Taking action
Getting started

5. Planning the input
6. Start working
Part B: Taking action

You are now ready to plan for and start taking action. This booklet, Part B, has great tips to help you plan and run successful activities, manage projects, achieve great results, avoid common mistakes and share your success.

6. Planning for action

6.1 Why plan? 2
6.2 What type of plan is it? 2
6.3 How to plan 3
6.4 Preparing a site plan 5
6.5 Preparing an action or activity plan 5
6.6 When to do things – timing is important 8
6.7 Updating and reviewing your plan 8
6.8 Other types of plans 9

7. Working bees

7.1 Planning and promoting working bees 11
7.2 Risk assessments and safety 12
7.3 Running successful working bees 15
7.4 Keeping records and reviewing working bees

8. Planning and managing projects

8.1 What activities are needed? 19
8.2 Planning your project 20
8.3 Communication planning 21
8.4 Managing projects 22
8.5 Monitoring and evaluating projects 22
8.6 Reporting and sharing success 23

9. Funding

9.1 How much is it going to cost? 24
9.2 Where to find grants 24
9.3 Grant writing tips 24
9.4 Sponsorship 26
9.5 Enterprise 27
9.6 Managing project funds 27

10. Working with others

10.1 Who are the people in your neighbourhood? 30
10.2 Working well with your land manager 31
10.3 Involving your community 35
10.4 Partnerships 36
10.5 Working with contractors 39
10.6 Sources of volunteers 41

11. Education, awareness raising and events

11.1 Raising awareness 45
11.2 Coastcare in schools 46
11.3 Brochures, pamphlets and flyers 47
11.4 Websites and social media 49
11.5 Signs 50
11.6 Events and displays 52
11.7 Art in environment projects 54

12. Recognition and awards

12.1 Value of recognition 54
12.2 Types of recognition 55
12.3 Writing award nominations 57
12.4 Being a good ambassador 57
6. Planning for action

6.1 Why plan?
Planning helps you work more effectively to achieve your aspirations and you will be more successful in gaining support from land managers, your local community and funding providers.

Through good planning your group will gain clarity about your aspirations and reach agreement on common goals to work towards.

Even if you consider your activities to be small it is important to work well with others who have a vested interest in the area. The best way to do this is to be able to share your plans. It is easier to recruit and retain volunteers with well informed, clear plans that everyone can work towards together.

Planning takes time and energy and this often means less time for on-ground works and a delay in starting these works. But good planning gives your activities a much better chance of success in the long-term.

Planning is important to:
» Identify priorities (local, regional, national);
» work effectively with the land manager and their plans;
» align to other regional plans and work strategically;
» get feedback from your members;
» gain understanding and support from your land manager and other authorities; and
» communicate clearly to your local community and potential supporters.

Start small. A beach walk may be enough to identify problems and decide what you want to do. You may want to prepare a simple site plan. It could be notes jotted on paper or marked out on a large map or aerial photo (purchased from Service Tasmania).

6.2 What type of plan is it?
In the past it was common for Coastcare groups to develop a ‘management plan’ for their area. Land managers now prefer to reserve the term ‘management plan’ for documents which have statutory power and include actions that will be undertaken by multiple stakeholders.

The term ‘management plan’ has become more formalised in recent years. Existing care groups should consider this when updating old plans and seek advice from their land manager.

Coastcare groups are more likely to develop an activity, action or site plan. Such plans provide guidance to the group and also help inform overarching ‘management plans’ developed by the land manager or other authorities.

An action or activity plan describes the actions and steps that will be undertaken by the group to manage an area or undertake their activities. Action or activity plans can be for individual sites or may govern all of...
a group’s activities on a number of sites. A site plan (sometimes referred to a landscape plan) usually involves a smaller area and identifies key features or changes to a site that are required to manage threats and protect values, such as where to put a fence or an accessway. A group may have multiple site plans as part of an overall activity plan. More definitions of common plans are provided in Section 6.8.

Of course all plans must be endorsed by the land manager or owner. This might be a private land owner, but is most likely your local council, the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) or Crown Land Services (CLS).

Coastcare groups can also provide input into the development of management plans by land managers. This way the group can ensure any proposed plans build on the hard work of Coastcare volunteers and take community participation in coastal management into account.

6.3 How to plan

Get together with your group and brainstorm what you know about your area/site, what your aspirations are, and what resources you have available both within your group and more broadly.

Know your site

Before you plan, assess your area. Refer to Chapter 5. Seek advice from your land manager and experts about the values and issues in your local area.

Know the issues

Find out what management plans and other strategies apply to your area and align your plan wherever possible. This way you are achieving local success and contributing to broader strategic goals at the same time. This will make it easier to gain support and funding for your activities.

Regional and national strategies are always being updated. Your NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office can help you access the latest information.

Know your group

What skills and experience do you have within your group? What are people interested in? Ask everyone to contribute their ideas and aspirations. Do you all agree on some common goals? Start small and build on your strengths.
Know the people around you

Who are the people and groups around you that you need to work with? You must have permission from your land manager and you should keep your local community informed.

Consider inviting land managers, experts and other stakeholders to planning meetings, they can often provide good advice and involving them in your planning will help keep you all working together for common goals.

Invite other local groups or community representatives to share their aspirations for the area with your group.

Be alert for other groups who might help, such as service clubs and scouts and volunteers support groups.

Local businesses might be a source of funding or donations of materials, especially those related to coastal rehabilitation, such as garden centres, hardware stores and fencing suppliers.

Planning is an ongoing exercise. One Coastcare group has produced a variety of plans over the past 20 years to guide their activities and adapt to lessons learnt or new ideas.

Some groups prefer to do their planning during their normal working bees. Other groups find it useful to have a short planning meeting before or after each working bee, usually in someone's home. Regular planning meetings are useful to sort out priorities and actions, and to deal with paperwork such as funding applications.

Sharing stories

Pipe Clay Lagoon Coastcare (PCLC) made good use of Landcare Tasmania’s offer of a group action planning workshop. Whilst PCLC already has a Foreshore Management Plan, this plan focuses on the big picture rather than laying out a timeframe for specific works. The group was finding that monthly working bee activities ended up being organised on an ad-hoc basis by a few key people. The action planning workshop enabled the group to identify and prioritise tasks, work out what was feasible, and set out a plan for what will happen over the next year.

PCLC’s action planning workshop drew in members who wouldn’t usually come to meetings meaning that more people had the chance to have their say and put their hand up to lead activities they were interested in.

Action planning may not be ‘rocket science’ but it can be hard to prioritise planning time when there are always other pressing jobs. Inviting a facilitator to run a group workshop will help ensure an action plan gets produced quickly so that works can proceed.

Landcare Tasmania has produced a great resource to help groups plan, Action Planning for Community Landcare. Free workshops are available to Landcare Tasmania member groups to help you answer these questions through a structured process.
Plan ahead to be opportunistic

Opportunities always pop-up e.g. funding applications, offers of support from volunteer providers, local partnerships and training. Keep a list of some simple small goals that you can put into action if a suitable opportunity arises.

Your list might include: training needs; simple tasks required (checking plantings, follow up weeding, removing bags & stakes); equipment or resource needs; costs (paper for printing; bags & stakes, gloves, tools); and simple activities that are already agreed to/ approved in your plan and are ready to go.

Keep this list together with a map of the site, a brief vision statement, contact details for key stakeholders and any safety or risk information associated with the tasks. This way you will have everything you need to run off a quick application or submission when an opportunity arises.

You might obtain funding to employ a project officer to prepare a more formal plan.

6.4 Preparing a site plan

If your group wants to do some small-scale rehabilitation, weeding, or access control, you may be able to prepare a simple work plan or site plan that can be approved by your local PWS Regional Manager and/or local council. Discuss what is required before you start. Approvals can take time depending on the site or activities. Be patient.

A site plan may form part of your action plan and sets out how a small area can be designed and used in an aesthetic and functional way. The site plan should show existing vegetation (including weeds), other important values and proposed plantings or other remediation works. Include any existing infrastructure such as position of roads, tracks, car parks, buildings, and facilities.

Depending on the site, its use and the proposed changes, your local land manager may be very involved in the planning process or just provide support as required. In some cases the capacity of the land manager is limited and you might need to be patient or seek support elsewhere.

In some cases the involvement of the land manager is essential. Any installation of infrastructure will require your land manager to consider the purpose, visitor needs balanced against environmental needs, cost, appropriate materials and colours, safety requirements, and ease of maintenance and management.

Sharing stories

The Bellerive-Howrah Coast Care Group obtained a treasurer through Volunteering Tasmania. He wasn’t interested in on-ground activities but for a few years his generous accounting contribution gave the group more energy and time for planning and running working bees.

Make sure your work will:

» Be approved and supported by the land manager.
» Not interfere with natural coastal processes.
» Protect the natural coastal values, such as flora and fauna.
» Avoid disturbing Aboriginal cultural heritage.
» Ensure public safety.
» Blend aesthetically with the natural environment.
» Be maintained in the future.

6.5 Preparing an action or activity plan

Developing an activity plan is more involved than a site plan. An action or activity plan can guide the activities of your group across your entire patch. It might include a series of site plans for individual sites.
The action or activity plan can determine:

- your vision for the area
- long-term and short-term goals
- work or other actions that are needed
- time frames and budget
- a communication strategy
- how you will work safely
- how you will monitor and evaluate progress

In developing your activity plan keep in mind that the coastline is constantly changing. The patterns of erosion by wind and waves change naturally over time. Even with good intentions your work can alter these natural changes. Ensure your activities will benefit the environment and do no harm by seeking expert advice.

Here are some questions to consider for your plan:

- Who is the land manager? Are they aware of the problem?
- What has caused the problem – a natural process or human activity?
- Is intervention justified? Is intervention feasible?
- What are the other issues and values in the area?
- Who are the people in the community with an interest in the site or area?
- What do different members of the community want for the site?

Sharing stories

Local surfers used the skills of a landscape architect in a major landscaping project to rehabilitate a site used for dumping old road-building materials at the ‘Cattlegrid’ at Four Mile Beach on the east coast. This project shows what is possible for groups who may wish to take on a similar project. It demonstrates how using rock and gravel for lookouts and walkways can be better than building high-maintenance timber structures.
PART B Taking action

» What resources do we need (advice, materials, dollars)?
» What safety considerations need to be incorporated?
» What follow-up or maintenance will be required and who will do it?

» Are any approvals required? What other legislation and statutory requirements must be met?
» Is the project compatible with existing plans and policies?
» How will we keep records of our progress? How will we monitor and evaluate our activities?

Sharing stories

The Southern Beaches Foreshore Access Management Strategy.

Southern Beaches Landcare/Coastcare have more than 20 years experience working in their community to care for the coast. They know the value of good planning. Members recognised early on that many issues arising from development such as beach access, parking, sewage and stormwater needed to be discussed at a strategic level. A Coastcare grant enabled them to employ a project officer to identify key issues and involve all stakeholders to develop a management strategy for the area.

Through this process they identified access to the foreshore as one of the most important issues facing their community. The group secured further funding to develop a Foreshore Access Management Strategy.

They established a joint steering committee with land managers to guide the project and foster understanding and cooperation with the local council and the Parks and Wildlife Service developing relationships with key staff which made it easier for everyone to work together.

The group held a series of beach walks inviting local residents to share their thoughts about the area. Over 130 residents attended. The beach walks enabled people to share knowledge, raise their individual concerns, learn about the problems facing their coastline and identify and discuss opportunities. Many of the people who attended would not normally come to a Coastcare meeting or a working bee. This was their first opportunity to share their attachment to and raise their concerns about the coast.

