

Plastic Wise Communities

A step-by-step guide to reducing plastic waste from your community



Acknowledgements

Published by Bellarine Catchment Network Inc.

865 Swan Bay Road, Mannerim, Victoria, 3222

www.environmentbellarine.org.au

Copyright 2023 Bellarine Catchment Network



All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission from Bellarine Catchment Network. Contact info@bcn.org.au for information.

We would like to acknowledge the Wadawurrung, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, live and volunteer, and pay our respects to their elders past, present and future.

The Wadawurrung are the Traditional Owners for the Country of Geelong, the Bellarine, Surf Coast and beyond. Learn about what the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) aim to achieve in their *Paleert Tjaara Dja* Let's make Country good together 2020 – 2030: Wadawurrung Country Plan'.



This document is supported by the City of Greater Geelong.



Contents

Preface	4
Background	
The problem with plastic	5
The solution	6
Living circular	7
Top 10 litter items in Port Phillip Bay	8
Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Rot!	9
Individual actions.....	10
Plastic Wise Communities.....	11
Starting a Plastic Wise Community.....	12
Flowchart of steps.....	13
How to use this toolkit.....	14
Goal 1: Create a group.....	15
Goal 1: Example: St Leonards Foreshore Litter Project.....	16
Goal 2: Understand community.....	17
Goal 2: Example: Barwon Estuary Project.....	18
Goal 3: Community outreach.....	19
Goal 3: Example: EarthFest Ocean Grove.....	20
Goal 4: Take action.....	21
Goal 4: Example: Reuse me in OG.....	22
Where to from here?.....	23
Appendix 1: Project plan template.....	24
Appendix 2: Stakeholder matrix.....	25
Appendix 3: Impact vs. Effort Matrix.....	26





Preface

As the world moves towards net zero by 2030, we all need to prepare to adopt a low carbon lifestyle. We may already be trying to do our bit by cycling to work, installing solar panels and planting trees, but it may surprise you to learn that there is a hidden recipient of fossil fuels in your home that may be hiding in plain sight all around you. This cryptic agent is plastic, a word that can describe around 300 types of materials that can have widely different properties and uses. Despite their differences, all plastics are made of polymers, which are molecules arranged in formations that give plastic specific qualities like flexibility, malleability and strength. Plastic can also fall into 2 types; bio-based plastics made from cornstarch, vegetable fats and bacteria, and synthetic plastics made from crude oil and natural gas. To actually make these plastics from materials like crude oil involves complex processes involving heat, pressure, energy and chemicals.

Plastics are so popular, and growing more popular every year, that the plastics industry is keeping the fossil fuels industry going. As a result, we're now producing more than 300 million tons of plastic a year.

We need to act to change this.

People across the globe are adopting a 'plastic wise' mindset that involves a thoughtful and realistic approach to a reduction in plastic consumption. This mindset acknowledges that plastic has a place and can help provide services for the community and individuals, but that over-consumption is harming us in the long run. This document outlines ways that we can encourage more people to adopt this lifestyle to benefit their health, community, environment and planet.



The problem with plastic

Plastic is an important resource for modern life with particular benefits to the medical industry. Plastics are cheap, light, durable, long-lasting and malleable into any shape. In some cases, using plastic can have a smaller footprint than alternative like metal as the manufacture of plastic is easy and uses emissions when transported. These characteristics make plastics extremely popular. However, right now the world is more reliant on plastics than it has ever been. Their use has increased 20-fold since 1964 and is expected to double again in 20 years and almost quadruple by 2050. If this trajectory continues, the manufacture of new plastics will be responsible for 20% of all the oil extracted from the ground globally by 2050.

A product that is responsible for using so much finite fossil fuels would be expected to be precious, but actually, 95% of plastic is thrown away after a short first use, and 32% eventually ends up in the environment.

