



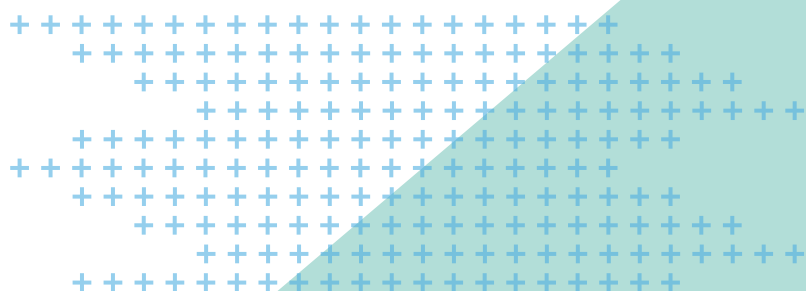
ACTION PLAN

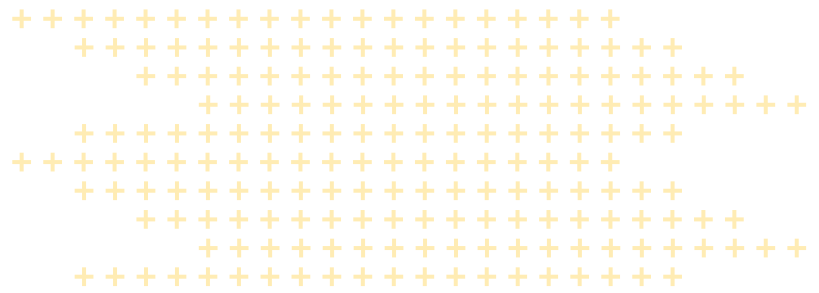
**DEVELOPED BY LOCAL RESIDENTS,
THROUGH THE PELICAN AREA
SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP**

2013-2023

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Background

The Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhoods Program

The Sustainable Neighbourhoods Program is about residents taking responsibility and action to ensure their unique environment and community remains sustainable for future generations. An initiative of Lake Macquarie City Council (Council), the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Program encourages active citizenship by empowering residents to protect and care for their environment and place; reduce resource consumption; respond efficiently to environmental threats; and participate in public life and decision making.

The Sustainable Neighbourhoods Program enables residents to develop a vision for their neighbourhood, identify local values, uncover neighbourhood assets, and develop and implement a Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan (SNAP or Plan) to address neighbourhood challenges.

Council started to work with local residents to establish the Pelican Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group (PASNG), covering the suburbs of Blacksmiths, Pelican and Marks Point, in late 2012. The PASNG is made up of residents and friends of these suburbs.

The Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

The Pelican SNAP articulates the vision of its residents for a sustainable future, and identifies the characteristics of the neighbourhood that are valued and contribute to the vision. The aspects of the Pelican Area that our neighbours appreciate and value include the beautiful beaches, lakes and waterways, the peaceful and safe neighbourhood feel, connected community members, and its convenient location to services.

The SNAP contains a range of activities and projects that members of the neighbourhood group are committed to undertake in order to ensure that the things they value are protected and enhanced. The SNAP also identifies opportunities to address local challenges or issues that residents want to change.

The Pelican Area SNAP is an evolving document that is subject to change as the values, interests and attitudes of our community adapts to new opportunities and challenges.

The contents of the Pelican Area SNAP are the results of a series of Council facilitated community engagement activities in the suburbs of Blacksmiths, Pelican and Marks Point, as detailed in Table 1.



