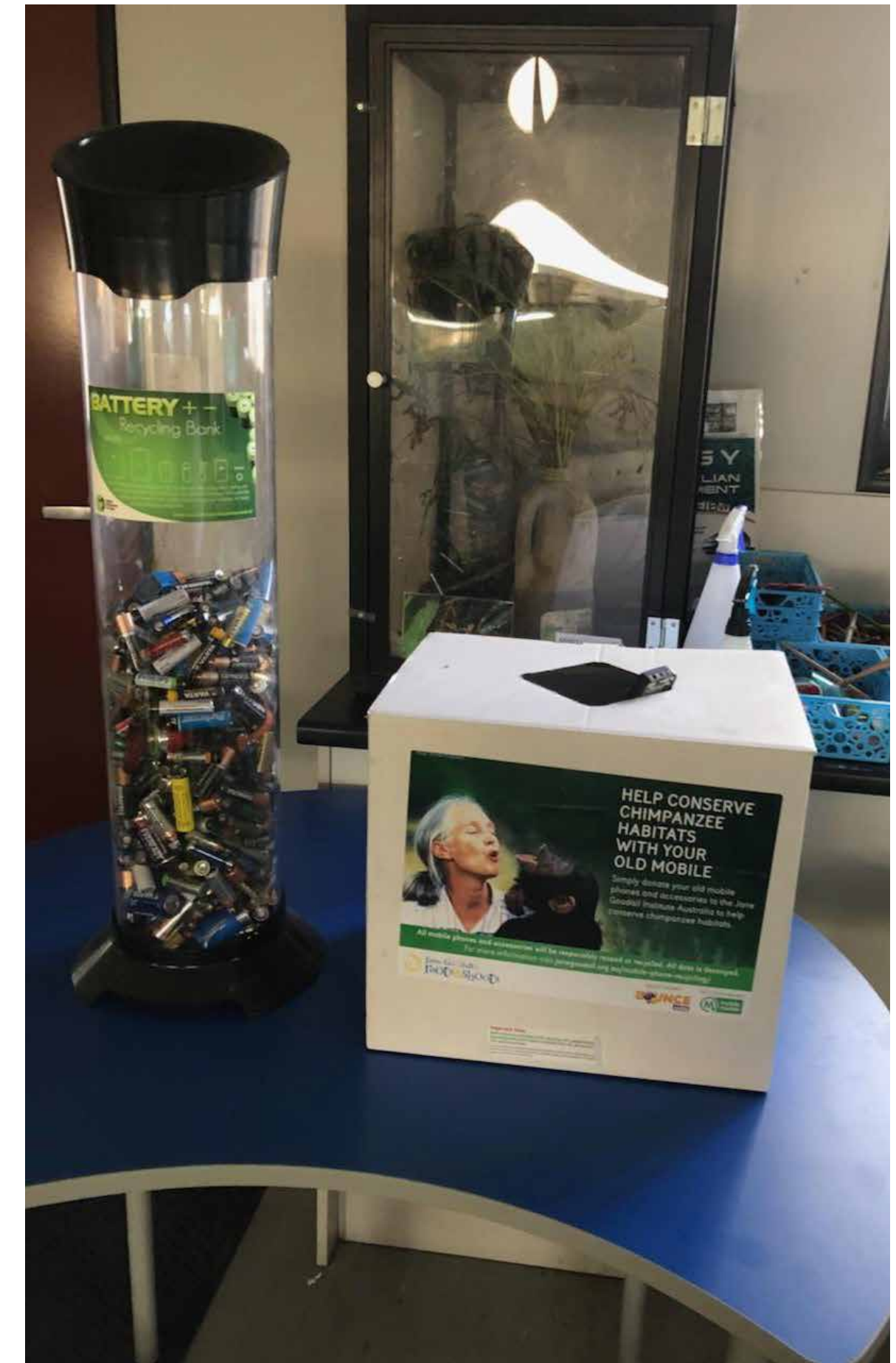
With over 400 students at the school, waste is generated VERY quickly. In fact, two-thirds of rubbish in all school bins could be recycled. That is why the school has taken it upon themselves to cut waste and divert as much as possible to be recycled and re-used.

To help achieve this, the school introduced a variety of recycling bins including:

- co-mingled recycling bins in all classrooms, offices and the school grounds
- soft plastic bag collection bin
- battery collection bin
- mobile phone collection bin
- composting bins.