Plastic in the environment has obvious impacts. Marine animals in particular have been observed becoming entangled in litter items including fishing nets, peak caps and plastic bags. In addition to this, plastic contain 'persistent organic pollutants' (POPs), which are organic compounds that are resistant to environmental degradation through chemical, biological, and photolytic processes. In the marine environment, these POPs can harm our local wildlife.

The solution

We need to move away from our reliance on plastics for everything. There are many ways that our future can become plastic wise – where plastic is used where in a way that is appropriate, sustainable and ethical.

Circular Economies

A circular economy is one where waste is kept within a circular 'loop' – i.e., an aluminium can that is infinitely recycled or electronic devices that are maintained rather than replaced. Circular economies can be found in everyday practices as well as large scale systems.

Zero Waste

Zero waste is when a person or community tries, where possible and practicable, to produce no waste. This means that they either refuse products or services that create waste or compost, recycle or reuse any created waste.

Plastic Wise Communities

Plastic Wise Communities can come in many forms – from schools, businesses, groups and towns. These communities try and reduce the use of unnecessary plastics including typically 'single-use' items and instead encourage practices like borrowing, reusing and recycling. Plastic Wise Communities look similar to those aiming for a zero waste lifestyle but with a specific focus on plastic products.

With all of these, be inclusive and understanding of everybody's journey, capacity and willingness to reduce waste as we are not all the same.



Living circular

We can start by rethinking how we use plastic and moving to a circular way of using materials.

The first step is start the change within yourself! This toolkit includes facts that you can share with your community, as well as important steps that you can implement in your personal life. Remember, its more about your attitude and positive impact in the world than trying to be perfect.

"We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly."

- Anne-Marie Bonneau

Do not feel overwhelmed, celebrate your accomplishments and be proud of yourself.

- We can change our habits and find alternatives for everyday items that are less carbon intensive.
- We can care for and repair plastic items so they are useful for as long as possible.
- We can use recycled plastic and recycle our plastics which will reduce the need to make new plastic items.
- We can rethink how we live our lives and consider the need for excessive plastic consumption.
- We can advocate for systems that support circular economies.
- We can change this future, and free our communities from unnecessary single use plastics. Let's start now!



Top 10

Litter items in the Port Phillip Area

The below list outlines the 10 most common litter items found in the Port Phillip area, collected by volunteers. This list can help you to identify what to target.

- #1 - Cigarette butts & filters - 50,296
- #2 - Plastic film remnants (bits of plastic bags) - 31,239
- #3 - Plastic bits & pieces hard & solid - 29,392
- #4 - Foam insulation & packaging (whole and remnants) - 27,048
- #5 - Plastic packaging food (wrap, packets, containers) - 24,472
- #6 - Plastic wrap non food (bubble wrap etc) - 12,042
- #7 - Miscellaneous paper, labels & tickets - 10,262
- #8 - Straws, confection sticks, cups, plates & cutlery - 9,879
- #9 - Lids & tops, pump spray, flow restrictor & similar - 9,773
- #10 - Foil wrappers, packets, bladders & aluminium foil - 7,225

Source: <https://amdi.tangaroablue.org/dashboard> (2022)



Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Rot!

The previous motto of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle' now includes additional words that make further actions to reduce waste before it enters the system.

Rethink

Before purchasing anything, consider whether you really need it, and decide if a second-hand product would be suitable. Consider buying second hand or purchasing from local brands that invest in alternative materials and repair services. Making more thoughtful decisions and setting standards for your purchasing will make it easier to refuse waste. Consider; do you need that product? Is there an alternative?

Reduce

Reduce the amount of items that you need to purchase by mending, reusing, borrowing or finding another option that is longer-lasting.

Reuse

Wherever possible, reuse items you already have and transition to purchasing items that are intended to be reused such as reusable mugs and cutlery. Find alternative purposes for an item and get creative! The possibilities are endless and can lead to unique and artistic pieces. This step can be used for products that cannot be refused, reduced, or reused.

