



# WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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2023

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# Foreword from the Mayor and General Manager

Waste continues to be a significant challenge for society. We all have a responsibility for the waste generated by our activities and purchasing decisions, which is both financially and environmentally costly. Progress is being made as new technologies, new attitudes and new ways of doing things help us to divert re-usable or recyclable resources from the waste stream. Continued improvement is essential. While Australians are producing less waste per person, we are still generating higher volumes of waste overall.

With the introduction of the Tasmanian Waste Levy there are compelling reasons to improve how we all manage our wastes. In particular, to divert organics from land fill to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. A key action will be the implementation of a kerbside service for food organics and garden organics (FOGO). This service will provide multiple benefits to the municipality and is supported by the community.

Council has a strong commitment to working in partnership with other Southern Tasmanian Councils to provide better waste management services, including sharing of infrastructure and services. We remain committed to providing convenient, cost effective and equitable waste services and leading by example. We will continue to listen to the community and seek your feedback on major decisions.

We sincerely thank the residents of Sorell for engaging in good waste reduction practices and particularly those who volunteer their time and efforts to improve the environment for all of us.

# The Strategy

## Aim

To grow a sustainable community through proactive waste initiatives and increasing materials recovery.

### GOAL 1

To promote the sustainable management of resources.

- Support and educate the community in separation, recovery and reuse.
  - Collaborate with others regionally and nationally to improve effectiveness and sustainability.
  - Support the appropriate use of the Copping landfill and maximise its lifespan.
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### GOAL 2

To provide convenient and affordable waste services that meet the needs of the community.

- Provide high-quality, cost-effective and flexible kerbside collection services.
  - Provide long-term continuity of convenient waste disposal options.
  - Maintain effective and timely communication to keep the community engaged and informed.
  - Continue to share waste infrastructure with neighbouring Councils, including a waste transfer station.
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### GOAL 3

To minimise negative impacts of waste on the natural and built environments.

- Introduce green waste wheelie bins in residential areas and transition to a food and garden organic waste (FOGO) service.
  - Reduce litter and dumped rubbish in public places.
  - Ensure waste facilities and infrastructure are designed and maintained to reduce litter.
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## GOAL 1

# TO PROMOTE THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

Sustainability means that we live and act in a way that ensures future generations can enjoy a similar quality of life. Our choices and behaviours ensure they will have sufficient resources for healthy and fulfilling lives, including access to clean and healthy soil, air and water.

We can ensure quality of life for future generations by using resources carefully, not producing, buying or using resources unnecessarily, and by reusing items and recycling materials. Reducing our consumption of resources conserves them for the future.

Reusing and recycling materials allows them to provide extended benefits rather than being buried in the ground after a single use.

### **Supporting and educating the community in separation, recovery and reuse**

Thinking about our day-to-day actions and decisions now can make a difference for future generations. Cumulatively, individual actions and decisions do matter and can have a significant impact. Recycling by individuals and households is a positive example of this. We live in a society increasingly crunched for time and often it's just easier to take shortcuts. The Council can help both businesses and households by providing support and education to increase awareness, encourage smart purchasing decisions and improve resource recovery and recycling. Some waste issues are outside the Council's direct influence. For instance, the Tasmanian and Australian governments have responsibility for some important areas which nonetheless affect our present and future community. In such situations, the Council can advocate for the needs of our community and promote its interests. The Council will not ask the community to do what it does not do itself. The Council is committed to ongoing improvement of its waste management practices and to demonstrating best practice in waste management.

The Council will:

- Provide education to residents, businesses, schools and community groups about the importance of waste reduction and how they can improve waste management.
- Promote local re-use and recycling businesses or initiatives to the wider community.
- Advocate for the interests of the Sorell community to the Tasmanian and Australian governments.
- Develop and implement an internal sustainable purchasing policy.
- Improve separation and recycling of Council works waste.

## Collaborating with others regionally and nationally to improve effectiveness and sustainability

Working with others can help us achieve our objectives more efficiently and save time and money. By pooling resources, we can develop better long-term solutions.

Collaboration enables us to share knowledge and develop consistent approaches across municipalities. Pooling resources can create options for managing waste that are not possible for one municipality alone. This will be important for Sorell as the Statewide waste levy is introduced in 2023/24 (including a number of stepped increases for the first 3 years) which will increase the cost of waste to landfill. The Council participates in national initiatives and campaigns, including Keep Australia Beautiful, Garage Sale Trail and recycling of batteries. These not only provide efficiencies through access to shared resources and ideas, but also remind us that many people and organisations around Australia are all working to reduce waste.

Council is a part owner of Southern Waste Solutions that operates the Copping Landfill for residents of Sorell, Tasman, Clarence, Glamorgan Spring Bay and Kingborough and offers a commercial service for accepting Controlled Waste. Landfill gas is also extracted and is used to generate base-load renewable energy. Sufficient power is generated for up to 2500 homes.

The Council will:

- Explore opportunities for enhanced regional collaboration on an ongoing basis, including participating in the Southern Tasmanian Regional Waste Management Authority.
- Work with neighbouring Councils to share services and infrastructure where possible, including waste transfer stations and joint waste collection contracts.
- Continue to participate in national waste reduction initiatives.

