

Green Wedge Management Plan



Green Wedge Management Plan Achievements

In preparing the new *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2022–2032*, over 100 community members told us what aspects of the Green Wedge they value the most:

- The positive effects on wellbeing from enjoying green natural spaces.
- Environmental significance of the area – just the existence of natural landscapes and features like hills, trees, waterways and animals.
- Environmental benefits, including reduced pollution in the air and water, and reduced heat or flood impact from extreme weather.
- Local food produced in the area.
- Local jobs in agriculture and related industries.
- Other values, such as cultural and spiritual connection to the land.

There were 84 actions set out in the *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011–2021*, and every one of them has now been commenced. Of these actions, 49 have been completed, five are still underway and 30 are ongoing changes to the way we work, including networking with the local Aboriginal community and rural communities, providing business support to help keep farmers on the land, and partnering with community groups to better care for our waterways and environment.

Here are just some of the initiatives already championed under the Green Wedge Management Plan:

- **Whittlesea Community Farm and Food Collective**, a pilot program to demonstrate innovative sustainable farming practices, increase food security and provide an opportunity for residents to learn about local, sustainable food production.
- **Wayfinding and interpretive signage** for all of Council's 60 conservation reserves to promote the value and significance of ecosystems on Council-owned land.

- **Support for farming**, including agribusiness and the 'right to farm', through a submission to the State Government's Planning for Melbourne's *Green Wedges and Agricultural Land* review project.
- **South Morang Farmers and Makers Market**, held on the third Saturday of each month, which provides an opportunity for local producers to connect with the community and sell their produce locally.
- **Support for tourism in Whittlesea Township**, through the campaigns such as Dinner on Us, Shop Local, Choose Your Own Adventure, Christmas on Church and Winter Weekends, as well as support for the Whittlesea Agricultural Show and Table of Plenty events.
- **Strengthened partnerships with Traditional Owners** to contribute to a greater awareness, understanding and appreciation of the relationship between cultural heritage, Traditional Owner knowledge and Aboriginal community health and wellbeing.
- **Advocacy for the proposed Melbourne Food and Innovation Export Hub (MFIH)**, which would support the use of agricultural land in the municipality and provide a meaningful contribution to Victoria's economic growth.
- **Partnerships with community groups** on waterway health, Landcare and rural education to support our community's own initiatives or new initiatives as a result of the Green Wedge Management Plan implementation.

Over the past 10 years, the *Green Wedge Management Plan 2011–2021* has nurtured and protected this land and delivered important outcomes for our community. Now at its completion, the Council and community are celebrating its many successful initiatives ahead of releasing the new draft plan in May–2022.

- The Whittlesea Community Farm and Food Collective
- Rural education programs to promote sustainable farming
- Improved signage across 60 conservation reserves
- Strengthened partnerships with Traditional Owners
- The South Morang Farmers and Makers Market