Recycle

Recycling can keep materials circulating through the system and reduce the production of new materials. But it often leads to down-cycling and the creation of materials with low-value. Remember to regularly purchase products made from recycled materials and educate yourself on local recycling regulations like the City of Greater Geelong's 'Recycling Guide': <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/recycling/guide/default.aspx>

Rot

Compost as much as possible to avoid compostable items going to landfill (E.g., food scraps, paper/cardboard, garden waste, home-compostable cups & plates) and use compost in your garden instead of artificial fertilisers.



Individual actions

One way to inspire broad change is to start at the individual level. There are many low-cost and easy actions that we can all take to reduce our excessive plastic use. Below are just some ideas that you can try:

- Use a refillable water bottle and keep a spare in your car
- Refuse single use plastics where possible (plastic water bottles, plastic bags, takeaway cups, condiment sachets)
- Bring your own reusable bag to the supermarket
- Bring your own coffee cup and keep a spare in your car
- Avoid single use packaging - opt for items in cardboard, glass or aluminium
- Bring your own cutlery for markets, festivals or getting take away
- Try bathroom items that are packaged in paper or glass such as bar soap and shampoo/conditioner
- Consider purchasing some food and cleaning items from refill stores
- Blow bubbles, not balloons! Rethink using balloons at parties or events
- Reconsider purchasing hard plastic products - can you find an alternative?
- Choose products with multiple functionality/purposes and avoid hard plastic where possible
- If possible, choose higher quality products that will last longer can be repaired
- Try making your own products instead of buying them. There are great recipes out there for cleaning sprays, toilet bombs, deodorant and laundry detergent
- Support brands who invest in plastic-free packaging or products. For example - there are multiple plastic-free floss options
- Consider not buying certain items that are packed in a lot of plastic - do you need them? Can you make it? Is there an alternative?
- Recycle as much plastic as possible using specialist recycling such as TerraCycle or Lids for Kids.

Plastic Wise Communities

To achieve net zero by 2030, we all need to act as individuals in every way we can to adopt a low-carbon lifestyle. There are many things we can all do, and eliminating unnecessary single-use plastics from our daily lives is a great place to start.

Reducing the impacts of climate change will take all of us working together to change our habits, and ultimately by reducing our carbon emissions and transitioning to a circular economy.

This toolkit is intended to help communities throughout Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula to come together and tackle single use plastics effectively. Research into successful plastic reduction initiatives has shown that the best results happen when small community-led groups work together to create change within their local community, rather than a few large groups trying to create change across a large area.

Anyone can start a Plastic Wise Community group. All you need is to be passionate about the environment, have a group of like-minded individuals and some ideas.

How do I become a Plastic Wise Community?

Stage 1

Take action

Groups are building momentum towards becoming a town or community with a shared vision – eliminating excessive plastics.

This guide provides direction and helps to navigate the steps involved in establishing a group and making real change. There are five key goals that can be followed to help guide you to becoming a successful plastic wise community group.

Stage 2

Be recognised

Get recognition for your existing efforts and achievements by registering your group with us. But the journey doesn't end here! By this stage your group should be independent and self-directed. The goal should now be to maintain support and encouragement for your community to keep the momentum going. You may want to revisit some of the same goals each year.

Starting a Plastic Wise Community

These four steps guide you through building an effective, long lasting Plastic Wise Community. The guide is intended to help passionate community members to get started and organise their community to create real change.



1. Create a group

Forming a group is the first step towards gathering the community around you. This group may be separate to the volunteers group, and is the brain of your operation. As an example, this group could meet quarterly at a minimum and work on planning the groups strategy and logistics towards completing your goals. Try also to establish connections to organisations like the City of Greater Geelong and Sustainability Victoria.



2. Understand your community

Before you take any action, you should first understand the plastic related issues in your community. What are the most common items of plastic litter found? What issues do businesses face? How much do local schools embody 'nude food'? You could design a survey to identify this, but also talk to stakeholders directly, observe litter-creating behaviours and look for funding to develop further actions if that is possible to your group.



