



Report to Community - April 2018

Vision: For Benalla to become a zero net energy town by reducing and balancing energy demand with 100% renewable energy supply

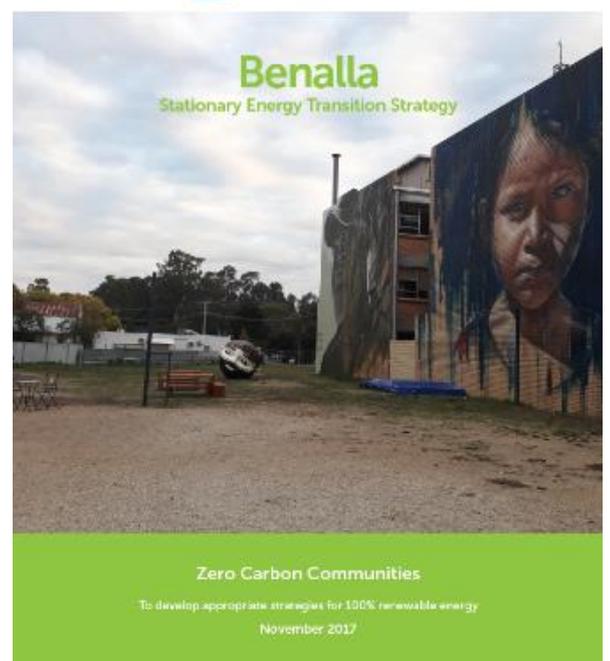
It is eight months since our last Report to Community and I must apologise for not having communicated with you over that time. However it has been a very busy period with many things happening which are detailed below.

In October 2017, REB held a Benalla Business Breakfast with the support of Benalla Rural City Council and the Benalla Business Network. The breakfast explored key issues for the Benalla business community, components of the transition strategy and information on available options for financial assistance.

The transition strategy document developed by REB and Beyond Zero Emissions was completed in November and details three strategies that need to be implemented to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve zero net energy. These strategies are:

- i. Energy efficiency measures to reduce energy use
- ii. Promote and install local roof top solar
- iii. Investigate utility scale renewables, battery storage and micro grids

In November 2017 the Benalla Stationary Energy Transition Strategy was launched by REB and BZE, with support from Benalla Rural City Council. The launch and workshop was attended by over 60 people and explored opportunities for energy efficiency, roof top solar, bulk buy programs, community energy projects and the potential for utility scale renewable energy. I expect many of you attended the workshop to launch the transition strategy.



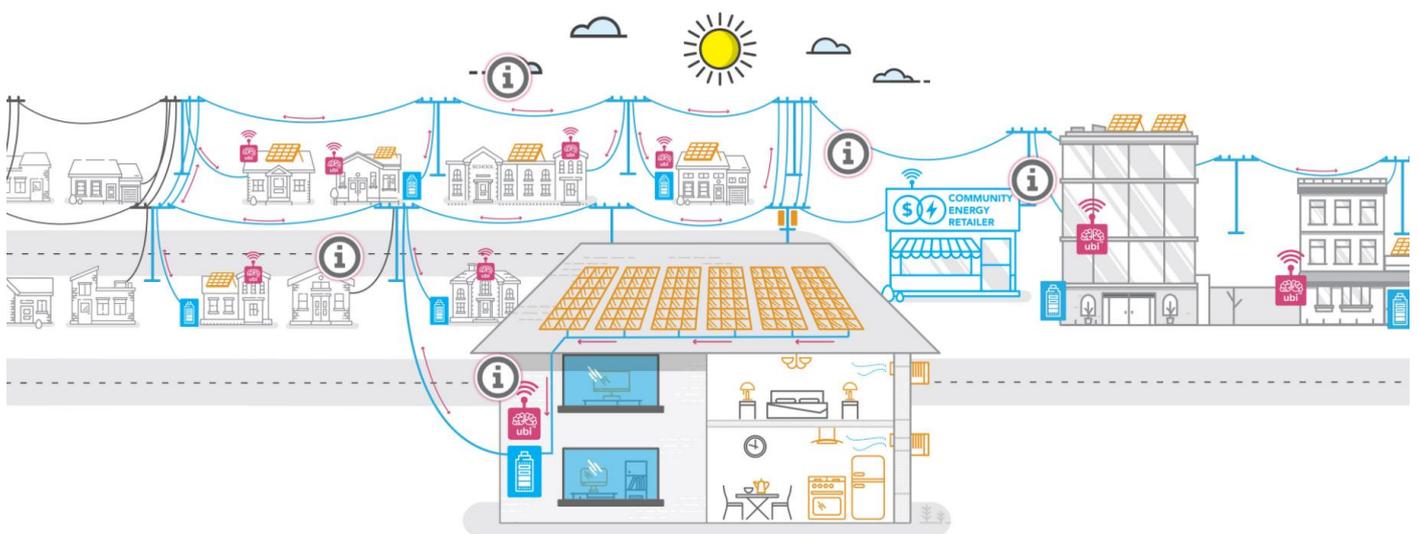
At this workshop Mondo Power, a commercial subsidiary of AusNet Services, explained how they had worked closely with Totally Renewable Yackandandah to develop a battery ready solar bulk buy offer for the Yackandandah community, which included a smart control device that readied properties for battery storage and the potential to trade power with neighbours in a micro grid. Mondo Power indicated they were willing to make a similar offer to the Benalla community.

