



Healesville Community Renewable Energy Project



Healesville CoRE Community Gathering Community Feedback Report

14th July 2017

This report contains an overview of the community feedback received during the Healesville CoRE Community Gathering on June 29 2017. Between 225 - 250 individuals attended the gathering at the Memo and 116 returned a completed feedback form. This report was prepared by Andrew Bevitt on behalf of the newly formed Healesville CoRE working group, and is available from the Healesville CoRE website www.healesvillecore.org.au.

Community interest and engagement

The community gathering was attended by a diverse group of individuals interested in renewable power projects in Healesville and the greater Yarra Valley. Approximately 90% of attendees live in postcode 3777. An important first step for the new Healesville CoRE working group will be to engage this community. Feedback forms completed on the night asked whether people had been motivated by the presentations and how useful a local group could be for managing local solar and renewable projects. Figure 1 shows a majority of attendees (85%) felt the gathering had further motivated them to participate in Healesville CoRE projects, with most now being highly motivated. Almost all (97%) those who attended the gathering felt a community group would be helpful to increase solar and renewable energy use in the local area.

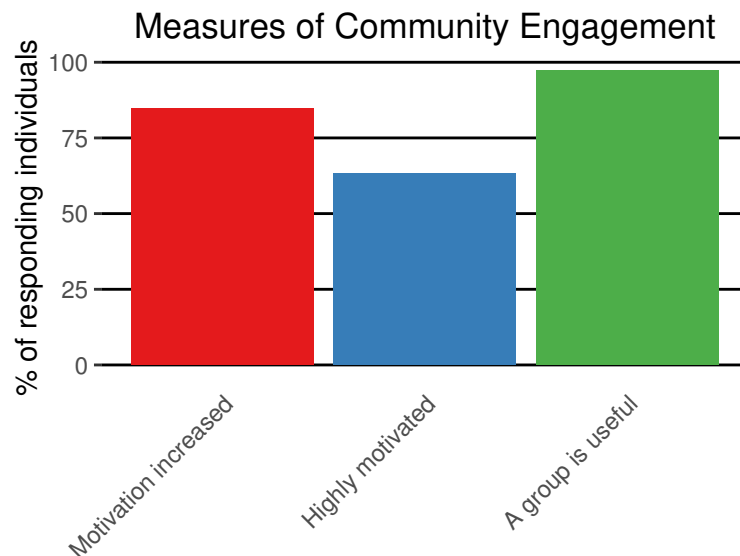


Figure 1: Community engagement as percentage of individuals interested

Project and financing preferences

The feedback form asked people to nominate project areas of interest that the working group could focus on. Figure 2 presents the percentage of people interested for each project area, in descending order. Each bar is divided into two groups (different colours) based on whether the individual volunteered to be part of the Healesville CoRE working group (or not). There is a clear interest in solar panels and battery storage projects. Use of solar for hot water and community benefit are also important, followed up by more broad infrastructure projects such as a micro-grid or deploying solar on community buildings. It is also worth noting the working group has consistent interest across all of these areas - a great way to ensure a diverse range of projects can be achieved.

Similarly feedback was sought on financing and purchasing options which may be of interest to the community. Individuals were asked whether they were interested in self-financing a solar setup, having finance arranged for them to purchase their own system, or arranging purchase of energy in a bulk buy scheme, from a community energy retailer or through a distributed neighbourhood scheme. Interest was also canvassed for landlord/tenant financing schemes, donating money or investing in a corporation formed by Healesville CoRE.