3. Community outreach

Identifying and collaborating with the local community is vital. This could include local schools, businesses, land managers, festival organisers, other community groups or recreational groups. This is how you will gain community support and spread your message! Once you have community support and people are familiar with your message, it's time to get together to take action! Community events are a great way to foster camaraderie, keep in touch, build momentum for your goals and make a tangible contribution to remedying the challenges. This could be action at markets, sporting and music events or school fetes.



4. Take action

Take action to target local issues in your community; from running a social media campaign about dog poo bags, creating your own plastic reducing initiative like a mug library, helping local businesses find alternatives to plastic or providing information to the community at events, meetings, news articles or print media.

Flowchart of steps

The below flowchart explains the steps to becoming a Plastic Wise Community.

GOAL 1

Create a group

Find people with a range of skills and do some research.



GOAL 2

Understand community

Do your research and collaborate with local partners including schools, businesses or festivals.



GOAL 3

Community outreach

Run your own community events or host your own campaigns.



GOAL 4

Take action

Take action to reduce plastic or inspire actions from others.





How to use this toolkit

On each page of this toolkit you will find a goal that will help you to become a Plastic Wise Community. This toolkit shows you the requirements for each goal and a summary of how to achieve them. It provides guidance, tips and advice to enable you to establish your own local plastic-wise network. Instructions for how to apply for Plastic Wise Community approved status is found at the end of this toolkit.

What To Do	How To Do It	Why Will It Help?
Each goal includes an overview of the components you will need to work through to achieve the goal. Each component is explained in greater detail	Each goal features a table with suggestions and examples for how to complete each component of the goal	This section explains the benefit of the overall goal and why it will help to reduce single-use plastics in your community

Don't be daunted! The most effective way to tackle single-use plastics is to act local. There is a network of plastic free community groups all working towards the same goal alongside you.

Goal 1: Create a group

A group can be formed in so many different ways – it can those within a certain group, representatives from other groups with diverse ages, experiences and skills. Your group doesn't have to stay the same over time either – expect it to grow, evolve and change as time goes on. Remember, you want this to happen!

This step may seem simple, but a strong group can provide you with guidance and a clear strategy which helps to keep things on track and helps your group grow. Your group members will also amplify your plastic goals within their own communities.

Here are some ways that you can create a group:

Steps	Make it happen
Look for diverse people and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek diverse people; from their abilities, perspectives, skills, ages and more. Your group may change over time, but this is both expected and encouraged to help avoid volunteer burn out.• Is there a similar group already doing great work? Can you combine and/or collaborate? Take advantage of collective passion.
Get together!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get together to brainstorm, meet, connect and be inspired. Face-to-face meetings make great brainstorming sessions and people are more likely to attend if food is provided.
Find a place where everybody is comfortable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are you meeting somewhere that is halfway for everybody? Do you have an online option for people who work full time? Consider if you are being inclusive and welcoming where and how you meet.
Meet regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular catch ups or meetings keeps you on track. We suggest that you meet at least twice a year to monitor the progress of your Plastic Wise Community and check in on any actions.• Consider the need for sub-groups that target specific things – e.g., a research component, grant writing or social media.
Connect to community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aim to include a member who has strong connections to the local community – e.g., a local business owner, staff from council/local land manager or a teacher.• Are there initiatives that exist already that you can collaborate with? This builds further connections to the community and helps you avoid reinventing the wheel!
Update us!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell us how you are going every 6 months. This is a way for us to identify ways to support you (e.g., providing a meeting space, hot desks, IT equipment and software, etc). Email us at info@bcn.org.au.

Keep it small, simple and find passionate people to support you!

Example: St Leonards Foreshore Litter Project

In 2023, a group of representatives from multiple organisations came together to discuss the issue of litter in the St Leonards community. This meeting was facilitated by the St Leonards Progress Associated and involved representatives from Bellarine Bayside, Bellarine Catchment Network, City of Greater Geelong, Friends of Edwards Point, Parks Victoria and the St Leonards Community Care.