## GOAL 2

# TO PROVIDE CONVENIENT AND AFFORDABLE WASTE SERVICES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

The Council considers waste management a core service for Sorell residents. This includes the ongoing provision of kerbside collections for standard household waste and a facility for disposal of other wastes. In line with Goal 1 we intend to introduce kerbside green waste wheelie bin collection for residential areas and transition to a FOGO service. Existing kerbside green waste and hardwaste will be phased out as Council transitions towards a more circular economy and responds to changing waste market conditions including contractor availability. Instead, residents will have subsidized access to the Mornington Park transfer station where there is a greater opportunity for re-use and recycling of waste. This does not diminish the Council's commitment to reducing waste. In fact, the Council has used a number of mechanisms to incentivise better separation and disposal practices and will continue to do so. A key component of our service is ensuring that up-to-date information is available and that we maintain open, two-way communication with the community.

### **Providing a high-quality, cost-effective and flexible kerbside collection service**

The Council provides a kerbside garbage and recycling collection service to all residences and some commercial properties – over 8,000 bins in total. Around 3200 tonnes of garbage and 1100 tonnes of recyclables and 500 tonnes of green waste are collected from the Sorell Municipal Area kerbsides annually.

The kerbside collection provides a convenient method of disposal for regular residential waste. At the same time, it is essential that household waste is sorted properly to reduce pressure on the landfill and conserve resources.

The standard 80/140L garbage bin collected weekly is more than adequate for the large majority of households in Sorell. In special circumstances, larger bins may be desired. A significant proportion of garbage contains organics which will be diverted to FOGO bins in the near future. To avoid the need to significantly increase waste management service rates, changing to a 240L fortnightly garbage collection will be adequate for most residents and savings made will be used to fund the FOGO service. This will ensure an affordable standard option is available to households that encourage proper sorting of waste, while providing some flexibility on a user pays basis in justifiable circumstances.

Currently, of the properties that have an existing waste collection service, 88% are zoned either residential, low density residential, village or rural living. Meaning that the vast majority of residents will receive the new kerbside green waste and FOGO service.

The Council will:

- Continue to deliver a fortnightly recycling service.
- Investigate changing the existing weekly garbage collection to a fortnightly garbage collection, providing it is cost effective to do so.
- Provide a specialised recycling 'hub' at the Council Community Administration Centre for items not collected in the kerbside service.
- Introduce a monthly green waste wheelie bin collection service for primarily residential, low-density and rural living residential areas only and transition to a fortnightly 'opt out' FOGO service.
- Phase out the existing green waste collection service and provide subsidised access for residents to 'drop off' green waste at the Mornington Park transfer station.
- Phase out hard waste collection and provide subsidised access for residents to 'drop off' waste at the Mornington Park transfer station.
- Develop criteria and procedures to assess requests for bin size upgrades and 'opt out' criteria for FOGO.
- Introduce new services and changes to services at the start of the financial year.
- Continue to critically assess waste management services and costs to achieve an appropriate level of service and affordability and that are consistent with the Waste Management Strategy Aim and Goals.



## GOAL 3

# TO MINIMISE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF WASTE ON THE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

The quality of our natural and built environments has a significant impact on the community's image and sense of pride.

Environments where waste is disposed of properly are attractive, healthy and safe. Poor waste management or disposal practices can lead to unpleasant and sometimes dangerous conditions, from making our streets and waterways look messy to posing significant health or safety risks to humans and wildlife. Waste products can pollute the environment, sometimes for many years or decades to come.

All of us have a responsibility to reduce wastes and dispose of them carefully. The Council plays a very active role by:

- Managing its facilities to a high standard and preventing escape of pollutants.
- Providing public litter bins and providing bins at some community events.
- Sweeping streets to keep them clean and tidy.
- Encouraging reporting of and investigating dumped rubbish and removing rubbish promptly.
- Integrate recycling centre operations with the Statewide Container Refund Scheme (to be introduced 2023/24).
- Introducing a kerbside service to recover food and garden organic waste.

Almost half of the waste placed in kerbside bins comes from food and garden organics (FOGO). FOGO in landfills can produce unhealthy or unpleasant leachates, gases or odours and can encourage pest animals. Organics take up valuable space which is needed for other things and is a useful resource. FOGO waste can provide a substantial amount of compost for gardening and agriculture for the community.

The Council has consulted the community on the option to introduce a new kerbside collection for FOGO waste, and the responses indicate a high level of support for this initiative.

The Council will:

- Work with Southern Waste Solutions to establish an Organics processing facility and support initiatives to re-use compost.
- Introduce a new kerbside collection for FOGO when the Copping facility is operational.

### **Reducing litter and dumped rubbish in public places**

The Council provides over 190 rubbish and dog faeces bins in streets, parks, sportsgrounds, bus stops and beaches around the municipal area, including 80L and 140L bins in enclosures in business areas with larger 240L bins mounted on poles and used in some beach areas and boat ramps. 660L wheelie bins are used in high demand location such as the RV parking area. The Council also undertakes street sweeping activities to remove litter and natural detritus.

Not all members of the community dispose of their wastes responsibly or understand why they should. Dumped rubbish can create health and safety risks to the public, attract pests and pollute waterways, sometimes lingering in the environment for many years. The presence of rubbish in public areas can also lead to further rubbish dumping, as others begin to accept this as normal behaviour.

The Council supports community groups that undertake litter collection activities and we arrange for the litter to be removed. Prompt removal of rubbish and reporting by members of the public are key to managing the issue and keeping our community clean, safe and inviting. Targeted education and assistance for those who have difficulty knowing how to deal with their unwanted items can improve waste disposal practices and help reduce rubbish dumping.

The Council will:

- Continue to work with other agencies to prevent dumping and remove litter.
- Encourage reporting and remove rubbish in a timely manner.
- Where evidence exists, take enforcement action against litterers.
- Ensure adequate waste management arrangements for events on public land.