

Promotional Opportunities

For Community Groups and Events



Introduction

You have planned your event / activity, the date is set and the next thing you need to do is tell people about it.

Many groups set aside a marketing budget as part of the activity, particularly for major events. You can, however, gain publicity without spending much, if any.

Even with an advertising budget, big or small, you should seek opportunities to leverage the paid advertising with some free promotion.

This document provides tips & tricks to maximise promotional opportunities that will assist in driving a successful event.

It is important to understand your demographic, who you need to be targeting for your event / activity. Workshop additional ideas with your fellow committee members as they will be a wealth of knowledge!

Never underestimate the power of a good graphic designer, an attractive user-friendly website, and effective social media!

Spreading the Word

Word of Mouth

The first place to start is with your members and supporters. Use your meetings, regular communications and newsletters to let them know about an event and encourage them to tell their friends and friends of friends. Word of mouth is still one of the most powerful selling tools because it also comes with a reliable, credible endorsement.

Fear of missing out (FOMO) is a social anxiety stemmed from the belief that others might be having fun while the person experiencing the anxiety is not present. It is characterized by a desire to stay continually connected with what others are doing. FOMO is also defined as a fear of regret, which may lead to concerns that one might miss an opportunity for social interaction, a novel experience or a profitable investment. It is the fear that deciding not to participate is the wrong choice. Make sure that people have FOMO with your next activity!

Social Media is KING

Social media needs no explanation – it's everywhere, and FREE (for the most part). However the most important thing with social media is engaging with your followers. Social media content must be meaningful. Monitor the page, reply to comments and questions and regularly post to keep engaging with your followers. One person should be assigned to maintaining all social media posts and can report back to the committee with a Social Media Engagement Plan, including dates and themes of posts to ensure all posts are aligned to your brand.

Remember, social media is a marketing tool, not a selling tool. Be authentic, tell your story – don't just bombard followers with making a purchase. The best marketing doesn't look like marketing!

Spreading the Word

Facebook is free to use however you can benefit from paid advertising (boosting posts and/or promoting page). Use your company/organisation page to create an 'event' – which will include the date, location, time, ticketing information & event description of your event. This is where people can click to say 'Going,' 'Interested' or 'Not Going.' If it is an un-ticketed event this allows organisers the opportunity to gauge how many people are interested in attending. On the flip side, those who have clicked 'Going' will be reminded by Facebook through their calendar, and allows them to share the event with their Facebook friends.



Instagram is a great visual tool to share engaging images and videos before, during and after the event. It is advisable to use the story function to 're-gram' or repost followers who tag your @ handle. Those who take the time to 'tag' you in their post are often quite chuffed to be reposted.



TikTok, the 'new kid on the block' is a free profile-based app that lets you watch, create, and share videos often to a soundtrack of the top hits in music. These videos can be grouped by hashtags, which often correspond to challenges or memes.



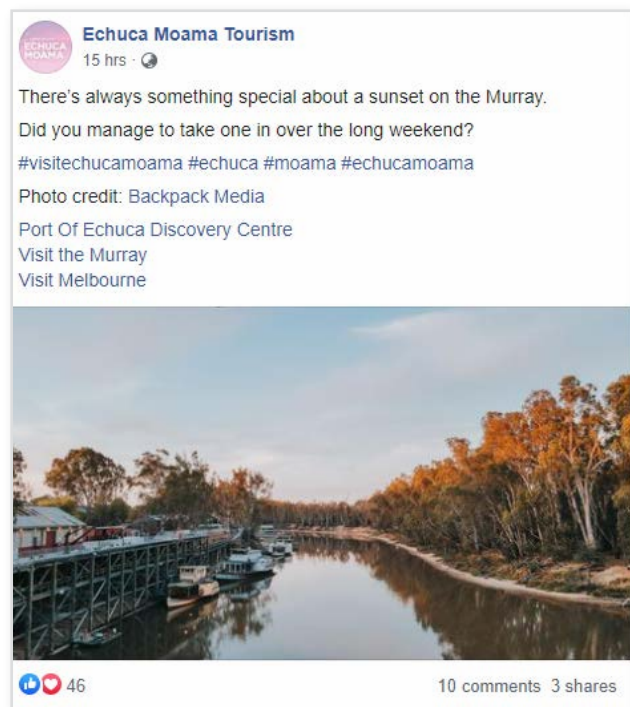
Hashtags (#) are specific and unique keywords that make your content more discoverable on social media platforms. They enable you to engage with other social media users based on a common theme or interest. Clicking on any hashtag directs you to every social media post that has used the same hashtag.