The knowledge provided by the local community was incorporated into the Foreshore Access Management Strategy. The Coastcare group and the land managers continue to work together to manage coastal access in the southern beaches area guided by this strategy.
In some instances your group’s interest in working on a particular piece of land will prompt the land manager to develop a management plan for the area. The development of management plans by community groups is not encouraged as they are comprehensive documents that involve considerable research and consultation with a range of stakeholders. Your group can play an important role in the development of any management plan by working closely with the land manager and providing important input to ensure the plan takes your activities and aspirations into account.

### 6.6 When to do things – timing is important

You can gain some easy publicity by planning activities around related events such as Clean Up Australia Day (March), Sea Week (March), Biodiversity Month (September) and Coastcare Week (December), which are featured by the media. The Australian Government maintains an environmental events calendar on the Australian Government’s Environment website.

Some activities are seasonal, especially planting (winter), collecting seed (summer) and using herbicides (warmer months). On some Tasmanian beaches it is important to avoid disturbing nesting shorebirds and seabirds (1st October to 31st March). Some penguin colonies are active all year round. Seek advice.

September to early October is generally the best time to lead wildflower walks.

Most propagation from seed and cuttings is done in spring but some cuttings are taken in autumn. Keep in mind that it can take a year to propagate plants from locally collected seed.

Seek expert advice. Ask your NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office for advice. They can also direct you to other sources of expert advice from government agencies, universities, TAFE colleges and organisations such as field naturalists clubs, Greening Australia, BirdLife Tasmania, and the Understorey Network.

If approaching your land manager for financial support, remember they operate on a financial year basis with planning for the upcoming financial year often commencing in November or December and finalised in February, so it pays to get in early.

### Seven steps towards preparing an activity or action plan:

1. **Public Consultation.** Make a list of all stakeholders to be contacted. This includes the land manager, other users of the site, interest groups, experts and more. Think about how you need to consult with different stakeholders.

2. **Know your site.** Identify and describe the planning areas on a map. Including the natural, cultural and recreational values. Seek expert advice.

3. **Know your issues.** Identify key issues (you may need to consult at a public forum if appropriate).

4. **Vision and action.** Prepare a vision statement and list of objectives and prioritise a list of actions and responsibilities.

5. **Prepare to monitor.** Establish methods of monitoring and evaluation, both the actions and the plan itself.

6. **Review.** Write a draft plan and get it reviewed by the land manager.

7. **Approval.** Table at a local council meeting for discussion and approval or submit to the land management authority for approval.

### 6.7 Updating and reviewing your plan

Make sure your action plan is a working document, not just placed on a shelf. Add to it as you go along. Depending on your type of plan and how you work with your land manager, a regular review and update of your plan may form part of your agreement with the land manager, and they may provide support for you to do this. If you work more autonomously it will be up to you to take responsibility for reviewing and updating your plan.
Seek feedback from your members and the broader community about what has worked well and what hasn’t worked. New techniques are being developed all the time and there may be better ways to address the issues that you manage. You may need to seek fresh expert advice.

Seek support. Your NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office can help. Landcare Tasmania provides planning support for community groups. If your plan is small you can make time at each meeting to discuss it and make changes or improvements. If you have a comprehensive plan that requires sign-off by the land manager then make a place to collect thoughts or suggestions that can be included in a future review.

6.8 Other types of plans

There are a number of planning instruments and documents that are relevant to coastal management. These plans may provide direction to your own planning or affect it by imposing constraints. Remember most plans must provide for community consultation and input when they are being developed or revised, so make sure your local knowledge is submitted to any planning happening in your area.

Statutory management plan (required by law)

A ‘statutory management plan’ for a PWS or other reserve can be prepared under the National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002. Statutory management plans follow a specific format. They are reviewed by the Tasmanian Planning Commission and approved by the Governor on the advice of the Minister.

Statutory management plans may be prepared for National Parks, State Reserves, Nature Reserves, Conservation Areas, Historic Sites, Game Reserves, Nature Recreation Areas, Regional Reserves, Private Nature Reserves and Private Sanctuaries. Management plans for such reserves are usually prepared in-house by the Parks and Wildlife Service planners. They are comprehensive documents that may take a long time to prepare and be approved. Community groups can play an important role in the development of these plans, by providing local information, reviewing drafts and seeking sponsorship or grant monies to help with the costs of developing a plan.

Under Part II B, Section 12C, of the Crown Lands Act 1976 management plans may be prepared for Public Reserves.

The Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice

This code aims to protect the conservation, heritage and recreation values of land-based reserves declared under the National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002, Forest Reserves and certain Public Reserves on Crown Land. The code explains how to protect these values. It deals with a wide range of issues including fire management, weed control, track management and lists many useful references. The code does not apply to Public Reserves that have been highly modified and developed.

Follow the Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice if you are working on reserved land with significant natural and cultural heritage values. Ask your land manager if the code might apply.

Local Council Planning Schemes

Planning schemes are regulatory planning instruments that are developed under Part 3 of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993. Local councils produce planning schemes to regulate the use, development, protection or conservation of land they manage. Every council has a duty to observe and enforce its planning scheme. The planning scheme is binding on all members of the community, State Government agencies and public authorities (unless specifically excepted). More information is available in The Environmental Law Handbook produced by the Environmental Defenders Office.

Planning schemes are made up of two parts: a written document detailing the types of land use that are permitted, prohibited or discretionary; and a set of maps showing the different land uses or zones. The document and maps must be considered together.

Anyone can view a planning scheme at the relevant council office or at the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) office. Many planning schemes are available on council websites (but check with local council to make sure that these documents include recent amendments). Check carefully, many councils have more than one planning scheme.
You may lodge a request for a council to amend its Planning Scheme, however if you are not the landowner you must have written permission of the landowner. You have the right to have a say in the preparation (or amendment) of planning schemes. Before preparing (or revising) a planning scheme, local councils are required to notify the Commission and should invite public input at the early stages. It is important to have input at this informal stage, when it is easier to make major changes.

Public comment is then invited when the new or amended planning scheme is made available. After the comments are received, public hearings may be held to discuss the amendments. Any person making a submission can request a hearing. Notice of public hearings will be published in the newspaper.

If providing a submission or comment be clear about the changes you are seeking, check the permitted uses and development standards and any discretionary allowances to make sure you understand where the scheme needs amending.

**Regional and Sub-regional Land Use Strategies**

Agreements between the Tasmanian Government and respective councils and regional council bodies have been established for the north, north-west and southern regions as part of the Regional Planning Initiative.

As a result, three regional land use strategies have been developed. The regional strategies will guide development and investment in each region.

Local councils are now tasked with developing planning schemes consistent with the regional land use strategies.

In addition, more sub-regional strategies are expected to be developed such as the *Vision East: East Coast Land Use Framework* which considers strategic issues for the east coast of Tasmania.

**Natural Resource Management Strategies for regions across Tasmania**

The regional strategies provide a strategic, integrated framework for natural resource management in each of the three NRM regions of Tasmania. They are developed by the regional bodies in accordance with the Tasmanian *Natural Resource Management Act 2002*.

**Regional Weed Strategies**

The aim of these strategies is to consolidate weed management activities, identify any emerging issues in each region and set clear achievable outcomes.

**Statutory Weed Management Plans**

Statutory weed management plans exist to guide management of individual weed species declared under the *Weed Management Act 1999*.

**National Strategies**

**Australian Pest Animal Strategy**

The Australian Pest Animal Strategy addresses the impacts of introduced mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish that have become pests in Australia.

**Australian Weeds Strategy**

The Australian Weeds Strategy identifies priorities for weed management across the nation. It aims to minimise the impact of weeds on Australia’s environmental, economic and social assets.

**Australia’s Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030**

This Strategy is a significant national policy document that will guide how governments, the community, industry and scientists manage and protect Australia’s plants, animals and ecosystems over the next twenty years.

---

**Sharing stories**

*Over many years Tranmere-Clarence Plains Land and Coastcare Inc have provided input into their local Council Planning Scheme, Amendments and development proposals. The group’s input has become highly valued by both developers and Council, allowing for effective consultation and leading to better planning outcomes.*
7. Working bees

7.1 Planning and promoting working bees

If, after careful planning and preparation, you have got to the point of starting work on the ground you can congratulate yourselves on having successfully resolved many problems already.

7.2 Risk assessments and safety

7.3 Running successful working bees

7.4 Keeping records and reviewing working bees

Working bees are a great way to get things done and can be a lot of fun. They take a bit of planning to be successful. Most importantly you need to provide a safe working environment for your volunteers. This chapter shares tips from other Coastcare groups about how to run safe and successful working bees.

7.1 Planning and promoting working bees

If you are not working to an agreed activity or management plan then be sure you have sought advice and permission from the land manager. There’s no need to go it alone – you deserve some help along the way.

Plan your working bees to include some simple but important steps:

- Have a range of different tasks if possible to suit different people’s interests or skills. Break bigger tasks up into smaller steps to share the work around.

- Gather a collection of tools and equipment required and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) e.g. gloves to provide to people on the day.

- Include time to arrive early to scan the site for any hazards and set up any equipment.

- Wherever possible inform people prior to the day about what they will be doing, what they should wear and what to bring.

- Record names of everyone who attends on an attendance sheet (this includes your own members, even if you already have their details recorded). You want to know who was there on that particular day. Name, phone number and a signature is usually enough.

- Undertake a risk assessment prior to the event and have important safety messages printed out for people to read when they arrive.

Sharing stories

Buddy-up in hazardous situations

One local group had a near-miss incident when an elderly volunteer was weeding near a roadside. The volunteer was very engrossed in the work and nearly stepped back into the path of an oncoming car. Because the volunteers were working in pairs, their ‘buddy’ saw what was happening and was able to catch the person in time. Land managers will have requirements for working on roadsides such as signage and wearing high visibility vests. You can also improve your safety in hazardous situations by working closely in pairs, taking it in turns to watch each other as you work.
Many injuries that can occur are quite minor but still unpleasant such as sunburn, sprains and strains. At the end of the working bee you do not want to send volunteers home with sore backs, sunburn, twisted ankles or worse with cuts, bruises or serious injury. Most often the hazards involved in working outdoors are easily managed and injuries or incidents avoidable.

Risk Assessment and risk Management

To work safely you must identify hazards and risks (risk assessment) and control them (risk management). Risk assessment enables you to identify all the possible hazards beforehand; the risks (likelihood) of being exposed to those hazards; and the consequences (injuries) that could occur. Then risk management enables you to control the risks by minimising the likelihood of the risk occurring and reducing the consequences should the risk occur.

The information provided here is to help you understand the value of risk management and how risk assessments work. It is not intended as a comprehensive guide on how to perform a risk assessment. You should seek advice. Your land manager, NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office can help you undertake a risk assessment or find the best advice.

Risk assessments are best undertaken by someone who understands the activities in detail. There is no right or wrong way. The intent is simply to keep people safe.

> Leave time at the start to gather everyone together to welcome them, explain the tasks and to alert them to any hazards at the site and safety considerations for the activities.
> Make time for morning/afternoon tea, lunch or some other opportunity for everyone to stop work together, refresh and chat.
> Prepare to monitor. Work out beforehand what information you are going to record, when and how.
> Prepare to communicate. How and who will you tell about what was achieved on the day?

7.2 Risk assessments and safety

Create a safety culture in your group by talking about safety at every meeting and appointing someone to be the safety person at each working bee.

It is the responsibility of your group and all members to provide a safe work environment for your volunteers.

Some activities are more dangerous than others but simple precautions can reduce the risk, such as wearing appropriate protective equipment for the task or using the right tools for the job.

Working bees are very satisfying and a lot of fun.
**List the risks**

Think about things such as manual handling, exposure to the elements, using tools, on-site hazards and terrain, using herbicides. Visit the site and identify any hazards such as steep terrain, exposure to the sun, inclement weather, trip hazards, dangerous rubbish etc.