This group identified the increasing issue of plastics in the St Leonards community in that visitors in particular were not using bin infrastructure correctly, dog poo bags continued to be an issue and building waste was not managed properly.

At the first meeting, the group brainstormed ways to tackle these issues including positive social media campaigns, a partnership with the local primary school to focus on education and ideas to run events to encourage people to participate in Plastic Free July.

Learnings from this example:

- Think outside of just volunteers or community groups – councils, agencies and land managers are great to have at the table to include directly in the conversation.
- You may want to involve or include people who live locally so that you can have eyes and ears on the ground in regards to the true nature of plastic issues.
- Think creatively about how you might make change – positive social media campaigns, art and craft competitions, clothes swapping events or even movie nights can be great ways to encourage positive change.
- Provide space and opportunities for individuals to discuss what makes them passionate and why they are there! Connect to the person first.



Goal 2: Understand your community

This step should follow naturally once you have established your group. Your group may know that you want to try and create change to reduce excessive plastic use, but what should you target? Who will you work with? What are the big plastic offenders in your community?

This goal is all about understanding your community, from the people (stakeholders), the local issues (both use and littering of plastic) and how your community works (coastal town vs inland rural community). This is vital information that will impact the next goals.

Here are some ways that you start to understand your community:

Steps	Make it happen
Identify your players	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who are your players, or stakeholders? This includes councils, land managers, schools, businesses, community groups and even residents.• You may want to get out and about to meet these people or conduct a survey about who is in your local community.• One way to tackle this is to make a list of all the stakeholders that you believe should be included. This may be a list of all the local businesses. You may also want to identify which stakeholders are already leading the plastic wise journey
Identify your community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at how your community or town works. Are you a coastal town that increases in population size every summer? Do you have a lot of take away businesses or schools nearby?
Target items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To identify the worst plastic offenders, you may need to conduct some research. You could observe how people use the local bins, what behaviours are causing litter or do a bin audit to see the mix of plastic items. Are they mainly coffee cups? Local festival waste? This will help you direct your energy to the worst items and should help streamline your approach.
Get funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note that research into your community may require funding. If you aren't a legal entity (e.g., an incorporated organisation) you may need to collaborate with a local group or land manager to help manage the funds.• Some good grant opportunities may arise through Coastcare Victoria, the Port Phillip Bay Fund and/or your local council (e.g., the City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire, Borough of Queenscliffe).
Share your learnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whatever you learn, make sure that you share this with like-minded groups, local council/land managers and agencies like Sustainability Victoria. This will help make the journey easier for other groups on their plastic wise journey.

The only way to make change in our community is to first understand how our community works, relaxes and learns.

Example: Barwon Estuary Project

The Barwon Estuary Project is a community-lead group based in Barwon Heads that facilitates multiple projects around conservation, education and plastic reduction. In 2022, the Barwon Estuary Project received funding from the Barwon Heads Community Bank Branch (Bendigo Bank), to fund a research project looking at community plastic consumption.

This project involved looking at the kinds of plastics that end up as litter, however it ended up including single-use plastic items, dog poo bags and more. The research included surveys, interviews, observations and more, and is a great example of how important it is to undertake research before plastic campaigns begin. As a result of their research, the Barwon Estuary Project realised that some plastics cannot be avoided at a community level (e.g., local cafes and shops buying products), some cafes are restricted in their use of single-use plastics due to occupational health and safety codes, and that the best way to enact change was to focus on community education over community initiatives that require heavy volunteer effort and management.

Learnings from this example:

- Consider looking for funding to help engage an external person to conduct research. You may even want to talk to a local university to see if there are any students interested in collaborating for their Honours, Masters or PhD.
- Use multiple methods to understand your community and the related plastic issues – from surveys, interviews, anecdotal conversations, your own observations and litter audits.
- Get in contact with your local council or land manager as they may already have information about contamination, litter items or problems and suburbs of interest.