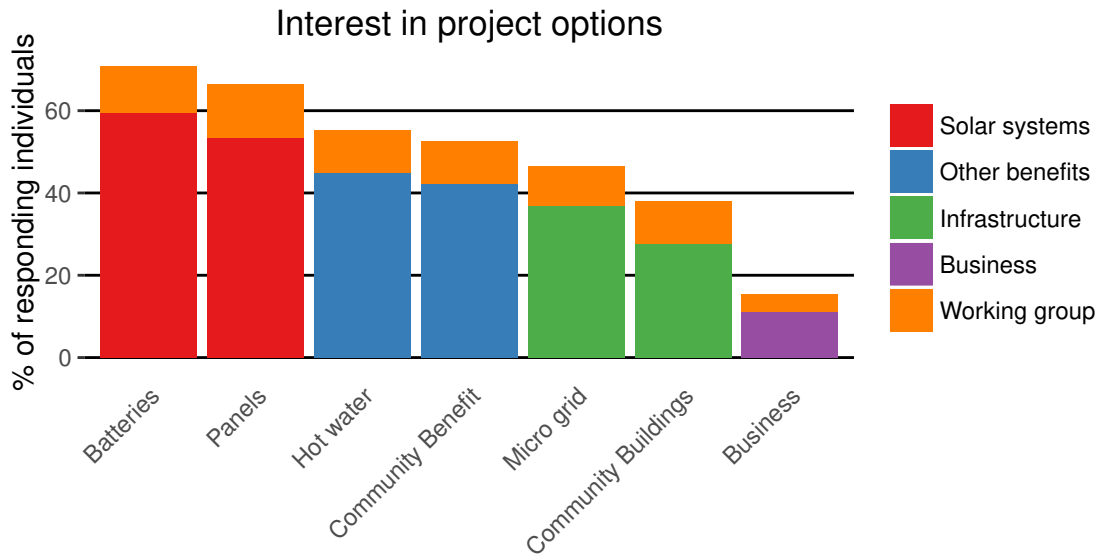


Figure 2: Community interest in potential projects

Figure 3 presents the percentage of individuals who indicated an interest in each of these financing options. The graph suggests there are four levels of interest (colour coded) which broadly align to project complexity and time to deliver. This indicates the community has interest in both the immediate changes that could be made, and longer term options. Switching to a community energy retailer is appealing to about two-thirds of individuals, a change that could be made easily at an individual level - perhaps with the encouragement of a community education program. Interest is still strong (approximately 50%) to undertake short-term projects such as self financed installation of solar systems and arranging community bulk buy plans. Longer term projects such as distributed power and investment are of interest to about one-third of the community.

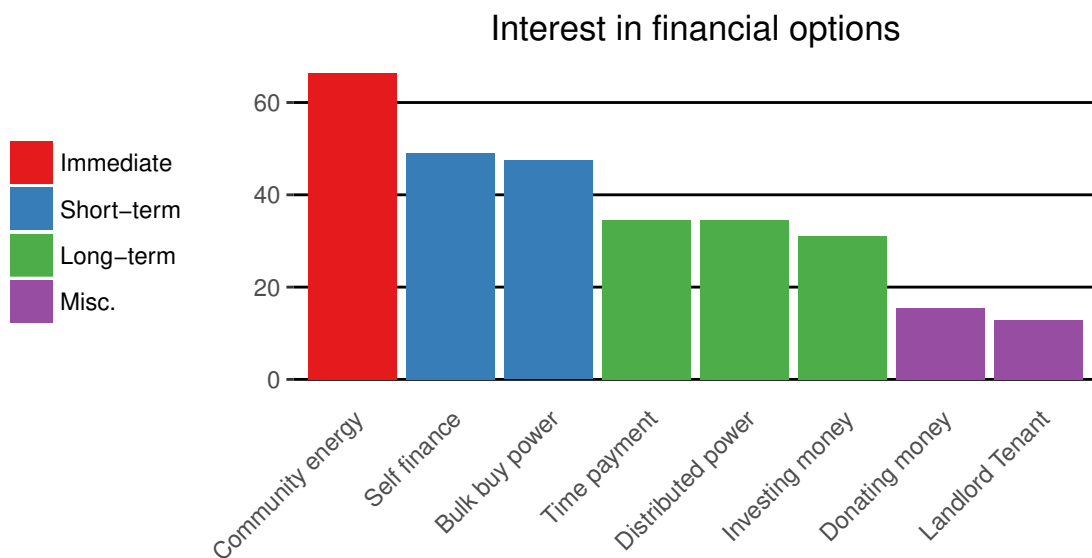


Figure 3: Community interest in funding options

These summary findings suggest the Healesville community is ready to undertake a range of solar and renewable energy projects. This is a very exciting outcome for the newly formed Healesville CoRE working group. The working group are looking forward to engaging with the community and are enthusiastically working towards planning the first project.