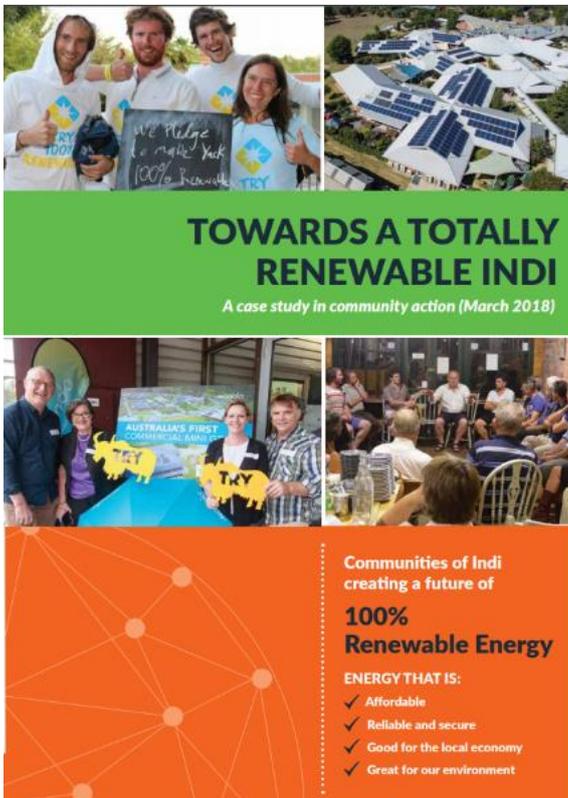
As a result of this workshop a number of community members volunteered to join the REB action group and small working groups have started to prepare action plans to start the implementation of the three major strategies mentioned above:

- i. Improving energy efficiency of buildings to reduce energy demand and energy bills. This group is planning to conduct a number of sessions focussed on improving the energy efficiency of existing buildings, making them more comfortable and reducing energy bills. Information about this series of sessions will be distributed shortly.
- ii. Investigating suitable roofs for a behind the meter community energy project. Initial focus will be on council owned buildings.
- iii. Utility scale - investigating the possibility of a waste to energy project.

Mondo Power will be presenting their proposal for a bulk buy of panels, monitoring systems and in future batteries and the establishment of microgrids to the Benalla community in early April. You should have received information about the Mondo information sessions already.

This proposal, if accepted by community members, will lead to increased numbers of PV panels on roofs and has the potential to see the establishment of microgrids in Benalla at a future date.





Indi Energy Working Group

Cathy McGowan, the federal member for Indi, has established an Indi Energy Working Group which consists of representatives from Indi councils, community renewable energy groups and industry stakeholders. This group provides advice and progresses the Indi renewable agenda, "Towards a Totally Renewable Indi.'

Federal Environment and Energy Minister, Josh Frydenberg, visits Indi

Cathy McGowan invited Josh Frydenberg to visit Indi and meet with community energy groups so that he may gain some insight into the work of such groups. His visit took place on March 19th and he met with local groups in Yackandandah and at the Hub, at Winton Wetlands. Renewable Energy Benalla representatives, Larissa Montgomery and John Lloyd

met with the minister at Winton Wetlands, and told him about the work of REB. Press reports indicated that he was amazed at the amount of work being done by local community energy groups to help achieve 100% renewable energy.

A Community Energy Retailer for North East Victoria

Indigo Shire, in partnership with Totally Renewable Yackandandah was successful in receiving funding to develop a business model for a community energy retailer. The proposed community energy retailer would be a decentralised energy retailer providing a platform for local communities across North East Victoria to achieve community energy goals and access locally generated, renewable energy.

The community energy retailer will source renewable energy from across the region. It will also invest in local energy initiatives and retain profits in local communities. The community energy retailer will change the way our communities interact with energy – taking the power back for communities.

A Community Energy Network has been created to support a community energy retailer for North East Victoria and Albury. The network currently has groups from Beechworth, Benalla, Corryong, Euroa, Indigo Valley, Mansfield, Taggerty, Wangaratta, Wodonga, and Yackandandah.

[The community energy retailer is currently looking for expressions of interest – people who may like to be a part of the project when it launches.](#) Register your interest by clicking on the above link or visit www.communityenergyretailer.com

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