The plastic bags, co-mingled recycling, batteries and mobile phones are sent to waste processing facilities for recycling, while compost is put into the school vegetable garden which sells the produce at school markets.

Since the program began in 2017, waste to landfill has been reduced by over 50% - a great achievement that can easily be adopted by anyone in the community.





# Lyndale Greens Primary School

## Towards a Sustainable School

Lyndale Green Primary School's efforts towards sustainability were focused on two themes this year, waste and biodiversity.

Their approach to waste focused on changing student attitudes towards food waste and litter. They did this by running a number of programs over the year including a Clean-up Australia day activity, audits of classroom bins, installation of a compost garden and nude food lunches to address food packaging waste.

The student's efforts made a noticeable reduction in waste to landfill. As a reward, students were sent to CERES environmental park to learn more about sustainable practices to implement at the school.

To help improve biodiversity at the school they focussed on attracting native birds. They installed a bird bath in the garden and formed a student bird watching group.





# William Kwan and John Hayman

## Bee Pollination in Springvale

William and John have created a real buzz at the Springvale Community Garden. Thousands of bees are now living at the garden in their new bee hive courtesy of John and William.

Bees are responsible for a third of the food we eat. With bee populations in worldwide decline it is critical to ensure their survival and boost populations so that they can pollinate plants to produce food. The new bee hive at Springvale Community Garden is a local action to a global issue.

The resulting bee pollination affects the community within a 5km radius of the hives resulting in huge increases in pollination rates for flowers and food production (by over 200%) for the gardens in Springvale. Furthermore, William and John have educated the community about the benefits of bees through talks at the community garden and a story featured in the local newspaper.

William and John hope to continue their efforts to maximise bee populations across the entire south eastern region.





# Carers of Africa

## Sleep Well Project

Carers of Africa is a not-for-profit organisation based in Dandenong committed to supporting disadvantaged people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and the African community.

The *Sleep Well Project* is a great example of addressing the issue of homelessness and global issue of pollution from soft plastic bags. They are doing this by turning obsolete plastic bags into sleeping mats, pillows and carry bags to give to Melbourne's homeless.

The mats and pillows are made by flattening, folding and cutting the bags, then weaving them into the final product. The process uses up to 400-700 plastic bags per item which is done by community volunteers. The group acquired 3.6 million unused bags from defunct retailer Masters.

The products are not only soft, but they are also waterproof, durable, lightweight and keep in the heat. A great example of addressing a global issue for a local cause for our most vulnerable citizens.



# Dandenong West Primary School

## Habitats and Hollows

Dandenong West Primary School is located a stone's throw from Fotheringham Nature Reserve. This provides great opportunity to involve students to enhance the biodiversity of this reserve and that's exactly what their project *Habitats for Hollows* has done.

The project's guiding question was: *How can we continue the growth and survival of Australian wildlife in local native habitats?* Students worked as 'biologists' with Council's Parks and Reserves staff to learn about flora, fauna and ecosystems at Fotheringham Reserve.

Students visited Fotheringham Reserve fortnightly where they surveyed woodland creatures, insects, vegetation and birds. At school, they researched wildlife native to Fotheringham Reserve and threats to their survival then prepared an information poster for display at the reserve. Then finally, the students constructed nesting boxes for their chosen animal (installed by an arborist) with the intention of monitoring the impact on the biodiversity.





# Resurrection Primary School

## Resurrections Reduce and Recycle Program

Resurrection Primary School is determined to reduce the amount of waste in their school, with students leading the way.

In late 2016, student representatives agreed the amount of rubbish in the school grounds was excessive and something had to be done. A recycling program was already operating but more action was required.

Students met with the Deputy Principal to discuss the problem. Immediate action was taken and a waste audit was conducted. The audit found that students generated a half a wheelie bin of waste annually. This led to the introduction of a waste minimisation program in 2017.

Led by the sustainability student leaders and educator, Hannah Prosser-Matthews, with support from councils waste education unit, the waste minimisation program targeted food waste packaging and recyclable materials.

A range of measures were introduced to the school, targeting all year levels including education workshops and incursions on waste reduction (including sessions for parents), new recycling bins in all classrooms and organic compost bins. They even composed a song named "the resurrection recycling rap" played at recess to educate the children.

The results are starting to take effect with less rubbish and waste seen. With new actions to come in 2018 it is expected to continue.