Goal 3: Community outreach

This goal is all about connecting and collaborating with the local community, whatever that looks like. Consider 'communities' like schools, businesses, land managers, festival organisers, other community groups or recreational groups. Meeting and working with these communities is a way to take advantage of collective effort and help spread your word even further. This goal also provides guidance on how you can connect and interact with members of the public via community events.

Here are some ways that you start to connect with your community:

Steps	Make it happen
Connect to like-minded groups and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local environment and waste groups are ideal collaborative partners. See how you can work with your local Landcare, Coastcare, 'Friends of', clean up or climate change groups.• Remember to think outside the box. A local Rotary or Mens Shed may align to your goals and they have unique skills and support methods.
Collaborate with community leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborating with local leaders including businesses, schools, libraries, land managers and community services are a great way to leverage community effort.
Link into existing campaigns and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find out what campaigns and programs are already out there that you can link in with. For example; Resource Smart Schools work with local schools to help them reduce waste and are always looking for ways to do so.• Are there organisations out there that can integrate your message or goals into their own programs? Think of schools and Nude Food.
Host events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host your own events or have a presence at markets, fetes, festivals to connect to residents and visitors of the area.• Be creative in how you do this; will you be asking for patrons to complete a survey, will you be providing reusable items for patrons, will you be facilitating repair cafés, harvest swaps or running a clean up event? It could even be a talk that raises money for a like-minded organisation.
Help others run events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unfortunately events often generate a lot of waste. Working with existing events including markets, music festivals and fetes is a great way to make a positive influence quickly.• Think about what you can provide; a bin audit, information about compostable food ware, bin hub infrastructure, reusable zip ties. For example; providing them with the 'Zero Waste Event Guide' is a great start. Consider working closely with these groups by representing your group on their board or project group.• To help with this task, you may want to make a list of the local community events you want to engage with.

**Alone we may be able to achieve small things.
But together we can do so much!**

Example – EarthFest Ocean Grove

EarthFest is a twilight community event that aims to educate and inspire as many people as possible to connect, as a community to care for our Earth. The festival is coordinated by Star of the Sea Primary School, is hosted in Ocean Grove and features live music, activities, community and environmental groups, and market and food stalls.

The festival is a great example of how a school or community can partner with businesses and organisations to promote a positive environmental message. For example, the festival had partnerships with Bunnings, Coles, GMHBA and small local businesses to help interact and engage with more people. All the market stalls featured recycled or sustainable products to showcase what is possible, and community and volunteer groups hosted stalls to talk to people about the great work they do.

By running a festival that also included food, live music and activities, they were able to engage with a much broader audience than just the ‘already converted’, widening the exposure of sustainability and circular living.

Learnings from this example:

- Think broadly about who you can connect with – from big businesses, small businesses, community groups, local creatives and councils.
- Consider getting creative in these partnerships – what function are they playing? What do they get out of it? How can they collaborate?
- Provide multiple options for partners or community groups to be involved.
- Consider how you will acknowledge these partnerships. Do you have a social media page? Will you write a newspaper article?



Goal 4: Take Action

Now that you have completed the following goals, you can start to focus more on direct action. Note that by getting to this stage, you have taken action in your community, but this is about doing the things that you really want to do. Targeted actions may include a social media and marketing campaign that targets your communities 'worst offenders' – e.g., installing and promoting butt bins on piers to tackle cigarette litter, as well as something like 'Plastic Free July'. You may want to set up your own initiative like a mug library, a reusable 'party' kit or a business toolkit to help cafes swap to compostable options. These actions can be something you do once, maintain or evolve as you learn, adapt and grow.