Using dedicated #hashtags in social media posts can be useful to promote the event and track who's following your page or has attended the event. Identify two or three core hashtags that are relevant to your event/organisation, and use these in every post. Additional hashtags can be included that are post specific.

If you are an event, remember to keep your followers and friends engaged throughout the year with updates, don't just bombard them with information in the lead up to the event! Social media is made to be social so don't be afraid to share related page posts, link videos, run competitions and ask questions for your followers to respond to. Good engagement results in your page appearing more frequently in followers' feeds.

Campaspe's Social Media strategy suggests that events use #lovewhereyoulive and Echuca-Moama & District Tourism currently use #visitechucamoama.

Below is an example from the Echuca Moama Tourism Facebook page.



Tags (@) allow social media users to engage an individual, business or any entity with a social profile when they mention them in a post or comment. In Facebook and Instagram, tagging notifies the recipient and hyperlinks to the tagged profile.

You may like to tag the business that is featured in the picture, a sponsor or event partner. When a page is 'tagged' they in turn may share that post to highlight to their followers that they have been identified in a specific post.



Spreading the Word

SMS Marketing

Direct SMS-based communication (text message to a mobile phone) connects with customers instantly and directly. SMS messages can feel personal, and that's why they have such a high read rate compared with many other communication channels. Compared to email, SMS is read more than 90% of the time, and that's usually within a few minutes of being received.

You will need to obtain and gain consent of the mobile number owner - you may have gathered this through a database, previous ticket order purchases, etc. You don't require special software to send out SMS marketing however you can link with an existing Client Relationship Management (CRM) program if you have one.

Websites such as www.wholesalesms.com.au offer an easy 'how-to guide.'

Don't waste your readers time and don't spam - remember to include a web link and a call to action!

Website

Put the details of your event on your website. You may only be reaching the people who know you exist and are interested in what you are doing, but they are also the group most likely to invest in your event or activity.

A great cross promotional opportunity is to link your social media posts back to your website. It is particularly beneficial when there is a lot of information to relay. By linking, you can refer to the website for more information.

Make sure you keep the information on your website updated, and check the listing for required updates at least weekly. Out of date websites create a very bad first impression.

Visitor Information Centres

Local Visitor Information Centres (VICs) are a great source of promotion for visitors and locals. This could be achieved through the VICs' website, social media platforms, weekly news updates and 'What's on' flyers. These opportunities will contribute to greater traction and a greater audience. Make sure that they are aware of your event, including prices, times and location.

Many VIC's offer an ambassador/volunteer program. If it is an annual event you may even wish to invite ambassadors along to your event so they can talk firsthand about your events. Remember FOMO!

Local contacts:

Echuca-Moama & District Tourism Association - Echuca Moama Visitor Information Centre

www.echucamoama.com
Karen Colvin, VIC Manager
karen@echucamoama.com or 03 5480 7555.

Volunteer-run information hubs (located within Campaspe Shire):

Rochester Sports Museum & Visitor Information

www.facebook.com/rochestersportsmuseum/
Email digital flyer to Manager Sam Watkins - shottosam@bigpond.com

Gunbower Tourism & Events

www.facebook.com/gunbowertourism/
Email digital flyer to Manager Letitia Edwards
letitiatedwards@gmail.com

Kyabram Town Hall

www.facebook.com/kyabramtownhall/
Email digital flyer to Manager Anne Churches - info@kyabramtownhall.com.au

Regionally accredited Visitor Information Centres:

Heathcote Visitor Centre

www.heathcote.org.au/
heathcotevic@bendigo.vic.gov.au
or phone 03 5433 3121.

Bendigo Visitor Information Centre

www.bendigoregion.com.au/
List events using the form:
www.bendigotourism.com/eventitem_add.asp
(Note preference is given to Bendigo based events)
03 5434 6060 or tourism@bendigo.vic.gov.au

Shepparton Visitor Information Centre

<http://visitshepparton.com.au/>
Add your event using this form - <http://greatershepparton.com.au/whats-happening/events/suggest-event> 03 5832 9330, 1800 808 839
or info@visitshepparton.com.au

Spreading the Word

What's On Listing

Make sure that your event is listed on a variety of event calendars across your region. This is a job that can be allocated to one person as submitting event listings can take time and it is essential they contain consistent messaging. Listings often require images to be uploaded in a specific size which takes extra time.

Below is a list of event calendars. Make sure you register your event with genre specific sites.

Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)

www.visitvictoria.com

The ATDW is Australia's national tourism database and distribution platform. It's the best way to get your event in front of not only a huge network of industry relevant marketing mediums, but in a prime position on your state tourism website. Victorian tourism operators/businesses do have to pay an annual fee however it's free for events to list their information on <http://atdw.com.au>

Echuca Moama & District Tourism Association

www.echucamoama.com

Events calendar that is accessed by visitors, visitor centre staff and tourism businesses.

Email event details including event name, date, opening/closing times, cost, short description of event to Karen Colvin, VIC Manager
karen@echucamoama.com

Campaspe Shire Council

www.campaspe.vic.gov.au

Upcoming Events list. Community events can be listed free of charge by clicking on the below link and submitting the form.

www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/Recreation-events/Events/Events-directory

Murray River Council

www.murrayriver.nsw.gov.au

List an event on the Murray River Council website
www.murrayriver.nsw.gov.au/discover/arts/community-events

McPherson Media Group

Local papers are a great supporter of events with publications such as the Riverine Herald and Kyabram Free Press offering weekly 'Coming Events' columns.

www.riverineherald.com.au/@events

Email event details through to Sarah Crossman at sarah.crossman@mmg.com.au

Discover Murray

www.murrayriver.com.au

Use the 'Promote your event for free' section of the website in the Events & Festivals drop down menu.

Events on the Murray

www.eventsonthemurray.com.au

Listings are free and include an active social media campaign. To register visit
<http://eventsonthemurray.com.au/events/community/add>

One Hour Out (OHO)

www.ono.com.au

One Hour Out is a free to read media site about supporting regional food producers and venues. OHO encourages city folk to travel 'one hour out' and experience all the best food and cultural experiences outside the city. Their weekly e-newsletters are a fantastic promotional tool, encouraging regional dispersal. Complete the online form to register your event.

EventFinda

www.eventfinda.com.au

Eventfinda is an online cultural events calendar that focuses on what's on around Australia.

Events are organised into the categories 'Concerts and Gig Guide', 'Festivals and Lifestyle', 'Performing Arts' and 'Sports and Outdoors', 'Exhibitions' and 'Workshops & Conferences' to help you find what you're looking for.

Royal Auto

www.racv.com.au

Royal Auto features events under categories of motoring, arts, lifestyle and community.

Submit your event using the email

royalautoevents@racv.com.au

<https://www.racv.com.au/royalauto/competitions-events.html>

Spreading the Word

Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA)

The CMCA website includes a platform to promote events held in RV Friendly Towns. Lockington & Kyabram have their RV Friendly status while Echuca Rotary Park offers an RV Friendly Dump Point.
<https://rvfriendly.cmca.net.au>

Bendigo Advertiser

Submit events details online at
www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/community/events

Shepparton News

Email events details including contact numbers to editor@sheppnews.com.au and ask for the information to be forwarded to the appropriate person.
<https://www.sheppnews.com.au/events>

Victorian Online Events Calendar

Victoria Together website has been created by the Victorian Government to promote a range of events across the state. Numerous metropolitan journalists use this calendar to highlight events in their publications.

View the Events Calendar at
www.together.vic.gov.au/about-victoria-together and click on 'Submit your experience'

Event Finder

www.eventfinda.com.au/add-event

The Art Shed Shepparton News

<http://theartshed.sheppnews.com.au>

My Community Connect

www.mycommunityconnect.com.au

Ticketing 101

People want to be able to purchase event tickets easily and quickly. Selling tickets online is the easiest way to achieve this. You can then distribute the link on websites, social media and promotional flyers. Also, people will be able to Google search the event and make their purchase in a few quick clicks!

Ticketing websites take a small commission for hosting your event page and processing purchases.

Echuca Moama and District Tourism Association offers a ticketing service which keeps funds local. For further information on this service visit
www.echucamoama.com/accommodation/tickets-and-packages

Other online self-managed ticketing websites include:

www.eventbrite.com.au/organizer

www.stickytickets.com.au

www.trybooking.com

Selling tickets on the ground eg, in local stores or at the gate to your event, is an alternative method however do consider the catchment that this will reach – local or only those who have heard of your event well in advance, versus unlimited capacity via the internet.

Email bulletin

Blast out to your digital networks via a catchy email or using a program like Mailchimp or Flodesk.

Mailchimp and Flodesk are email marketing campaign builders that take the hard work of designing the bulletin for you. Simply drag and drop your content, add your email address database and schedule to send!

Use the 'BCC' (blind carbon copy) function when sending an email to promote your event. This respects others privacy. Be sure to embed your event flyer into the email rather than attaching, this way all information is visible and they don't need to go looking for the information.