**Rank the risks**

Then each risk is ranked according to how likely it is to occur and the severity of the outcome should the risk occur. For example, getting sunburnt is very likely when working outdoors but generally not life threatening, however heat stroke can be far more serious.

Formal risk assessments use a matrix system to calculate risk; where ‘likelihood’ and ‘severity’ are used to determine a risk factor from ‘low’ to ‘extreme’ for each activity or risk.

**Reduce the risks**

Once you have a ranking for each risk, you need to consider what things you can do to reduce the risk to an acceptable level – low. This might be by reducing the chances of the risk occurring in the first place or by reducing the severity of the outcome should the risk occur.

For example wearing sunscreen, long sleeves, a hat and drinking plenty of water will all but eliminate the risk of sunburn or heat stroke and will reduce the risk ranking to low. If the risk cannot be reduced, and is both ‘severe’ and ‘likely’, then that activity would be considered extreme and should be avoided.

This process may seem a bit tedious for common risks like sunburn and sun exposure, but the risk assessment is a comprehensive way to identify all risks and work out how to reduce them. Because it is task and site specific, it gives you the information you need to explain to your volunteers how to work safely on each task on any particular site.

All volunteers have a right and a responsibility to care for their own safety and the safety of those around them. There are tools and information available to help you improve safety at your working bees.

Landcare Tasmania, WorkSafe Tasmania, SafeWork Australia, Our Community and Conservation Volunteers Australia have tools and resources to assist you. See More information in Part E.
Safety Briefing

Give a safety briefing at the start of each working bee. Explain any hazards on the site and point out the dangerous activities. Explain the safety equipment and practices that should be used and make sure they are available. Ask people to let you know if they have a medical condition such as an allergy. They can do this discreetly if need be.

Tell your volunteers about the risks and how to work safely. There is no point knowing the risks if you don’t communicate them.

Each safety briefing will be a little different as it depends on the conditions at the site such as terrain, weather, working on a roadside and on the tasks e.g. using herbicides, tools. Invite the participants to add their thoughts or observations so everyone is included in the safety conversation. Remind them that safety is everyone’s responsibility and ask them to speak up if they identify any unsafe activities or any new risks not previously identified.

Safety is serious but that doesn’t mean it can’t be fun. Get your safety person to wear a fun hat. Everyone will know who to go to for advice about safety on the day.

Take extra care to ensure newcomers are given an induction to the site and the activities. An induction is simply a structured introduction including things such as pointing out any hazards at the site, any dangerous tasks, common mistakes, potential injuries, correct techniques and where they can find more information or help. You might like to create an induction checklist so any member can induct a new volunteer.

Record details of any near misses too (these are free lessons). Use these lessons to make changes to your activity, so you can avoid a future accident or incident.
In the event of an accident or incident:
» Treat the injured or distressed person and ensure the safety of others;
» Seek medical advice and treatment where required, if in doubt get professional help (always get medical attention for eye injuries, however minor);
» Notify next of kin if necessary;
» Take notes and record details of the incident immediately (preferably on an incident reporting form);
» Notify the group office bearers as soon as possible (if working under an umbrella organisation or under the direction of the land manager, notify their representative);
» Notify your insurer of all potential and actual claims within 24 hours if possible and as soon as possible after the incident; and
» Review the notes and details in your incident report so you can make changes to your activity to reduce the risk of the accident happening again.

In the event of an incident

Incidents and accidents do happen and it is important to manage the situation quickly and expertly. It is a good idea to ensure that at least one person at the working bee has a first aid certificate in the event of a more serious incident.

In the case of a serious injury, do everything you can to assist the person(s) involved. Then record the details and notify any relevant persons, such as land managers, insurers.

7.3 Running successful working bees

A little bit of organisation goes a long way. Working bees are most successful and enjoyable when people know what they need to do, why they are doing it and how to do it correctly and safely.

Make sure you brief everyone who attends about safety, and describe the tasks clearly. Have spare tools or personal protective equipment available if they don’t have their own. Make sure they know how to use the tool if it is not their own.

Have a blackboard or white board with a list of tasks on it that can be crossed out when complete. You could include a key safety message for each task and the equipment needed for that task.
It’s important to record what you do so that knowledge is not lost when key people move away. Celebrate your achievements. Keep a display folder with photos, newspaper articles and posters as a reminder of your activities. It’s something to show new members, potential sponsors and award providers.

**Equipment**

Be sure to have an up-to-date first aid kit on site and personal protective equipment (PPE) for people who do not bring their own, including gloves, goggles and sunscreen.

Have plenty of tools and other incidentals such as rubbish bags.

A working bee journal is useful for recording what you did and things that you noticed need fixing in the future. Record people’s names and addresses so you can contact newcomers again.

Maps are useful for marking (and dating) the areas weeded and planted, and the site of any structures erected or removed. Over time, the maps will show just how much a small persistent group can achieve.

Pipe Clay Lagoon Coastcare have installed a permanent sign, designed by one of their members, as a way of promoting their group and advertising up-coming events. The wooden design has both a permanent image and a display panel that allows for group notices and important alerts to be posted there. The sign is not at the beach but in the community hub, so that the information can reach as many people as possible.
7.4 Keeping records and reviewing working bees

How do you know which planting techniques work best in your area, or which event attracted the most new volunteers, or how best to plan for weeding a new site?

Remember to consult with your land manager and any sponsors or funders about the types of reporting they require. Then use this as a basis to develop a monitoring process that suits your group. That way you can be sure the information you gather is useful to your group and useful for any official reporting at the same time.

Keeping records (monitoring) and reviewing (evaluating) working bees is worth doing to help track your progress and assess the success or otherwise of your activities. Monitoring and evaluating your activities allows you to be adaptable in your approach and modify your activities based on what is working best and what isn’t working. It will help you identify new tasks and alert you to any problems or issues.

Having a sound understanding of the coastal issues in your local area and a record of evidence for changes or impacts is a great foundation for planning larger projects and activities.

Gathering evidence of a problem or of your activities is important when seeking support from land managers for a particular activity or project or when applying for funds.

Most funding programs now require a level of monitoring and evaluation as part of the reporting requirements. Monitoring can be a coastal management technique in itself and is often the most important activity a group can undertake to help them identify and understand the issues in their area. Environmental monitoring techniques are explained in Part C: Chapter 13.

Sharing stories

Once weeding and planting were well underway, members of Seven Mile Beach Coastcare divided the area into zones, each patrolled regularly by a group member to check progress and to see what needs to be done.
Don’t let the terminology associated with monitoring and evaluation put you off. Here are some simple explanations and how they can work for you.

**Monitoring: Collecting the information**
Ask, what are we doing? Why are we doing it? How will we know if we are successful? You should identify what information you are going to collect, the way you are going to collect it, when you are going to collect it and how you are going to record it.

**Evaluation: Interpreting the information**
You should ask, what is this information telling us about our success? Do we need to change the way we are doing things? Are there any new problems?

**Reporting: Sharing the information**
Keep records of your monitoring and evaluation for future use. Use them to report back to sponsors or funding programs. Use the results to gain support from land managers and other coastal user groups for your activities or to provide evidence of a problem or illegal activity.

---

### 8. Planning and managing projects

#### 8.1 What activities are needed?
#### 8.2 Planning your project
#### 8.3 Communication planning
#### 8.4 Managing projects
#### 8.5 Monitoring and evaluating projects
#### 8.6 Reporting & sharing success

After achieving success with regular working bees and activities, some groups choose to embark on bigger projects that deal with a number of issues. Projects require an ongoing commitment and usually involve management of budgets, timelines, reporting and communication. In this chapter you will find lots of information and tips for successful project management.
Major problems will need to be dealt with as part of a management plan developed by the land manager. Your group can play an important role in providing local knowledge and community values to the development of such plans.

Some things to consider

Your project needs to be consistent with any existing management plans for the area and with national and regional strategies for specific issues, such as a particular weed.

It’s important to consider monitoring and maintenance before you start. How are you going to keep records and monitor success?

8.1 What activities are needed?

Planning a project enables you to work strategically and efficiently to address larger problems or a series of smaller problems collectively.

Consider what actions are really necessary to help solve the problem. Low-use sites may only need some weed control followed by monitoring of natural regeneration. On the other hand, severely damaged sites in high-use areas may require extensive work over several years, which may include fencing, signage, dune stabilisation, rationalising access, weeding, revegetation and community education.

Sometimes educating the community is more important than on-ground actions to manage a problem. You may be interested in teaching local people about the shorebirds in their area and how they can protect them.

Don’t forget to involve other stakeholders in your planning like your local council, NRM Officers, PWS and interested locals and groups – you’ll be surprised at the resources they can offer!

National programs, priorities and opportunities are always changing. Your NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office can help you find out which programs are being created or supported.

How much capacity do you have in your group to manage the project? Larger projects require more administration, communication and reporting.

If considering work on or near dunes, first identify whether there is a risk from dune movement. A little time spent (one year may be sufficient) monitoring the rate of dune movement may save a lot of money in the long-term by avoiding costly stabilisation works and loss of structures.
Here are some key things you can include in a project plan:

**Project Title**
Keep it short and snappy.

**Vision for the project**
A couple of sentences about what the project is about.

**Background**
One or two paragraphs about the need for the project or how the project came about.

**Objectives or aims**
A short list of the key aims of the project. These are sentences about what you hope the project will achieve. Once achieved, these become your project outcomes. Dot points work well.

**Outputs**
These are more specific and measurable than aims or outcomes. They describe the results (deliverables) that prove you have met your aims or delivered your outcomes. Again dot points work well.

Thinking big? You may need to ask the land manager to undertake skilled or hazardous work such as providing training or applying herbicide on a large scale. The land manager might engage a contractor on your behalf. You could organise some volunteer labour such as Conservation Volunteers. See Chapter 10: Working with others.

Ongoing maintenance of all your work will be necessary for years afterwards to save your hard work from being wasted. Structures can become dangerous if neglected, weeds can invade the area, people can form new tracks and the coast is always changing.

Find ways to align your plans and activities to current programs and priorities, this makes it easier to garner support from land managers and funding bodies.

8.2 Planning your project

When planning a project it is important to work out what is included in your project and what isn’t. This is called the **scope**. If you are seeking funding from one source, such as a grant, it may be easier to define your scope because some boundaries have been set by the funding organisation. However all projects can become bigger than intended, so it is important to set limits right from the start and stick to them.

Brainstorm with your group and note down the ideas, potential costs, possible supporters or resources and any pros and cons. If you have a current action or activity plan that covers your proposed project activities or area then you have done most of this work already.

Project planning does not need to be formal but the bigger the project the more important it is to produce a clear project plan.

If seeking funding for your project, be sure to include money for administration. Seek advice from the funder about how much you can allocate to managing the project.
Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs are measurable, specific results of the activities such as the amount of trees planted or the number of events.

Outcomes are the overall change as a result of the outputs. The improvement to the landscape or the new method developed.

Timeline
A timeline specifies particular aspects of the project that will be complete by a certain time. These are sometimes known as milestones.

Risk assessment and management
This is not so much about personal safety but risks to the success of the project. What things might make it hard for you to achieve your aims and outputs and how will you manage or reduce these risks.

Monitoring and evaluation
How will you monitor the success of your activities? What will you do with the information? Consider how you will manage your data and information.

Communication plan
Your communication plan should list who you will talk to, what you need to tell them or hear from them and how you will communicate.

Budget
Your budget outlines how much each aspect of the project is going to cost and should provide enough detail to let you make informed decisions. A spreadsheet program will calculate totals for you. If you are using grant monies to fund your project then you will need to acquire your grant so keeping good financial records is essential. More information about managing grant funds in Section 9.6.