Here are some ways that you start to take action:

Steps	Make it happen
Create a project plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whatever action you want to take, it's always beneficial to map out a project plan that includes things like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - who do you need to engage with and when (i.e., stakeholders) - what is the timeline? What are some key dates? - which members of your group are doing what? Make sure to equally delegate to avoid volunteer burnout - what is the end goal? How will you assess your success? • Note that this can become a template that you use for other projects to help streamline the planning and delivery.
Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True change in the community requires collaboration! Collaboration is crucial at this stage. Consider if local businesses can help you promote your action with flyers, can like-minded groups share your social media campaign, can local councils share your events on their websites? • Share, promote and applaud your collaborators to help cement your relationship with them.
Adapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't stress if things don't go to plan – this is an opportunity to adapt to new circumstances. Your project plan is a way to provide guidance but more often than not, new approaches may be required to deal with un-foreseen problems as well as unexpected opportunities. • Consult project partners or similar stakeholders to see if they can help you solve problems or take advantage of new opportunities. For example; a local group may have resources and equipment that you may need at short notice or there may be an event coming up that you didn't know about and that you can connect in with.
Reflect and learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once you have completed a project, campaign or outcome, take a moment with your group to reflect on how you went. Ask yourself; did you achieve all you set out to do? How did you manage those unforeseen circumstances or opportunities? What would you change if you could do it all again? These learnings are just as important as the planning stage and will help keep your group growing and learning.
Share your stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that you share your stories; the successes and the failures. This will help other groups on their plastic wise journey.

Example: Reuse me in OG

In an attempt to reduce plastic waste at events big and small, local group 'Repair Café Bellarine' created a reusable tableware kit for the local community to use for free. The kits include cups, bowls, plates, cutlery and shared 'festival' plates that can be used at birthday parties, school fetes, festivals, meetings and more. The money used to purchase this equipment was through a grant, and the bookings and management of the kits was facilitated by dedicated volunteers.

The 'Reuse me in OG' tableware service connects to local business 'Driftwood Cafe' in Ocean Grove, who help by washing the used kits in their kitchen grade dishwasher. The Repair Café Bellarine are a perfect example of a Plastic Wise Community and have achieved all the goals outlined in this toolkit. This is an example of a model where volunteer power can lead positive change for a whole community.

Learnings from this example:

- Look around for community grants to help with your actions or initiatives. One of the actions that you can take is to create a service like this.
- Work with local businesses or community groups to help deliver aspects of your action or initiative – the more collaborations you can facilitate, the better.
- Think about the best way to market or promote your action, service or initiative – talk to people in your community who are experts in the fields of social media, marketing or graphic design, to see what you can learn. Humans are visual beings and so the more engaging our promotions are, the more engagement we will see.





Where to from here?

Where do you go from here? Keep the ball rolling looking forward for new challenges that you can address. The Plastic Wise Community is a continuous work in progress.

Keep going	Local council	Social media
Now that you started, don't stop! Keep doing what you are already doing and dreaming about the next events/business allies	Approach your local council to fund and create a partnership to employ and train local coordinators to run a Plastic free program in communities and engage with local stakeholders.	Why not start sharing what you have been doing and learning through a social media? Give it a go, you might inspire someone to start a Plastic Free Community!



Join us on Facebook!

You can now join the 'Plastic Wise Communities - Geelong + Bellarine' Facebook group to see what other groups are doing, share your projects or learnings and stay in touch with us. Search: [Plastic Wise Communities - Geelong + Bellarine](#)