Table 1: Details of Community Engagement Activities

DATE	ACHIEVEMENT
November 2012	Mail-out survey to all households – Collecting information on what is valued and loved in the community; important local environmental issues; and current environmental behaviour (e.g. take-up rate of domestic water tanks)
December 2012	Community workshop – Facilitated opportunity for neighbours to meet and discuss what they love about their neighbourhood; their 2023 neighbourhood vision; and what actions need to happen to realise the vision
February 2013 - present	Monthly community meetings – Facilitated opportunities for neighbours to meet; continue the conversations started at the workshop; form a group; and further plan and organise projects
May 2013	Displays at local shops and organisations – centred on promoting the PASNG and receiving input for the draft SNAP
May 2013	Local school newsletter articles – Articles in the Pelican Flat Public School and Blacksmiths Public School newsletters asking for input into the SNAP via an online survey link



BLACKSMITHS

Blacksmith Beach,
looking North.



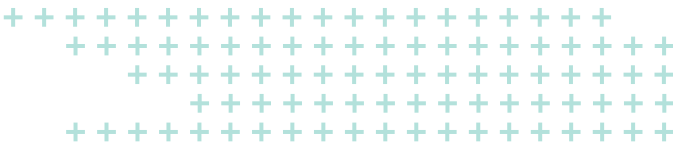
PELICAN

Sunny morning at
Pelican Jetty,
Lake Macquarie.



MARKS POINT

Rising tide at
Swan Bay, Naru,
Lake Macquarie.



About Our Neighbourhood

The Pelican Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group includes the suburbs of Blacksmiths, Pelican and Marks Point, and membership of the group extends to all residents and those who may have a special interest in the area.

Our Place

The suburbs of Blacksmiths, Pelican and Marks Point, as can be seen in Figure 1 below are located in the City of Lake Macquarie, NSW Australia. This area is the traditional land of the Awabakal people.

KEY	
1	Belmont Airport
2	Blacksmiths Beach
3	Blacksmiths Nature Reserve
4	Pelican
5	Swansea Bridge
6	Swansea Belmont Surf Life Saving Club
7	Grannies Pool
8	Boatrowers Reserve
9	Aitchison Reserve
10	Kindaimanna Reserve
11	Roy Byrnes Reserve

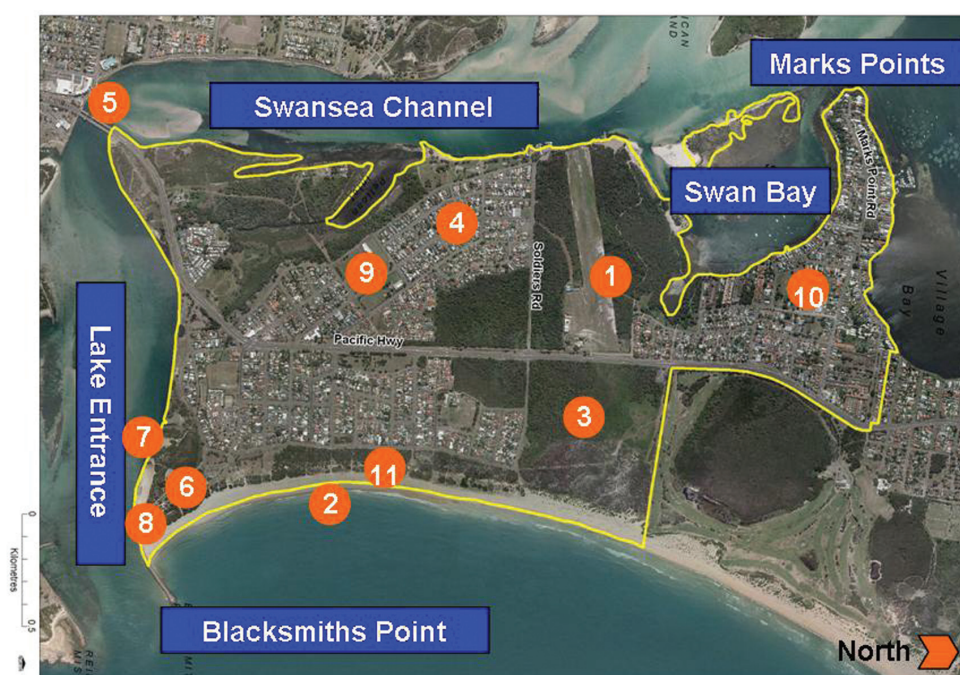


Figure 1: Our Neighbourhood

Some key features of our neighbourhood include:

1. Unique natural environment:

- + Access to the beach and lake;
- + Three nature reserves including Boatrowers Reserve, Dobinson Reserve and Aitchison Reserve; and
- + Large variety of threatened species including the Magenta Lilypilly, Black-eyed Susan, Grey-headed Flying Fox, Eastern Bentwing-Bat, Little Bentwing-Bat, Pied Oystercatcher, Little Tern, Wallum Froglet and Green Turtle.

2. Rich cultural history:

- + Strong history of indigenous cultural activity - corroborees were held in the area as well as canoe races and other games around the Swansea Channel;
- + Local residents tell of a Blacksmiths Shop that used to be situated on the channel, they tell of old timers referring to "The Blacksmith" when giving directions to the area of the present Blacksmiths;
- + Blacksmiths was a depot during the building of the Swansea Bridge. The building of the northern breakwater followed, and later coal-loading staithes were installed on the Blacksmiths side of the Channel; and
- + The local Surf Life Saving Club (Swansea-Belmont) was founded in 1927, and remains a community hub.

Our People

The suburbs of Blacksmiths, Pelican and Marks Point are currently home to approximately 4,450 residents living in almost 1,600 households. The locals are a friendly bunch, coming from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Selected statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2011 are shown below.

- + Locals are likely to be older than the average Lake Macquarie resident, however there are quite a few younger families in the suburb of Pelican;
- + Locals are more likely to fully own their home compared to the average Lake Macquarie and NSW resident;
- + Employed people in this neighbourhood are more likely to be employed as technicians, tradespersons and machinery operators and drivers compared to the average Lake Macquarie and NSW resident;
- + Locals are less likely to own a vehicle compared to the average Lake Macquarie and NSW resident. In Marks Point there is a particularly low level of motor vehicle ownership per household; and
- + Locals are less likely to be connected to the internet compared with the average Lake Macquarie and NSW resident.

Our Assets

Figure 2, highlights some of the area's most prominent and important local assets. The PASNG hopes to tap into these assets during project implementation.