Reporting
If you are working with grant monies, you will need to report to the funding body using their templates. You may also need to report to other stakeholders and partners.

8.3 Communication planning
For larger projects with lots of interested parties, it is a good idea to create a communication plan that maps out whom you will share information with, and how and when you will do this.

Your communication plan includes everyone from the general public, land managers, sponsors, support organisations, media and anyone else you think needs to know about your project, and each group may need a different approach and different information.

Create a table or a diagram that outlines your communication plan. Write down all the people/stakeholders; note how you will communicate with them (email, phone, meetings etc); when you expect the communication to happen; and who will be responsible for ensuring it happens.

If you are planning a large project you should consider setting up an advisory or steering committee to guide the project.
8.4 Managing projects

We all love it when our hard work of putting together a funding application pays off and we are successful. It may have been a while since you sent the project proposal off and you might be at a bit of a loss as to where to start.

- Review your project plan and create a timeline to help you coordinate activities.
- Contact all partners and let them know you will be beginning the project. Don’t forget to thank them for their support and gently remind them of their obligations. You may need specialist advice or further approvals.
- Talk to your funding body and/or land manager if you’re not sure of your obligations and legislative requirements.

Seek help early from your supporters if your project is experiencing difficulties. Problems arise, especially with larger projects and it is OK to adapt. Seek advice and inform the funding body as soon as you can if you are working with grant monies.

It may be that your group sees the planning and reporting as an onerous task and like the rest of us, you’d rather be doing the good stuff outside.

A good way of looking at project management and reporting is that it is an opportunity to ensure the smooth running of the project and to collect information that will be invaluable when seeking further funding or support for your activities.

8.5 Monitoring and evaluating projects

Monitoring and evaluating your project is not just about how many plants survive or how many hectares of land you protect from weeds. You should evaluate all aspects of your project if you hope to describe your success or learn from any difficulties.

Your project timeline and milestones are a good place to start for monitoring your project’s progress. Milestones help you know if you are running on track. It is a good idea to list each output and the key steps required to achieve that output and then put a realistic completion date against each step.

Most project timelines require flexibility, however by including a bit of detail you will have the knowledge to make informed decisions about any changes.

How will you manage your project

Before you jump in to your activities:

- Send a letter of thanks to the funding body. You may wish to apply again in the future and it pays to be nice.
- Review your application and visit the site again. You may notice something new or some change that could affect the project. If you need to vary the project it is good to notify the funding body and stakeholders early.

Don’t forget to take photos of people too, during on-ground works, workshops or other activities. You’ll need these for media stories and for the award your group is going to win later!

- Keep records of working bees and volunteer hours as well as on-ground results.
- Establish photopoints for before and after shots. These will be handy for reporting to funding bodies and for promoting your group’s activities, not to mention a valuable resource for the future.
- Keep all of the project material together i.e. the financial records, photos, application, media releases etc. It may be a good idea to have an electronic and hard copy version, stored separately, so as not to lose the information.
- Remember all the project details are an extremely valuable resource for your group that can be used in a multitude of ways. This information will make future applications and project planning easier and be a source of promotional material for your group.
When promoting your activities, be sure to acknowledge or thank all of your supporters, such as funding bodies, land managers and other organisations. Use their logos if appropriate or possible (get permission first). It is good practice to let them know before the publicity goes out so they know what is being said about them and have answers ready if the publicity creates questions for them to answer. Acknowledging your supporters makes it easier for them to demonstrate the value of their support and they will be very grateful for the positive publicity.

More information about monitoring and evaluation in Part C, Chapter 13

One way to evaluate is to create success indicators. Success indicators are clearly defined and measurable achievements, keep them realistic. For example: 75% of revegetated plants surviving first 6 months; 4 new volunteers attending regular working bees over 12 months.

8.6 Reporting and sharing success

It is important to report back to your members, your funders and other supporters about the progress and success of your project. Most funding bodies have their own reporting system and requirements. When you sign the contract for the funds you agree to their reporting terms.

Consider how you will promote the project and communicate with the media and whether you will involve local politicians or figureheads in promotion.

Write stories for local newsletters and newspapers, give radio interviews, take great photos and label them and store them for easy reference. Send any published stories to land managers, partners, supporters and funders.

Many groups report being discouraged by slow results. Remember revegetation and habitat restoration activities usually take many years to take hold. Keep your evaluation realistic to your time frames. Monitoring and evaluating real outcomes will often take much longer that the reporting time frames set by programs and funders.
9. Funding

9.1 How much is it going to cost?

Before you seek funds to support your activities it helps to know how much things are going to cost. Costing out projects can be tricky if you haven’t done that type of thing before. Check for experience within your group or seek advice.

Often groups have a very clear idea of what they want to achieve and what they need to make it happen. So then it is simply a case of finding out the cost of each item and seeking quotes for works where necessary.

Record all of this information in one place, a spreadsheet works best and will even calculate the totals for you.

Think of all the things you need for the tasks including any tools you don’t have and any consumables such as gloves.

The internet is a great way to find the costs of items and many products can actually be purchased online. Local hardware stores, fencing manufacturers and your land manager can help you calculate the costs of materials. Nurseries can provide quotes on plants; the Understorey Network may be able to provide advice.

Once you know what everything is going to cost, you can think about how you might fund it. If you already have some of the items you can leave them on your list and just note that they are being paid for by your group. It is helpful for demonstrating your contribution to the activity, known as your in-kind contribution.

9.2 Where to find grants

There are many grant programs available, with new programs being announced all the time.

Don’t limit yourself to environmental grants. The Our Community website and Easy Grants Newsletter has a wealth of ideas and grant opportunities.

Register for online grant alerts, there are a number available.

Make use of regional facilitators and other volunteer support staff and organisations to inform you of opportunities and assist you in preparing applications.

Your NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office can help you. Landcare Tasmania, the NRM regions, and other regional and sub-regional organisations produce regular newsletters keeping groups informed of new funding opportunities.

9.3 Grant writing tips

Many Coastcare groups have proven success in securing grants, but there is always more to learn. Take advantage of grant writing workshops when they are offered by volunteer support organisations and look out for grant specific workshops that are often delivered by funding bodies when a new round is announced.

Focus on the problem / issue first, then look for funding. Spend some time writing down the activities or projects that you wish to achieve and then think about how much each would cost. Starting with the problem allows you to develop the project before the funding opportunity comes up. If you have existing agreed plans in place it will make this much easier.
## Sharing stories

### Successful enterprise

Friends of Adventure Bay have published a book about their area and the proceeds go towards funding the group’s ongoing activities. The book ‘Following Their Footsteps – Exploring Adventure Bay’ (Cynthia Turnbull, Ed., 2006) was financed by a Tasmanian Community Fund Grant. All sales are committed in their entirety to environmental works (and book reprint when required). The group produces a calendar (in partnership with the Bruny Island Community Association) featuring the results from an annual photographic competition.

Friends of Tasman Island also produce an annual calendar of stunning photos of Tasman Island to raise funds each year.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Cost per item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>In kind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cut and paste boxthorn at saltmarsh</td>
<td>herbicide</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>1X2L</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dabbles</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$72.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plastic gloves (nitrile)</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>safety goggles</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dye</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$16.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>secateurs</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-vegetation of saltmarsh boundary</td>
<td>understorey plants various species</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stakes</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>$240.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tree guards (bags)</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>garden gloves</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>$84.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton planter</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing of saltmarsh</td>
<td>wire</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>200 M</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>posts</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>$272.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fasteners</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>$400.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post driver</td>
<td>$80.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$80.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gripple tool</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer hours</td>
<td>10 volunteers</td>
<td>$30 / hour</td>
<td>10X4 hours</td>
<td>$1,200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

$2,224.00  $1,500.00

---

Example cost breakdown of a Coastcare activity. Prices are provided to demonstrate how to plan a budget only and are not intended to provide a guide to actual costings.
Create a sponsorship package that you can send to potential sponsors with photos and information about your group, your activities and your success. Include any benefits to the sponsor for supporting you and be sure to tell them what you will achieve with their support.

Be clear on the basics: what is the problem, what do you want to achieve, what will you actually do to achieve that, how (what methods), who will be involved, what will it cost, and what’s your timeline? Be clear about these before you even look at the application form. Failure to specify the method you will use is a common cause of grant failure.

Then try to identify potential sources of funding. These might be different grants, sponsorship, fundraising or other partnerships. It all depends on how much money you need, what you need it for and what your time frame is.

Once you have chosen your grant start early. Developing grant applications can take a long time! Contact authorities, land managers and partners at the beginning to give them enough time to provide support.

Double check your project idea is eligible! In each grant round, funders receive many applications for activities that just aren’t eligible according to the guidelines. Make sure your project idea is eligible. Read the guidelines and criteria carefully and if in doubt call the funding body to confirm.

Look for the grant judging criteria. If you miss any of these, your project will automatically get points deducted and is less likely to be funded.

Look at past recipients and what types of activities were funded.

Make your grant proposal appealing to the funder. Think about it from their perspective, it is their money after all. What do they want to achieve with their money? Explain how your project delivers their aims.

Seek support contributions from other organisations or businesses. Explain clearly the public benefits. These demonstrate value for money!

Explain why your project is important – what are the consequences of not funding your project?

Give details about how you are going to promote the project’s outcomes.

Triple check your budget! Does it add up? Are all the items clearly explained? If there are any extraordinary requests, explain and justify them.

Apply the ‘Stranger Test’ – ask someone who doesn’t know about your project to read it, then quiz them on the what, how and why of your project to see how well they’ve understood. – Would they fund your project?

Make it easy to read and use the words from the funding guidelines and other agreed plans to explain your activities. Assessors will find it easier to assess your application if it is written to closely reflect their criteria. Presentation is important, type if possible and make sure it photocopies well.

Remember, not all applications are successful, even when well written and on target. Sometimes funds are simply not sufficient for the number of applications received. Don’t give up, be persistent but ensure you submit high quality, well presented applications.

9.4 Sponsorship

You do not have to rely solely on grants to fund your activities. Your local nursery might be happy to donate some plants. Your land manager might be able to purchase some personal protective equipment or other items to assist. Some groups have been able to secure more comprehensive sponsorship from organisations or businesses seeking to align themselves with ‘a good cause’.

When seeking sponsorship it is important to be able to explain clearly what it is you are doing and why. You need to be able to market your goals or activities to potential funders. Get them excited about supporting you. What makes what you do so great?

Remember it is their money. How do your activities align with their business or ethics? What will you achieve with their money, what would happen if there was no funding? Tell your potential sponsor how you can promote their involvement and support. What’s in it for them? Provide a choice of sponsorship options if possible. Think about ways to get media attention or provide recognition. This could be as simple as their logo on your brochure or you could invite their staff to volunteer at a working bee and invite the media.

The opportunities are endless. Good luck!
9.5 Enterprise

Some groups have come up with ways to raise their own funds using the talents of members within their group, such as photographers or writers.

Other groups are paid by their local council for services such as to collect beach rubbish on a regular basis.

Growing your own plants can save money and even raise money.

You might consider taking advantage of a sausage sizzle service provided at many hardware stores, supermarkets and other large shopping complexes. For a fee you can make use of their facilities, raise funds and distribute flyers about your group’s activities.

9.6 Managing project funds

When you secure grant monies, you sign an agreement which is also a legal obligation to manage the funds appropriately and account for the expenditure.

Funds must be managed in a transparent way, ensuring that transactions are authorised, information is verified, and errors are picked up. This will limit the risk of mistakes and provide peace of mind that opportunities for theft or fraud are minimal.

The principles for managing grant monies are based on those for small business so you may have someone in your group with some skills or experience to offer.

