

2015 / 2016 Snapshot



Partnerships for a world-class urban ecosystem

Living Links is a major environmental and social project working to create a web of green spaces across Melbourne's south-east. By improving environmental values at existing parks, reserves and other natural assets, and improving the connections between them, the project delivers multiple benefits for people and nature.

Living Links brings together numerous organisations and community groups including City of Bayside, City of Casey, City of Greater Dandenong, City of Kingston, City of Knox, City of Maroondah, City of Monash, City of Whitehorse, Frankston City Council, Yarra Ranges Shire Council, Melbourne Water, South East Water, Parks Victoria, Bushwalking Victoria, First Friends of Dandenong Creek and Conservation Volunteers Australia.

The Port Phillip & Westernport CMA coordinates Living Links on behalf of the partner organisations by convening a Coordination Committee, managing the project's finances and employing project staff who lead the delivery of on-ground works, reporting and promotion.

Over its history, Living Links has developed a long-term corridor plan and has undertaken or assisted in the delivery of over 100 projects across Melbourne's south-east suburbs.

Achievements in 2015/16

In 2015/16, the Living Links Master Plan was maintained by updating the Living Links Prospectus of projects ready for implementation through collaboration with Living Links partners. An additional 10 projects were identified and added to the Living Links Prospectus. There are now a total of 64 projects ready for implementation.

A total of 103 projects from the Prospectus have now been completed, or are currently underway. This includes a wide range of activities carried out by our partners, including:

- Environmental works (revegetation, weed control, wetland creation, ecological burning);
- Civic works to improve recreational values (construction of trails, playgrounds, interpretive signage, community art projects); and
- Water quality improvement works (creation of retarding basins, bioswales, water filtration ponds and billabongs).

It also includes projects that carried out investigations or developed plans for the above types of activities, as well as educational programs, and the creation of environmental protection overlays.

In 2015/16, the environmental restoration works at River Gum Creek Reserve in Hampton Park were completed (see case study).



Living Links Photo Competition Winner Vikas David's image of Jells Lake, Dandenong Creek Trail

Looking ahead

Living Links will continue to work collaboratively with the project partners and is actively seeking major funding to support implementation of the Master Plan. The Living Links Prospectus is being used to promote and advance the implementation of Living Links wherever possible.



Living Links Coordination Committee at Drummies Reserve



Local students visiting River Gum Reserve as part of Birdlife Australia's educational program (right)

Case study - River Gum Creek Reserve Environmental Makeover and Schools Program

With support through Living Links, the City of Casey and Birdlife Australia have given the River Gum Creek Reserve in Hampton Park an environmental makeover and carried out a successful educational program for local schools.

On-ground works to restore the Reserve included re-alignment of the creek to stabilise badly eroded banks, revegetation of the creek corridor and the creation of a 'Habitat Island'. These works were carried out by the City of Casey. They also created a network of walking paths, a boardwalk, seating, picnic tables, a shelter and an environmentally-themed playground to attract local residents and visitors to enjoy the natural environment.

To supplement these on-ground works, Birdlife Australia delivered an educational program to teach local school children about the native birdlife that can be found at the River Gum Creek Reserve. Over 100 students from three local schools were involved in in-class sessions and excursions to the Reserve. It is hoped that by educating local children about the environmental benefits of the Reserve, they can develop a greater understanding of the importance of nature in urban environments.

We thank the following organisations for providing financial support to Living Links in 2015/16.