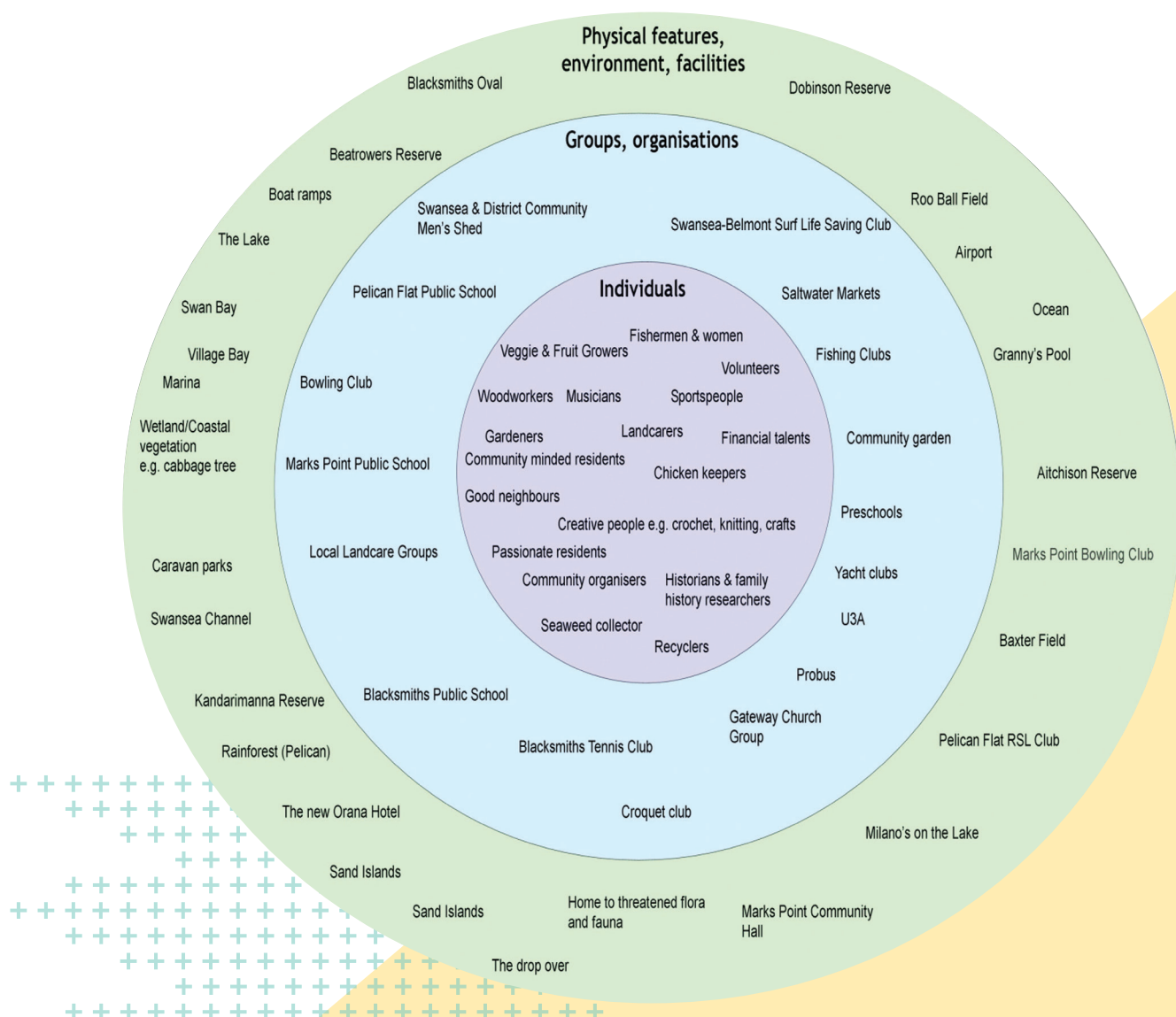


Figure 2: Asset Map for the Pelican Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group

What We Value

We value:

- + Being so close to the beautiful lake and beach;
- + Quiet, relaxed and peaceful atmosphere;
- + Good community;
- + The local natural environment;
- + Convenient location, close to services with relatively good public transport links;
- + Safe; and
- + Flat and accessible landscape.

Our Vision

The PASNG will strive to achieve this vision by collaborating with fellow neighbours to implement and regularly review this Plan.



A caring and harmonious
community interacting in a
productive and positive culture
and a healthy
natural environment.



Figure 3. Neighbourhood Vision for 2023

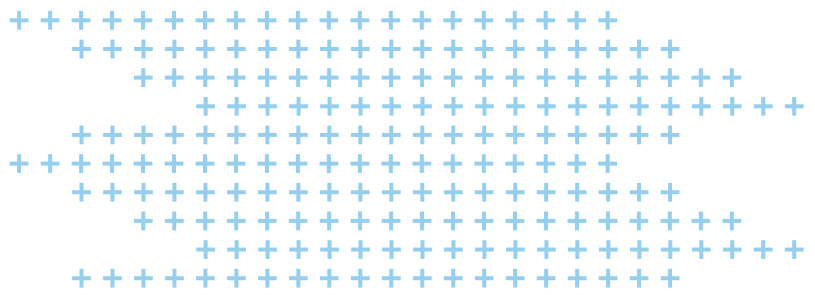
Community Projects

The activities and projects listed below are actions that the community has agreed to work towards to develop a more sustainable community and achieve the vision of the Pelican Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group.