Much of the following information could be used to guide the management of your group’s financial operations, even if you do not receive money from grants.

Electronic accounting systems

Most Coastcare groups will not be registered for GST and will not require complicated accounting or specialised computer software to manage their accounts. A spreadsheet program will provide all you need to record transactions and calculate amounts.

It is good practice to password protect your electronic accounting files and to have someone double check entries against the invoices, receipts and statements from the bank. Set-up a process where changes can be tracked.

Tips for managing your project money:

» A spread sheet is an easy way to keep track of your budget and spending. Use the headings from your application budget to monitor spending and to calculate monies left.

» When you spend money on the budgeted item, use the minus sign in the appropriate column and click enter. The spreadsheet will do all the sums for you and balance the column.

» If you don’t have a spread sheet program create one by hand using the budget headings from the application. You can exercise your brain by doing the deductions from spending yourself!

» Keep all receipts for auditing. The spreadsheet will assist the auditor too.

» Contact the funding body if you need a variation to the budget. They need to approve the variation.

» If you can’t spend all the money in time, contact the funding body for an extension. You will need to state sound reasons for your request. Keeping records of your project will make this easier.

Regular back-ups will protect against loss of information. Keep your computers and any external hard drives safe from loss or theft.

If your financial systems are becoming complicated you might consider seeking some training and purchasing specialised financial software like those used by small businesses. There are a number of products available.
Invoices and statements are attached to cheques when cheques are presented for signing
» Cheque numbers and dates of payment are written on invoices and statements. This helps prevent the same invoice from being paid more than once
» Cheques are recorded in a cash book or spreadsheet in numerical order
» Full details including dates of cheques, payees, invoice numbers or dates of supplier’s statements, amounts and reasons for payment are recorded both in the cash book or spreadsheet and on cheque stubs
» Cancelled cheques remain in the cheque book.

Receipts & invoices
Most groups already issue receipts to members for membership payments. Sometimes groups are required to issue invoices to receive payments. If issuing an invoice, ask first about what details they need on the invoice.

Where invoice and receipt books are used, the following procedures are recommended:
» Invoice and receipt books are stored in a safe place and accessed only by authorised personnel
» A ledger is maintained to record in numerical sequence, details of all invoices issued
» Where cash is received for payment, a receipt is issued
» Details of receipts are recorded in the Cash Book or on a spreadsheet
» Cash receipts are regularly banked and recorded on bank deposit slips.

Reconciliations
Bank statements should be checked against (reconciled to) cash book balances or your spreadsheet every month and approved by the committee, usually at a monthly meeting.
Financial records
Books of account should be maintained and financial statements prepared for review by management, committees and boards.
Financial statements should be audited annually.

Budget reporting
Many groups create an Annual Budget to guide their activities and help them identify where funding may be required to meet running costs or projects. This can be presented at the Annual General Meeting. If managing a significant amount of funds or a large project consider regular budget reports to the committee.

Regular budget reporting helps you make decisions about how to spend the money if plans change along the way. Regular budget reports help you manage cash flow; analyze differences in ‘actual’ and ‘budgeted’ income and expenditure; detect anomalies, mistakes and fraud.

Money management checklist

☐ Electronic accounting systems have security features (password protection, entry tracking and mechanisms for detecting errors).
☐ Electronic files are backed-up regularly and kept in a secure place.
☐ Duties are separated to limit opportunity for error and fraud.
☐ Registers for unused and cancelled cheques, double signatures and records of payment are maintained.
☐ Sales invoice and receipt books are used to record all transactions. Details of these transactions are entered into the cash book and general ledger.
☐ Bank statements are checked against cash book balances monthly and approved by a nominated official.

Definitions

Books of account: Journals, ledgers, and other classified records comprising an organisation’s set of accounts.

‘I get a chance to work on numerous projects with volunteers and their commitment and passion for getting jobs done continues to astound me. We are very fortunate to be able to work alongside these many talented people who inspire and encourage me in my role within Council.’

BRIDGET JUPE, KINGBOROUGH COUNCIL BUSHCARE OFFICER
10. Working with others

10.1 Who are the people in your neighbourhood?

Working with others is an important and necessary part of Coastcare. In fact, if you are working on land you do not own, then you are obliged to have the permission of the land manager or land owner. There are many advantages to collaboration when working on the coast. This chapter explains the benefits of working with others and some ideas of how best to do it.

It is especially important to work with your local community and encourage them to appreciate their local coastal patch and your efforts to protect it. It is important to understand the varied needs of other coastal users and include them when developing your aspirations and plans.

Your local Aboriginal community will be a valuable source of advice and a potential partner. Reach out to local and regional Aboriginal organisations.

Other stakeholders that might be interested in getting involved include: NRM regional organisations; the Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania; Landcare Tasmania; the Understorey Network; Greening Australia; Australian Coastal Society; Ocean Planet; Sustainable Living Tasmania; Tasmanian Conservation Trust; BirdLife Tasmania; agriculture and aquaculture.

Cash book: Journal in which all cash receipts and payments (including bank deposits and withdrawals) are recorded first (in date order), for posting into general ledger. The cash book is regularly checked against bank statements to make sure they match.

General ledger: Central repository of the accounting information of an organisation, includes summaries of all financial transactions during an accounting period. Sometimes called the book of final entry, it provides the entire data for preparing financial statements for the organisation.

Reconciliation: Item by item examination of two related sets of figures obtained from different sources.
Working well with others

Regardless of who you are working with it is important to:

» Identify all people, groups, organisations, agencies and other individuals who have an interest in the coastline you are working on. These are your stakeholders.

» Get to know each stakeholder, some will be more involved and aware than others. You may need their permission, support or advice or you may need to understand their needs or concerns.

» Decide how you will keep everyone informed. Create a simple communication plan. Include ways to reach different stakeholders, make sure it is achievable.

» Maintain the relationships. Foster involvement and support through regular contact.

Create a ‘map’ or diagram of your stakeholders to help you understand who they are and how they relate to each other. Remember to review regularly.

If your local council has supported your group in any way let them know you really appreciate it and would like to build on it.

10.2 Working well with your land manager

Most Coastcare groups work on public land. It is your legal responsibility to work with the permission of your land manager, which may be your local council, the Parks and Wildlife Service, Crown Land Services or other government agencies. Working with your local land manager can be one of the most rewarding or one of the most frustrating aspects of running a Coastcare group.

Get off to a good start by meeting any approvals. Most land managers are pleased to have active community involvement in looking after public land. It is up to the group to introduce themselves and show that they are a reliable source of practical help. Some groups have found it necessary to persevere until they are on good terms with their land manager and gain their respect.

Understand your local council’s responsibilities and limitations

Understanding the constraints on your local council will make it easier for you to work with them.

Duty of care to people
Local councils, and all public land managers, need to balance public safety with environmental issues.

Skills and knowledge base
Sometimes your local council may not be aware of a current or potential environmental issue. While some councils have well trained and aware natural resource management staff, in other cases staff may need training in some aspects of coastal management. Does your local council have an NRM officer that you can chat to? If not you will need to find out who has responsibility for natural resource management. Be patient, it takes time and money to develop or change existing work practices.
Be realistic

Your group may not achieve all the outcomes you desire:

» Be prepared to compromise. You may be able to achieve more than you think.
» Keep positive. Don’t think of it as a battle or a war.
» Remind your land manager that you wish to work with them.
» Be respectful to staff (especially on-ground staff).

Budgets and time frames

Local councils have an annual program that sets budgets and timeframes for activities including coastal protection and management actions. They must prioritise a range of potential NRM management actions based on need/risks, broader organisational priorities and time available or needed to undertake the activity. They may have limitations to financial support or timing of works. Being flexible with your aspirations and finding ways to value add to their priorities can be a great way to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

Planning schemes

Historically, Tasmania has had a different planning scheme in each council, however reform of planning schemes to improve standards and consistency on a statewide basis is occurring under the direction of the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Planning schemes play a role in coastal land-use activities and infrastructure. You may need to spend some time becoming familiar with your local planning scheme. Ask your town planner for help.

What if it is not going well?

If your group is having trouble working with your land manager, do not give up hope.

There may be a history or bad past experience that influences your relationship. This can lead to frustration, negative emotions such as anger and a general feeling of an ‘us and them’ situation.

Use your energy in a positive way to develop a relationship built on mutual respect. For example, ask council staff to meet you and explain what their policy and responsibilities are for the particular issue...
- and really listen. This gives you the chance to put forward your point of view with an understanding of their objectives and constraints. This may be an opportunity for your group to offer some help or lay the foundations for everyone to collaborate to develop an action plan.

**Offer solutions.** If you are going to be critical of an issue, be constructive. What would you like to see as a solution? You may need to do some research or ask for help from an expert. Include contact details of any organisation or expert in the relevant field in your submission.

**Offer to help.** This could be in the form of working bees, funding applications, networking or developing management and activity plans.

**Communicate your concerns** to your local council in an informed, calm and positive manner. You may include how other members of your community feel about an issue.

If there are problems being caused inadvertently by another group, for instance an orienteering group or sports club running on eroding dunes, a personal approach is best. Let them know that you’re trying to look after the area and you’ll probably find them willing to change their behaviour.

**Working well together**

Land managers can be a great source of guidance and advice and can help groups undertake risk assessments and attain high standards of health and safety. This could include providing training and safety

**Groups should always seek their own insurance.** Coastal land tenure can be confusing and volunteers may find themselves working on another authority’s land unknowingly.

**Sharing stories**

*Seven Mile Beach Coastcare* have found that giving away native plants to residents helps to promote good relations with the community and gets more native plants in gardens and nature strips.
Coastcare groups tend to draw attention to problems. This can give a negative image and create hostility, so counteract this by doing something positive in the community. Offer to run activities with local schools, community gardens, surf clubs, guides and scout groups. Lend support to national events such as Clean Up Australia Day.

Sharing stories

Growing great communities

Friends of Adventure Bay take a ‘big picture’ approach to the management of the foreshore. Their planning includes the environmental, social and development aspirations of the community. In addition to environmental remedial works, the group has been instrumental in improving public amenities and recreational facilities along the coast too. This approach has enabled the group to engage many diverse people from their small community. The demonstrated success of these projects has ensured that there is a sense of community ownership of existing works and ongoing support for future activities.

‘The biggest challenge faced by the group has been to utilise the diverse skills and interests of their community and to focus them in a way that realises long-term achievements and maintenance of an exceptionally beautiful area that is of outstanding environmental, historical and cultural significance.’

CYNTHIA TURNBALL, FRIENDS OF ADVENTURE BAY

equipment or supervision where required. Some land managers provide insurance cover for groups working on their land.

Some local councils offer simple small grants for community groups in their municipality to assist with their projects and activities.

Develop good relationships with land management staff and identify the people who actually control what works are done on the land. Invite them to events and working bees. Staff are often willing to provide advice and to organise plants and tools for working bees.
Some land managers encourage their staff to provide hands-on support at working bees, such as using a chainsaw to remove fallen trees.

Keep your land manager updated on your activities and progress by sending working bee reports and newsletters to relevant staff.

Cultivate friendly relationships with your councillors. Invite them to events and create media exposure for your group and elected councillors. Invite them to meetings and send them a copy of any letters you write to council. This helps councillors to become aware of your activities and more knowledgeable about local Coastcare issues. You are then more likely to gain their support when needed. This is especially important if the issue is contentious or you are having difficulty getting approval for some activity.

Find out what management plans and development proposals are underway in your area and get involved in the planning and development processes.

Tell them about it

If your group has received funding (from any source) or benefited your local community in some way, let your land manager know. This kind of information is extremely important to include in submissions too, be it for funding, or public comment on issues.