Spreading the Word

Email Signature

Every day thousands of emails are sent across the globe. Use your email signature to promote your next event, or better still, you could ask your sponsors/ supporters to include it on their business emails. This also allows them to show their customers what events and activities they are aligned to.

Add a visual plug below your email signature using your event graphic design, logo and details. See below example:

Kathryn Mackenzie
CEO
Echuca Moama Tourism
2 Heygarth Street (PO Box 8)
Echuca, VIC, 3564.
Phone: 03-54807555
Mobile: 0429228900
Fax: 03-54826413
Email: kathryn@echucamoama.com
Website: www.echucamoama.com



In the Line of Sight

Posters

Promote your event using the tried and true method of the poster put up around town.

If you have a little spare cash we strongly recommend engaging a local graphic designer to mock up an eye catching, professional poster to make your event POP!

If you consider yourself pretty crafty, you can use simple free online design programs (Canva, Snappa etc) which provide many free template options to suit your needs.

Local businesses that resonate with your target demographic are the perfect way to reach your potential attendees. Just don't forget to collect the posters after the event out of courtesy.

Some Councils ban posters on Council or public property, so check with the relevant local laws department before erecting posters.

Signage

Catch passing trade with a large sign in a prominent location with high traffic volume. It is essential to seek approval from the local Council and/or VicRoads.

Set areas for banners/signs in Echuca:

Fence of Echuca War Memorial Aquatic Centre (EWMAC) that faces High Street.

A temporary sign can be erected on the wire fence line to capture the attention of passing motorists. The opportunity is only available for not for profit community based local events (subject to terms and conditions.) Signage is permitted for up to 14 days before the event, and removed within two days after the event. Bookings via EWMAC's customer service supervisor (03) 5483 9698.

What's On - Moama side of the Echuca Moama Bridge.

Contact the Economic Development team at Murray River Shire for availability and fees. Signage is to be provided at the event organiser's cost, through Brian Manning Signs or Rich River Signs. 1300 087 004

Echuca CBD flagpoles

Council has nine flagpoles in the Echuca CBD (3 in 3 roundabouts) which are available for event promotion. Event organisers needs to design and produce the flags in accordance with the policy and there is a fee payable to Council to install and remove the flags. The policy and application form can be found at www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/Recreation-events/Events/Flagpole-program

The cost of producing the flags is the event organiser's responsibility and is approximately \$1700 for nine flags.

Echuca Moama Bridge Sign

Murray River Council offer a sign on the Echuca Moama bridge that allows for an event to be promoted. Sign needs to be made out of corflute and be 2340mm wide x 1220mm high.

If you are looking at advertising your event on the Echuca Moama Bridge please ensure that you contact the Economic Development team at Murray River Council (1300 087 004) to book your advertising time.

Billboards

Billboards are a great promotional toll which could be utilised to promote your event or programs.

Prices vary depending on the length of campaign and the time of year.

Contact details for local billboards:

Gawk Billboards - www.gawk.com.au Luke Course
0431 304 043 luke@gawk.com.au

Tickets 4 Promo

If you've got some well known people in your networks, use them for free promotion on their social media channels and reward them with free tickets for their efforts

When providing editorial why not offer free tickets to the media outlet so they can offer a free giveaway. This will increase interest in the article and may increase the space allocated to your event!

Feed the News

Media in Campaspe

Getting your story told in the media is an important component to increase your business and event profile.

Media coverage helps to spread your message to a greater audience than you could reach through your own efforts. To be successful you need to create a strong media strategy, develop good relationships and have the ability to recognise what is 'news.'

First and foremost, create a media list. You can find out more via the Media, Marketing & Post Centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au/mmp. Included at the end of this section are some local contacts to get you started.

Next, ask yourself...

'What's the hook?'

'What's the story?'

'Where's the picture?'

BAM! If you get all three right, you'll significantly increase your chance of media coverage because you've put yourself in the journalists, and audiences, shoes.

Now time to put your pen to paper – or fingers to the keyboard...

1. Write a media release

It sounds difficult, but it's not. A media release is a simple explanation of your event that grabs the media's attention from the get go. Keep it to one page. Ensure your heading is catchy, relevant but succinct. Use an event logo if you have one and put a contact name and number (preferably a mobile) at the bottom of the page as a contact for media enquiries. The same media release can be used for all media.

If you host an annual event or activity, think about what is different this year?

Are you celebrating a particular anniversary? Is there a specific theme? Do you have a new element?