Protecting the Natural Environment

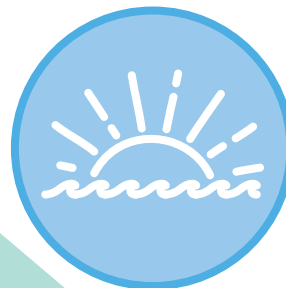
ACTION	OUTCOME
Establish a dune care group to work with Council to develop a plan to restore and vegetate the dunes at Blacksmiths Beach, particularly south of Maneela St	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthier coastal ecosystems• Opportunities created for neighbourly interaction leading to a stronger community
Consult with relevant agencies and engage volunteers to undertake bush care management activities: Naru Reserve, Pelican Revegetation of dunes north of Maneela St to repair fire damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthier local bush ecosystems• Opportunities created for neighbourly interaction leading to a stronger community
Work with other organisations to develop strategies to address impact of local feral animal issues, eg rabbits, foxes, Myna birds and crows particularly at: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Car park/reserve/helicopter landing area Blacksmiths Beach• Beach/Caravan Park Blacksmiths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthier local ecosystems• Greater opportunity for local flora and fauna to flourish• Reduced litter and food waste
Develop a plan to encourage responsible pet ownership (dogs on leads and cats controlled to avoid damage to wildlife)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater opportunity for local flora and fauna to flourish• Safer and cleaner public recreational areas• Reduced cases of pet poisoning from feral animal baits
Work with Council to develop opportunities to address the issues associated with the large volumes of wrack (seaweed) that gather on the foreshore, specifically at Marks Point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better informed locals who understand the protected status of wrack as well as an understanding of possible solutions to accumulation issues• Better understanding within Council of the community's concerns related to this matter
Work with Council towards the protection and management of local beaches. Particular issues include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of commercial fishing on local beaches, sand stabilisation and vegetation• Damage by 4 wheel drives, dune buggies and bikes in the sand and on vegetation• Impact of beach cleaning tractor on new grass in dunes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased awareness of the ecosystem damage caused by irresponsible vehicle use in the dunes• Reduced irresponsible vehicle use in the dunes• Healthier coastal terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem• Better understanding of the community into Council's beach cleaning processes





Protecting the Natural Environment (continued)

ACTION	OUTCOME
Develop a project to educate people on sustainable fishing including appropriate disposal of litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of sustainable fishing practices • Healthier coastal terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems • Cleaner beaches
Approach Swansea Belmont Surf Life Saving Club about moving their fence further out on beach to maintain sand barrier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased stabilising coastal vegetation • More stable dunes which means a better functioning coastal environment
Engage volunteers to clean up litter and rubbish; sites include the rock wall, the old boat ramp at Blacksmiths and Naru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier and cleaner coastal ecosystems • Opportunities created for neighbourly interaction leading to a stronger community
Talk with Council about illegal dumping at Naru; work with Council to develop and implement an education and prevention plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier and cleaner coastal ecosystems • Opportunities created for neighbourly interaction leading to a stronger community
Ensure the Sustainable Neighbourhood Group plays an active role and engages with Council around solutions and plans to deal with tidal inundation and flooding issues for the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged and well informed community • Increased confidence in Council's Local Adaptation Planning processes • Better project outcomes as community is aware and informed