Point out:

» Money you have saved them from spending
» Time you have saved them
» Volunteer hours you have spent to better your area
» Money/infrastructure that your projects have provided to your community
» How your group has worked with your local community and other stakeholders (including your land manager).

Private landowners

If you are working on private land you must have the permission of the landowner. It is important that they have public liability insurance that will cover your activities and that you communicate regularly to keep them informed of the type of work you are doing and any changes to your plans or activities.

10.3 Involving your community

The most successful coastal management outcomes are achieved when an area has a plan that is developed in consultation with the broader community. Projects will be more successful if the group is un-biased and open to suggestions rather than having a particular agenda.

Who uses the area?

It’s important to identify the different values of a wide range of users, not just the local residents or regular visitors. Your stretch of coastline may be used at different times for horse-riding, dog exercising, fishing, surfing, swimming, boating, orienteering, sports training, camping, walking, education and ecotourism. All these uses have potential impacts, for example erosion caused by pedestrian, animal and vehicular traffic across fragile dunes or saltmarshes.

While most people value the coast highly, their differing uses and expectations may cause conflicts. For instance, people exercising dogs and horses on beaches may inadvertently disturb birds trying to feed or nest on the sand.

Get to know your local community.

Residents living next to coastal reserves sometimes regard them as an extension of their property. People with a sea view might not welcome a Coastcare group coming along to restore the native vegetation in front of their house. Negotiate first – you might need to plant some low-growing shrubs rather than trees.

Pipe Clay Lagoon Coastcare created an ‘ideas book’ and held a walk and talk session with local residents to come up with ideas for the management of the foreshore at Cremorne. Participants could write their thoughts in the ideas book and share ideas as they walked along the foreshore together.

Sharing stories
Recognising people’s different values is essential to minimise conflicts and gain community support for a project.

Coastcaring is much easier and more pleasant if the local people are on your side. People living next to a coastal reserve are a great asset if you encourage them to get involved in hands-on activities and help with ongoing maintenance and in reporting and deterring vandalism and arson.

At the very least, residents and beach users should feel that their needs have been carefully considered. It’s important that they understand the reasons for a coastal management project or action.

**How to spread the word**

It is important to keep the community informed about what you are doing and to consult them about proposals for major changes. Produce and circulate progress reports to keep everyone up-to-date with your activities and proposals.

---

**10.4 Partnerships**

Partnerships are an opportunity to better deliver things that we can’t do well on our own. Good partnerships are good for the coast. Both partners must have something to offer each other.

Coastcare groups can bring a wealth of local knowledge, as well as diverse and valuable expertise, to a partnership.

Remember, if you are seeking a partnership you will need to invite your partner (this usually works best in person), so get to know your potential partners first.

**Sharing stories**

**One local group learnt a valuable lesson about working with land managers.**

After securing funding to upgrade a coastal walkway and access point, the Coastcare group accepted help from the land manager to get quotes for the works from contractors. The group wanted to seek their own quotes and they had a preferred provider whose work they trusted. However, they recognised that the land management authority has the ongoing responsibility for any infrastructure and thought it was nice to get the help.

The land manager selected the provider who provided the cheapest quote and encouraged the group to use the money saved to enhance the revegetation work.

The finished job was passed by the authority, but was not of the standard expected by the group. In addition, the land manager had inadvertently delayed the quoting process and the group had to rush to get the project finished on time.

The group learnt that if you have to report on a project you should stay involved in the decision making for that project and supervise any contractors involved. This group points out that you shouldn’t be afraid to question advice provided by authorities and renegotiate terms if you are not satisfied with their proposals.

---

As a courtesy, letterbox the residents adjacent to the site before each working bee and include a contact phone number so they can have their say or join in the activity.
Before you seek out partnerships, understand your own goals, needs, strengths and limitations. This makes it easier to explain to potential partners what you have to offer and what makes you a good partner. Don’t lose your voice – developing clear objectives, writing them down and telling your potential partners will help you to maintain your independence.

It is important to know what you hope to gain from a partner so that you can decide if a potential partner is suitable.

A partnership can provide stability for your activities, such as ongoing access to resources or support that you might usually need to seek from project to project. Partnerships can provide increased recognition for your work or plans and can improve your chances of securing funding. Partnerships can increase both partners understanding of local issues and in turn increase the effectiveness of any coastal management activities.

Sharing stories

One local group learnt valuable lessons about working with contractors.

After receiving funding for weed control the Coastcare group decided, in conjunction with their local council, to use a contractor they had heard performed well. The contractor came on-site to assess the work but was too busy to do the job immediately and agreed to call prior to commencing works.

The contractor undertook the work during two visits and called on the day of the works. The group was quite surprised on both occasions that these days had been chosen as the weather conditions included strong winds and light showers.

The group received an invoice from the contractor and paid the invoice in order to acquit their grant.

Because of the nature of the chemicals used, the results of the spraying were not evident for about 6 weeks. The group was disappointed with the results. Not as much of the infestation was sprayed as originally discussed at the on-site visit, and due to the windy conditions there was significant off-target damage to surrounding native vegetation. Left intact these native plants would have provided competition to any new seedlings of the weed that emerged in the future.

» The group learnt the value of providing a clear scope and conditions of work, in writing, when working with contractors. Such as:
  » Ask the contractor to provide 2 working days notice so that someone can arrange to be there to supervise
  » Ask the contractor not to spray in adverse weather conditions and to come back when spraying conditions are more favourable
  » Obtain a written quote of proposed works and results
  » Ask for some kind of assurance that if the works done are not acceptable, that the contractor will invest more resources to do some follow-up work.

What’s in it for you?

Benefits of partnerships for Coastcare groups:

» Shared knowledge.
» Access to additional resources.
» Permission and approvals.
» Advice and assistance.
» Access to more funding opportunities.
» More recognition.
» More support
Primrose Sands Coastcare was daunted by a large weeding and revegetation project when they only had 6 active members. After paying for some weed spraying work there were 2000 plants to put in the ground. The group used three key strategies to boost volunteer numbers:

1. **Invite a neighbor.** This instantly doubled their numbers and whilst this didn’t work as a long term strategy for boosting members, it was successful in recruiting volunteers for a one-off working bee.

2. **Sharing volunteers with a fellow Coastcare group.** Primrose Sand volunteers spent time at a Southern Beaches Landcare/Coastcare Inc patch in Dodges Ferry in return for volunteers from the neighbouring group spending time in their patch.

3. **Conservation Volunteers Australia provided teams of skilled volunteers for the more difficult areas of the site.**

All in all they had 16 people at each of the four working bees and were able to plant all 2000 seedlings, and bag and stake them as well! The newcomers also had a chance to learn about the serrated tussock weed and the good work of the local group.

**Boosting volunteer numbers**

**Community forums**
Invite everyone to come and share their views or learn about the coast together. Invite a guest speaker to stimulate discussion about particular issues or a facilitator to ensure a range of views are shared.

**Meetings**
It is important to meet face-to-face with other community organisations in your area. Surf life saving clubs, surf schools, rowing clubs etc all have their own understanding of and aspirations for the coastal environment and it is important to get to know what these are.

**Walk and talk**
Invite the community to discuss coastal issues and ideas as you walk along looking at the local values, features or problems. Make sure someone is recording all of the valuable insights.

**Surveys**
Online surveys are simple and free to create. Paper surveys can be dropped in letterboxes. Keep surveys short and simple with a clear explanation of why you are seeking the information and what it will be used for.

**Newsletters**
Place notices in local newsletters, school newsletters and council notices. Let your local community know what you are up to and what your plans are. You might even attract some new volunteers so be sure to include how people can get in touch with you.
Part B: Taking action

10.5 Working with contractors

Sometimes it is better to hire a contractor to do some skilled or hazardous work, such as large jobs or work requiring special qualifications (using chainsaws or herbicide sprays). A qualified and experienced contractor can achieve a great deal in a short time – a great boost to the group’s morale.

In most cases, for on-ground works, the land manager or owner will take responsibility for hiring contractors. They will enter into a contract with the contractor that sets out the terms of agreement and any insurance required.

If a group finds itself needing to engage a consultant or contractor for other tasks, such as the production of a brochure, then it is best to draw up an agreement or contract with the provider to ensure the work will be produced to the standard required and on time.

When engaging contractors or consultants it is very important to:

- provide a clear scope and instructions for the work required
- check their qualifications, insurances and references
- supervise their work.

Groups can request involvement in the selection and supervision of contractors by land managers, for on-ground works too, to ensure they are satisfied the above criteria are being met.

Writing contracts

If you need to write a contract, the Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) is a great source of advice about legal matters. Financial members of the EDO can often access this advice for free.

A contract is usually made up of a list of legal clauses that explain the details, scope and limits of the relationship between the two parties and what should happen if things do not go to plan. The contract includes a series of schedules, which is where the...
Telstra volunteers lend a hand

Bellerive Bluff Coastcare group hosted Telstra volunteers at their patch for a corporate working bee. The local Coastcare group sought some support from SCAT who provided some additional tools and resources and assisted with ensuring all safety requirements were met. The local group were boosted by some much need extra labour and the Telstra volunteers were treated to a homemade morning tea from one of group’s members to top off a successful working bee.

Sharing stories

Working with young people

Tranmere-Clarence Plains Land & Coastcare Inc (TACPLACI) has a strong history of working with other organisations, groups and sectors of their local community. These have included the local schools, Lions Club, Clarence Plains Historical Society Inc, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Green Corps and a church youth group from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

The church youth group enjoys getting involved in community projects and has also worked with Pipe Clay Lagoon Coastcare. Both of these Coastcare groups thoroughly enjoyed the help of the youth volunteers who assisted with revegetation work at Pipe Clay Lagoon and Rokeby saltmarsh. The youth group provided a BBQ lunch to share with the Coastcare volunteers and brought fresh enthusiasm and fun to the activities.
There are a number of other volunteer programs to help you get more volunteers working on your activities.

Some programs provide resources and administration with their volunteers, in other cases your group will need to provide for all volunteer needs, including safety.

Be sure to provide clear information about the type of work to be done and how to do it so volunteers know what to expect. A clear safety briefing is extra important if you have new people on your work site.

It helps if you can provide some information prior to the event including a list of what to wear and bring. A BBQ or shared lunch can make the day really fun.

Be sure to follow up with volunteers after the day to thank them. It helps if you can do this in writing and provide some details about the outcomes of the day and the greater goals they are helping to achieve.

**Conservation Volunteers Australia**

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) provides teams of volunteers for environmental projects and activities for a fee that includes a group leader, transport and other resources.

CVA can be a good source of additional labour for weeding, revegetation or construction projects. They provide their own equipment and sometimes materials. Ideally, one or two members of a Coastcare group work alongside them at least some of the time to provide some guidance and encouragement.

### 10.6 Sources of volunteers

Other community groups can be a good source of practical and financial help. Approach your local school, service clubs, scouts, guides, retired peoples’ groups and social clubs for help at working bees or events including fundraisers.

**Sharing stories**

*Medical students from UTAS planted trees with the Seven Mile Beach Coastcare Group as part of a wider campaign called Code Green Week, which aims to raise awareness among health professionals about the health threats from climate change. One hundred white gums were planted by the students from the Doctors for Environment group with support and coordination from the Coastcare group and Conservation Volunteers Australia.*
Green Corps

Green Corps is a work experience activity for job seekers enabling them to take part in environmental activities whilst enhancing their skills. Green Corp activities are undertaken with the support of a host organisation such as Conservation Volunteers Australia.

Corporate Volunteers

Many organisations have programs that encourage their employees to spend time volunteering. Some of these programs can provide a team of volunteers

Tips for hosting extra volunteers

» Be organised. Assign someone to coordinate the day. Let the volunteers know before they come what to expect and what to bring.