Get in touch

Bellarine Catchment Network

Email: info@bcn.org.au

Website: www.environmentbellarine.org.au

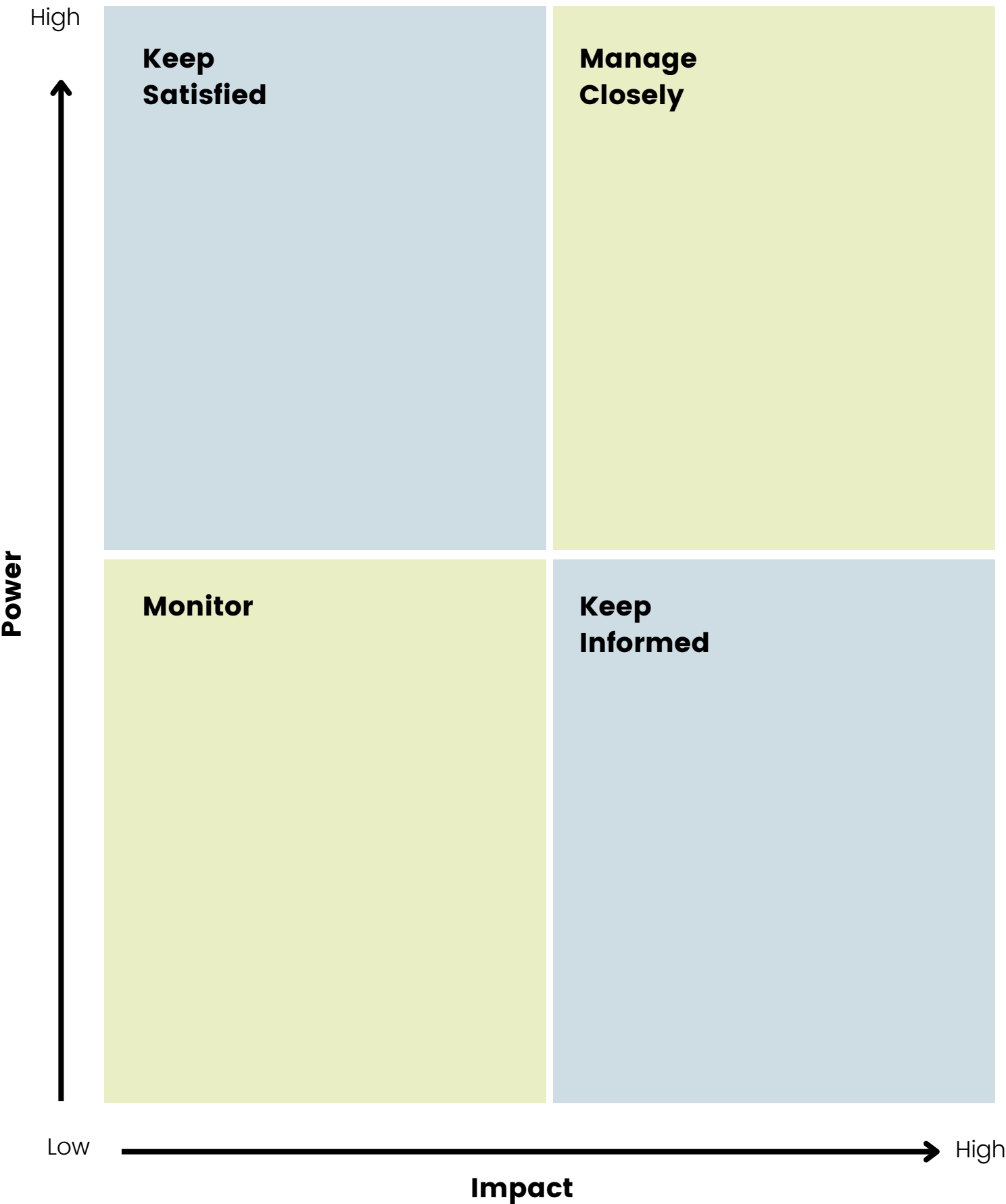
Appendix 1: Project plan template

The below is an example of a project management template. You can use this to help you set goals, provide

Project Title:	
Who is part of your team:	
Who are your stakeholders:	
What is your project timeline including start and end date:	
Who is doing what? List your group members and what tasks they can do:	
What are you trying to achieve?	
How will you assess your success?	
What are some risks to your project and how can you manage them?	

Appendix 2: Stakeholder template

Print this page off on A4 or A3 paper to help you map out your stakeholders. When we refer to 'power' we mean the people that can influence our project the most.



Appendix 3: Impact vs. effort

Map out your impact vs. effort to help guide your actions. This can be a useful way to identify priority initiatives and actions that are more likely to be successful.