Living Sustainably

ACTION	OUTCOME
Engage with Council to explore safety concerns around large volumes of vehicular and people traffic on Ungala Rd, Blacksmiths, and in particular the section near Swansea Channel (cyclists, walkers, boats). Explore possibility of bringing forward the Ungala Road cycleway to assist with this concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The safety of users is enhanced • Active transport opportunities are enhanced
Work with Council to source funding to deliver the Belmont to Swansea and Blacksmiths section of cycleway/footpath, and to provide other footpath and cycling connections to encourage walking and cycling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active transport opportunities are enhanced
Investigate ways to bring down the cost of residential solar systems (e.g. organise bulk purchases); other alternative energy systems for residents; and energy saving devices/appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced dependence on finite fossil fuels • For participants, reduced electricity bills • More resilient communities • Reduced local ecological footprint
Work with Council to address both illegal dumping and litter issues; investigate ways to encourage more responsible waste management behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier and cleaner public recreational areas • Healthier ecosystems when illegal dumping is reduced • Better awareness among community members of litter and illegal dumping issues
Work with licensed premises in the area to help them introduce better recycling systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased material recycled and diverted from landfill • Better informed community in relation to responsible recycling and waste management practices
Develop a community vegetable garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful, fun, friendly and educational public place created for the community • Increased opportunity for healthier and fresh food consumed at home • Increased opportunity for community connections
Investigate ways to promote more gardening at home of native gardens as well as vegetable and fruit gardens (e.g. workshops or advertising existing programs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backyard habitat created to support local native fauna and flora • Increased opportunity for healthier and fresh food consumed at home • Increased local knowledge • Greener more vibrant residential streetscapes • Increased community resilience
Develop fun awareness-raising events targeted at local young people; investigate possibilities of tying into established events such as Schools Night Market and the community Christmas dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased involvement in the program from young people • Increased awareness of the group and sustainability within the local community • Working partnerships developed with the Lake Macquarie Youth Advisory Committee and Eastlakes Youth Service



Improving Community Assets

ACTION	OUTCOME
Talk with Council and obtain guidelines to conduct an audit on drains at Marks Point; document findings and provide to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council of local drainage issues Potentially prioritised drainage work in the local neighbourhood
Consult with Council about losing public access to waterfront due to, amongst other things, bank erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council of community concern
Advise Council of concerns about concrete collapsing on foreshore near Pelican Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council of community concern Increased community awareness of channel erosion causes and issues
Consult with relevant agencies and harness volunteers to assist with the restoration of Grannies Pool, a much loved area of residents and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council and other organisations of community's strong views on the importance and significance of Grannies Pool Restoration of Grannies Pool, a recreational area for locals and visitors
Talk with the Marks Point Progress Association about upgrading Village Bay Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved public recreational area Relationship built between the Sustainable Neighbourhood Group and Marks Point Progress Association
Talk with Council about community concerns regarding flood level signs at Marks Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council of community's concern around the perception of flooding in the area
Develop a project to beautify and increase the pedestrian safety and accessibility of the shopping areas at Marks Point and Blacksmiths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council of community's ideas and vision for their local area Increased accessibility by foot, bike and car to local shopping and service areas Boost to local economy (supporting local shops over multinational corporate businesses)
Work with Council and other agencies to address the local graffiti issue; raise awareness of the NSW Graffiti Hotline 1800 707 125	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased local knowledge of the NSW Graffiti Hotline (free call) 1800 707 125 and website Increased awareness of legal artistic outlets for youth Reduced defacing of private and public buildings or infrastructure
Work with relevant organisations to improve community safety especially over the holiday season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within agencies and Council of community's safety concerns Increased community understanding of agencies and Council safety priorities and programs Improved community safety
Talk with Council about street and park lighting in the neighbourhood keeping in mind energy efficiency and community safety; some areas may be lit longer than necessary (e.g. Pelican Park BBQ area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness within Council of community's ideas about street/area lighting – what's lit too much, what's not lit enough Possible energy savings for Council



The Pelican Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group is made up of residents of Blacksmiths, Pelican and Marks Point, and those who have a special interest in the area.

The Group welcomes all individuals and groups with common goals who would like to work together to achieve our vision and objectives. The Sustainable Neighbourhood Group aims to work in cooperation with existing agencies and services, and is keen to develop partnerships to progress compatible activities.

The Group meets regularly and keeps in contact with members in order to review our progress, discuss and plan our projects and activities, and ensure that we are making the best of the many opportunities and assets available to us.

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