» Welcome volunteers onto your site and into your group. Explain what you are doing and why and the overall structure of the day. (Don’t forget to tell them where the toilets are and provide some refreshments).

» Give good instructions and direction. Have at least one member from your group to oversee each task.

» Make sure you have covered off on all of your safety requirements. Seek advice or support. Ensure you induct them to your site and give a clear safety briefing.

» Design your activities to cater for a range of physical abilities, skills and interests. Make sure you have enough tools, equipment and safety gear to share around.

» Provide positive feedback to your volunteers. Let them know about the difference they have made to your project or activities.

Sharing stories

Eaglehawk Neck Coastcare hosted a coastal information evening at their local hall to showcase what is special about their area to other local residents. More than 30 people attended the ‘Treasures of Pirates Bay’. Members of the Coastcare group talked about their ongoing weed management activities, their involvement with the local school and skills centre, and their project to protect the local wildlife. Dr David Leaman a noted geologist, author and bushwalker gave a fascinating presentation about the geological history of Eaglehawk Bay and the associated formations, mostly a result of fault lines!
for a one-off event complete with funding for transport, lunch and resources. Landcare Australia Limited provides a service linking corporations with volunteering opportunities in community groups.

It is important to remember that your group will need to provide information and supervision to the volunteers regarding your activities and site, including safety issues unique to your site. There will also most likely be reporting requirements to the corporation or to Landcare Australia Limited.

Even if your volunteer program provides a team leader and a safety briefing, it is up to your group to highlight any hazards unique to your site.

**Social, recreation and church groups**

Schools, recreational clubs such as Scouts and Surf Lifesaving Clubs, and church groups are all groups that can be invited to participate in working bees and activities.

**Wildcare Inc**

Wildcare is an umbrella organisation supporting care groups predominately working with the Parks and Wildlife Service. Wildcare has around 3000 individual members undertaking environmental work on Parks and Wildlife Service managed land and private land. Wildcare provides administrative support for care groups that form under their umbrella. They manage a register of volunteers who are keen to participate in working bees and events on a call up basis.

**Extra Hands program (Landcare Tasmania)**

Extra Hands is a volunteer placement program that links people to places and events to advance sustainable land and water management in Tasmania. Extra Hands links people who want a casual volunteer experience to places that need volunteers—it’s that simple. Extra Hands provides volunteers with insurance coverage, on the job training, newsletters and practical skills but most of all, a no obligation casual volunteer experience.

Extra Hands offers a range of activities and projects for volunteering. This range stems from the variety of hosts that work with Extra Hands.

**Sharing stories**

*The Taroona Environment Network is working alongside Taroona High School students to conduct interviews of local residents about the values and features along the foreshore. Many of these residents are experts on the local features including; Aboriginal heritage, European history, geology, birds, plants, shells, marine algae, the work of the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) at Crayfish Point, and the Derwent Estuary Program. These interviews will form part of a podcast about a trail of features along the Taroona foreshore.*
Sharing stories

Engaging with schools

Cradle Coast NRM has a long history of working with schools on coastal programs. One of their initiatives is a School Grants Program to support students to take part in NRM activities.

Southern Beaches Landcare/Coastcare offers a book as an Environment prize at their local schools. Teachers choose the winner and the prize is awarded at the school’s end-of-year award day. This has become a tradition and now the two local schools approach the Coastcare group each year about the prize.

As part of a larger project across the southern region, SCAT enjoyed running hands-on, educational activities with school groups.

Large educational events such as the Fairer World Festival, Kids 4 Kids Conference and Seafest make it easy to reach many students as they bring students together from a number of schools. Primary students enjoy learning about the complexities of coastal management through the hands-on creation of a miniature beach scene where they explore the introduction of threats and then management strategies.

Glamorgan-Spring Bay Council and NRM South have worked together with local schools to run an art competition about shorebirds and shorebird threats in their local area. The winning entries are printed off as postcards and promoted as part of Coastcare Week.

The Understorey Network teaches school groups how to propagate native plants. The seedlings are then used by other volunteers in revegetation projects. This is a great hands-on activity for students to learn about the importance of native vegetation. School groups have also become involved in the revegetation work too.

Students enjoy learning about the special plants and animals on the coast and how they can do things to reduce their own impacts.
11. Education, awareness raising and events

11.1 Raising awareness

Most Coastcare groups are interested in protecting or improving their local coastal patch and are very keen to see the rest of their coastal community value the patch as much as they do.

One of the simplest ways to spread the word about your group and your activities is by speaking directly to people. This may include simply chatting to passers-by during working bees or talking to schools, service clubs and youth organisations such as Scouts and Guides.

Many of the communication ideas in previous chapters are a good place to start for ideas about raising awareness. Refer to communication sections in Chapters 4, 8 & 10.

Volunteer Connect (Volunteering Tasmania)

Volunteer Connect is a free resource provided by Volunteering Tasmania, for any community group or organisation involving volunteers to advertise volunteer roles. Individuals look up volunteer opportunities on the comprehensive database.

Volunteering Tasmania is the state’s peak body for volunteering, providing information, resources and support to both volunteers and organisations working with volunteers.

University and TAFE

TAFE/Polytechnic and university students may be able to do an inventory of native plants and weeds in a reserve as one of their assignments. They might be interested in some ongoing monitoring of key sites. As part of their assessment for a Masters of Environmental Studies degree, students at the University of Tasmania School of Geography and Environmental Studies can get involved in planning with Coastcare groups.

Coastcare groups can play a very important role of informing the public about coastal issues and coastal management. Publicising and promoting your plans and activities also helps you gain community support for your efforts. In this chapter you will find ideas from other Coastcare groups and some tips from communication experts.
Many Coastcare groups have established and enjoyed long-lasting relationships with their local school. Students have been involved in beach clean ups, removing weeds or marine pests, water quality monitoring, painting murals, creating posters and art to spread coastal messages and propagating plants for revegetation. Some local groups take advantage of events such as Clean Up Australia Day to link up with their local school.

Schools and recreation clubs may welcome your help with excursions to explain about coastal plants, weeds or wildlife or to hear about your Coastcare projects. You might be rewarded with offers of help with weeding or planting. It is a great way to encourage the local youth to care about your activities.

Over the years NRM regional bodies and other organisations have hosted art competitions where the students submit entries based on important coastal themes.

Keys to successful awareness raising:

» **Plan**: What are the main ideas? Establish a logical flow of information.

» **Use a theme**: A theme narrows down your topic into a main point or piece of information that you want to get across.

» **Know your audience**: Tailor your information to your audience. Use analogies that they will relate to.

» **Organise your information**: Group information together and keep key points to a minimum. Too many messages or stories can be confusing.

11.2 Coastcare in schools

Working with schools can be fun and rewarding. It may require some extra skills and preparation and will not be for everyone. It is important to tailor activities to suit the age group and keep to a theme so you don’t overload students with information. Some organisations such as the Understorey Network, Landcare Tasmania and NRM regional bodies coordinate their own school activities or programs and can be an easy way for your group to work with schools.
11.3 Brochures, pamphlets and flyers

Some Coastcare groups produce their own brochures to highlight their work or promote their group. Others have worked closely with land managers or other experts to produce brochures about important coastal issues.

Brochures are great for distributing at events, to introduce new people to your group or inform them about Coastcare and coastal issues. Most local councils and community centres have a place for brochure displays.

Don’t forget there are many brochures and information sheets about coastal issues available from your NRM regional body, local council and the Parks and Wildlife Service. Ask for some copies if you are running an awareness raising activity.
The shorebird interpretation sign at Meredith River is a digital print on vinyl, encapsulated in a 3 mm industrial-grade polycarbonate seal that is resistant to abrasion and weather. The complete seal ensures there is no gap between the sign and its cover to cause condensation. The sign frame is bolted onto sturdy galvanised steel posts and positioned waist-high at a 45° angle so it does not obstruct the view.

Involving school students in Coastcare:

» Give kids equipment to use. Kids learn best with hands-on activities.

» Bring some life to your activity literally. If you cannot be in the field amongst living things then take some samples along.

» Target your activity to your group. Lower primary students will enjoy a range of activities but generally will not want to spend too long on any one task. Working bees tend to be more suitable to upper primary students.

» Don’t reinvent the wheel. There are lots of well-developed, tried and tested activities and resources out there.
Simple flyers can keep your community up-to-date with your activities and remind them of upcoming events.

Flyers can be distributed at local schools, libraries, fish and chip shops, surf shops and boating clubs as well as by letter box dropping.

Pamphlets and brochures should make maximum use of pictures and a few well chosen words to get the message across.

11.4 Websites and social media

Take advantage of websites and services provided by other organisations to promote your group and regular activities. Landcare Tasmania and SCAT provide places for groups to have an online presence where they can share their plans and activities or promote themselves and their working bees.

Sharing stories

Weaving art into environmental messages

Gwen Egg is a founding member of Southern Beaches Landcare/Coastcare Inc. and a fibre artist. Gwen is able to share her coastcare concerns and raise awareness of coastal plants and weeds through school and community workshops and she brings her knowledge of weaving with natural materials to her Coastcare activities.

At a Coastcare workshop organised by SCAT, Coastcare volunteers and their families were invited to camp at Lime Bay in south-east Tasmania and enjoy a series of fun and informative outdoor workshops over a couple of days. Gwen held a weaving workshop and taught both children and adults how to weave and create beautiful baskets with natural materials. Participants explored the qualities of different plants as they worked with the natural materials. Everyone involved was left with a renewed appreciation of the strappy and grassy vegetation that Coastcarers often plant along the coast.
NRM regional bodies can help groups advertise their events and activities. Landcare Australia Limited and other national initiatives promote events and activities all over Australia. Landcare Tasmania can help you identify these opportunities. Refer to Part E: More information for a list of websites and initiatives.

Some groups maintain their own websites and Facebook pages. Websites can now be created free of charge using simple programs that require only basic computer skills. Facebook and other social media can be an effective way for group members to keep in touch and a tool for attracting new members.

11.5 Signs

Signs are valuable tools for communicating messages to visitors. A well-designed sign can persuade visitors to change behaviour that is inadvertently causing damage to the coastal environment. A temporary sign may be necessary to ask people to keep off sites while work is in progress or vegetation is being rehabilitated.

When the cost of signs is spread over their expected life, signs are relatively cheap compared with other forms of communication such as brochures and guided walks. However, they do need replacing after some years.

Sharing stories

Medeas Cove sign

Signs can also be a work of art. This beautiful sign at Medeas Cove in St Helens was hand painted by Falmouth artist Lorraine Biggs and inspired by the birds that live in this quiet cove.

Sharing stories

Hooked

Cradle Coast NRM worked with local wool and fibre artists to develop the ‘Hooked’ project. Local knitters and crochet artists were encouraged to create beautiful sea and coastal creatures. The display of the artwork accompanied talks by local experts and guest speakers about Tasmanian animals, plants and our unique coastal environment. [image SS11.5] Freeform knitted leafy seadragon made by Karina Rose.
When planning your projects, consider the purpose of the signage as well as its design, construction, material, durability, maintenance and compatibility with the landscape. This section provides some general guidelines, which may be tailored to the local situation.

Signs need to be developed in partnership with the land manager and conform to their standards. All councils have a signs policy and may require formal approval before installation. There are specific guidelines for sign design, materials and construction on reserves managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service. Roadside signs in particular should comply with the statewide Integrated Visitor Information System.

Site selection for signs needs to consider any impact on Aboriginal heritage values.

**What is the purpose of the signs?**

What are you hoping to achieve with the sign? Who is your target audience? How will you ‘hook’ them in to read your sign? Think about what the audience is interested in – surfing, fishing, boating, weather – and use illustrations that reflect this. Cartoons and photos, including historical photos, are excellent.

**Signs can be used to:**

- Manage access to protect coastal vegetation, wildlife or cultural heritage.
- Inform people about facilities, hazards and regulations.
- Inform people about what is special about the local area, so they come to appreciate its values.
- Raise community awareness and understanding about Coastcare projects such as rehabilitating eroded areas and protecting nesting shorebirds.
- Raise the profile of Coastcare groups, gain support and encourage others to start similar projects.
A poorly planned sign can be counterproductive. An effective sign attracts attention without being ugly or intrusive. People come to enjoy the beach, not the signs. Excessive use of signs or too much information looks cluttered and puts people off reading their messages.

Try to use colours and materials that blend with the local environment and that relate to Coastcare.

**Interpretation and educational signs**

Interpretation signs set out to convey information and messages in a way that engages people’s interest. Such signs can help people understand what is so special or interesting about an area and how they can modify their activities so they are not damaging the beach vegetation and wildlife living there.

**Messages**

Keep text short, clear and simple. Signs are more likely to be read if you keep the number of words and the amount of information on a sign to a minimum. The old saying that a picture is worth a thousand words is especially true for signs. Choose an image that will attract people to read the message.

The most effective messages are positive and non-threatening. If people know why they are being requested to do or not do something they are more likely to co-operate with the message.

**Materials and construction**

Signs should be easy and cheap to maintain. Well-made signs that are properly installed should not require much maintenance over their lifetime.

A variety of materials is available. The Interpretation Section of the Parks and Wildlife Service and your NRM or community facilitators within your local council, PWS and NRM regional office may be able to provide information on choices and costs. Have a look at the latest signs in your region to see what signs are available. Ask your sign manufacturer what the options are. Many manufacturers now use a combination of materials (such as UV-protective coating and vandal-proof surfaces) and technological advances are constantly providing new products.

For interpretation signs, marine grade aluminium is more resistant to corrosion than ordinary aluminium or steel. Anodised aluminium signs, which can incorporate detailed photos and images, are very attractive. They are expensive but long-lasting. Screen-printed signs and the new technology of printed vinyl are cheaper options for signs. Some sign makers offer ten-year guarantees.

Signs need durable covers, backings, stands and posts. Consider using a strong back plate to support the sign and having a scratch-resistant top, which can be removed and replaced if damaged.

For a long life and protection from wind vibration, the sign panel should be firmly bolted or glued to a rigid stand or other flat surface. The best supports are made from galvanised pipe, which can be powder-coated. Sturdy treated pine posts are suitable for timber signs and some metal signs. Most signs have their supports set well into the ground – as much as a third of the post height or more.

**Siting and maintenance**

Place the sign where it will be effective and where most people will see it, such as a car park. However, it is better to place signs out of reach of vehicles. Check with the land manager that it is not placed on an Aboriginal site.

Signs are subject to vandalism and so must be sited carefully and monitored for damage. The more-or-less constant traffic at a car park tends to discourage vandalism. Unless any visible damage is repaired promptly, it is likely to encourage further vandalism. Consider the neighbours when deciding where to put the sign. Not everyone wants a sign in front of their house.

**11.6 Events and displays**

There are lots of opportunities to get involved in events run by local councils and other organisations and promote Coastcare and your local group and activities. Many Coastcare groups take this opportunity to have a display of brochures and photos.

Some events have an environmental theme such as the annual ‘Treadlightly Festival’ in Hobart, others might have a coastal theme such as Clarence City Council’s ‘Seafarer’s Festival’ or Glamorgan-Spring Bay’s ‘Seafest’. Don’t forget about local rural shows and even your local market place.
‘Together we continue to manage our natural areas in difficult times. Please know your immense efforts are very much appreciated not only by the Parks and Wildlife Service but by all Tasmanians’.  

*PIP GOWEN, PWS REGIONAL VOLUNTEER FACILITATOR*

You may be able to borrow a marquee or other useful resources from SCAT, Landcare Tasmania, your NRM regional office or your land manager.

It is a good idea for groups to join forces to host displays at events, which lightens the workload for everyone and is a great way to spend time with other Coastcarers.

**Hosting your own event**

Hosting your own event is a great way to focus attention on the issues you are working on, but requires a little more effort.

Take the time to plan carefully. What type of event is it? Who is your target audience? What is your theme? What do you hope to achieve at the end of the day?

» Choose a date that does not conflict with other local community events. (You might want to celebrate a particular environmental event such as World Oceans Day on June 8th).

» Don’t forget to invite any important supporters or partners, and your local councillors and members of parliament.

» Events such as an information session or forum work best if there is a draw-card, such as a guest speaker.

» You can attract media attention by timing your event to fit in with news media deadlines and creating good photo opportunities.

» Start on time and welcome people to your event. Include an acknowledgement of Aboriginal custodians.

» Bring a camera and take photos. Ask someone to provide an article to local newspapers and newsletters.

» At the end of the event, thank everyone including any important guests.

**Acknowledging Aboriginal people**

It is respectful to acknowledge the Aboriginal custodians of the land. Those hosting significant events should seek an Aboriginal elder to deliver a ‘Welcome to Country’. A ‘Welcome to Country’ address can only be delivered by an Aboriginal person.
For most events it will be appropriate to acknowledge Aboriginal custodianship yourself. The following words are a good guide. "I acknowledge the custodians of the land we are meeting on today and pay respects to elders both past and present. I also welcome the Aboriginal people here with us today at this event."

12. Recognition and awards

12.1 Value of recognition

Seeking recognition is often seen as additional work that doesn’t help the environment. Many groups do not want to ‘waste’ time working on self promotion. So why should you spend time seeking recognition? Writing an award nomination, or simply a media article for your local newspaper, has many benefits for your group and for your patch.

Simply writing an award nomination:

» Helps you review progress, reflect on your past success, and find inspiration for the future
» Reconnects you with your support base, and reminds them of your achievements and investment of time and energy

Receiving recognition has other benefits, including:

» Increased community support for your activities
» Gives your group/project credibility, which is important for future funding
» Increased partnership opportunities
» Can raise confidence in sponsors when seeking future funding or sponsorship

Promoting events

There are lots of ways to promote your event:

» media releases to radio, TV and newspapers
» articles in local newspapers and newsletters
» community information page of major newspapers
» social media online
» posters displayed in libraries, shops, schools, community centres and other meeting places
» letters or newsletters dropped in letterboxes
» door-knocking (wear a name tag with a Coastcare logo)
» notices in council newsletters

11.7 Art in environment projects

Community arts projects are an innovative and enjoyable way to spread the Coastcare message. Making the link between Coastcare and art can engage a new audience and provide hands-on activity for people who cannot come to working bees.
12.2 Types of recognition

Saying thank you

Don’t forget to thank people for their hard work and contribution. Take opportunities to celebrate together. National Volunteer Week (second week in May), Coastcare Week in December and International Volunteer Day (5th December) each year are great opportunities for groups to recognise their volunteer efforts and celebrate.

Recognising and thanking volunteers is an opportunity for land managers and support organisations to show how much they appreciate the hard work, enthusiasm and commitment of individuals and groups who work in the coastal area.

Media stories

Media stories are a great way to get information about your project out to the community, and increase your exposure beyond your immediate network of volunteers and land managers. “Good news” stories may focus on recent achievements, milestones, new funding or completion of a works program.

Media stories can be used to call for more volunteers to complete upcoming works, to highlight issues, or to thank participants for their contributions. You can contact the media yourself or they may approach you about your activities.

Create a media release, which is simply a short summary of the activity or event. A media release should provide all the information for a good story. It might include a couple of quotes by someone in your group or an expert involved in the project. Be sure to include any important details such as date and time if you want the media to attend an event. Don’t forget to provide contact details if they want more information.

Don’t forget about state-wide and regional newsletters and bulletins produced by other environmental or volunteer support organisations.

Sharing stories

Award success shared among many

The Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania (SCAT) was the recipient of the 2008 Tasmanian Coastcare Award, the 2009 National Coastcare Award and the 2011 Tasmanian Community Achievement Award. SCAT supports and represents local Coastcare groups from across the southern region of Tasmania so these awards were for all of these groups. SCAT held an event to share the awards and celebrate the achievements of volunteers from across the region. SCAT organised for the award trophies to tour the local Coastcare groups so that everyone could enjoy the awards in their local patch and celebrate the achievement.
They are a fantastic way to share your stories with other Coastcare groups, local councils and other coastal stakeholders or organisations.

**National and statewide awards**

Several national awards programs seek to recognise the important work of volunteers, and may include either individuals or groups. National awards often have a number of categories and may include environmental stewardship, community, individual or volunteer focus. Don’t be afraid to think big! Examples include:

- National Landcare Awards
- State Landcare Awards
- National Volunteer Week Awards
- Australian of the Year
- Tasmanian of the Year
- Tasmanian Awards for Environmental Excellence
- Young Achiever Awards
- Community Achievement Awards

**Local award programs**

Local award programs may be offered by councils or other regional bodies wanting to support and celebrate worthy projects and initiatives. These will often be advertised in local newspapers, online, or groups may be invited directly to apply. The amount of information requested is usually much less than for state or national awards. Local awards and recognition help to bolster any applications for funding or larger awards, as they demonstrate that your work is recognised as being of value to your local community and/or resource managers.

Councils often seek to recognise individual efforts through opportunities such as Australia Day Citizens awards, or annual recognition ceremonies.

National or state awards require a significant level of information and there will usually be multiple criteria that must be addressed. Don’t leave it till the last minute, especially if you need to ask for letters of support!

**Coastcare Week**

Events to celebrate Coastcare week are held around Tasmania in December and are coordinated by different organisations in each region. Generally Coastcare Week events focus on raising awareness of coastal issues with the general public and recognition for the work of volunteers in the coastal space. Organisations working with volunteers value the opportunity to say “thanks” and to highlight the good work of community and individuals. These events provide important networking opportunities while you celebrate!

**Public speaking at events**

There may be opportunities for you to spread the good news about your achievements, seek new members, or participate in awareness raising on important issues by speaking at public forums or conferences. Local radio programs offer an opportunity for you to talk about your project, the significance of any awards or other recognition you may have received.
12.3 Writing award nominations

Writing award nominations is similar to writing funding applications. You need to convey your information within the program’s criteria.

Increase your chances of success by making sure the award you have chosen to apply for is a good fit for your project and works.

Do’s and don’ts

Do

» Carefully check any eligibility criteria and award closing dates
» If you have any questions about eligibility or other aspects of your application, contact the organisers
» Always use the forms or templates provided
» Keep your writing clear and concise – if there is a word limit, stick to it!
» If there are key terms in the criteria to describe an achievement, use those words to describe your success (it makes it easier for the assessor to see how your work fits in with their criteria)
» Be passionate and convey the significance/difficulty/uniqueness of your work in positive terms
» Have someone proof-read your application before you submit it
» Save a copy for your records, and for future applications (especially with on-line applications)
» Ask for letters of support or testimonies from groups or individuals you have worked with
» If you can provide supporting information to provide context and background (before/after photos, maps etc) make sure they are clear, and illustrate the nature of your work

Don’t

» Use lots of jargon or technical terms – your application may be assessed by people with a broad range of backgrounds
» Waste words by repeating information or waffling. Engage the reader!
» Ignore the award program’s selection criteria or objectives

12.4 Being a good ambassador

Be sure to be present when your award is announced or presented. Prepare what you might say in advance, and thank all of your supporters and the award sponsor. Acknowledge your award in any media articles or promotional material associated with the event.

Send a story to the award sponsor and the award organisers about how the award has benefited your group or activities. Send a copy to your land managers and partners or supporters too.

If you received funding to undertake the work that resulted in the award, make sure you let the funding organisation know about your achievement.
Getting started

Planning

Starting work