Remember to follow the pyramid approach:



Feed the News

2. Plant the seed and pitch

Pick up the phone and call the relevant media outlet, ask to speak to a reporter (namedrop a specific one if you can – it helps with cut through) and quickly explain you have an event and would like to send through a media release. Consider who you want to reach and the timing of the publication.

3. Picture Perfect

In print and on TV, a great picture or good vision, can be the difference between a tiny brief and the front page or lead item. So think about how the event can be demonstrated visually and also suggest this to the reporter when you speak to them. Consider your Unique Selling Proposition (USP). What sets your event apart from the others?

4. Ps and Qs

Remember your manners! If a media outlet runs something on your event, ring or email to thank them. Courtesy goes a long way and building a good relationship is key to successful event promotion.

News - Newspapers

Local newspapers are often looking for 'news' to fill its pages. With the right pitch and plenty of time you should have some success with your article. Major and regional newspapers are also great options if you've got a unique or brand new event, or if a big name feature is involved.

You'll have to work for it though! Journalists can be notoriously hard to get on to. Do your research and target a specific journalist by name when you make the call.

The art of getting free advertising is in converting advertising copy into 'news'. BUT do not pitch a story written like an advertisement. Use concise, newsworthy and catchy language that is of interest to the public (not overtly promotional). AGAIN - What is your USP? Lead with that!

News - radio

There are two types of radio to target – commercial and community. Both are useful for promoting local events via news, what's on plugs and interviews.

Think of how much time you spend in and out of the car. Radio plugs fit the perfect sitting, waiting, listening and wandering time to inspire attending a new event.

Most community radio stations are very keen to support local organisations and tend to be under utilised when people think of local media.

To find your nearest station visit the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia's website at <https://www.cbaa.org.au/>

Aim for multiple appearances for different listeners and demographics, but you will need to think of a different story line for each one - or a different time slot.

News - TV

Regional news outlets are generally great at getting out and about and filming local feel good pieces. Sometimes if your promotion is going well, the network will approach you off their own bat. If not, you'll need to contact the network and pitch your story just as you did for newspaper & radio.

Once you're confirmed, you'll need to set up a "picture opportunity" or TV stunt that is so spectacular, so colourful, so active and so much fun that you catch the audience's attention.

Failing that, invite the TV stations around when the event actually happens. This won't help sell tickets in advance, but any PR is good PR.

News – blogs, specialist websites & online news platforms

Blogs are perfect for reaching special interest audiences. Blogs and online news outlets cater to niche markets and often these audiences are incredibly dedicated, reading multiple times a day.

Most have their own specific tone of voice and style of writing that appeals to these audiences or represents the blogger personally. So why not tailor your pitch to suit? Imitation is the highest form of flattery.

Newspapers	Published	Phone	Email
Riverine Herald	Mon, Wed & Fri	(03) 5482 1111	editorial@riverineherald.com.au
Campaspe News	Tues	(03) 5484 2000	editorial@riverineherald.com.au
Kyabram Free Press	Wed	(03) 5852 1533	editorial@riverineherald.com.au
Shepparton News	Monday - Friday	(03) 5831 2312	editor@sheppnews.com.au
Country News	Tues/Wed	(03) 5831 2312	editor@countrynews.com.au
The Adviser (Shep)	Wednesdays	(03) 5832 8900	editorial@sheppartonadviser.com.au
Bendigo Advertiser	Daily	(03) 5434 4470	addynews@bendigoadvertiser.com.au
Bendigo Weekly	Insert on Sat	(03) 5434 4470	addynews@bendigoadvertiser.com.au
Mclvor Times	Wednesdays	(03) 5433 3311	editor@mcivortimes.com.au
Tongala Times	Monthly	(03) 5859 0065	lyn.hope1@bigpond.com
Girgarre Gazette	Monthly	(03) 5854 6482	girgarregazette@yahoo.com.au
Waranga News	Fortnightly, Thurs	(03) 5856 1120	wnews@iinet.net.au
Locky News	Fortnightly, Fri	(03) 5486 2515	lockynews@bigpond.com
Stanhope Newsletter	Monthly	(03) 5857 2866	stanhopebc@gmail.com

Radio outlets	Frequency	Telephone	Email
EMFM	104.7 FM	(03) 5480 2085	info@radioemfm.org.au
Edge FM	102.5FM	(03) 5482 2047	news@edgefm.com.au
ABC Bendigo	91.1 FM	(03) 5440 1711	www.abc.net.au/radio/centralvic/live/
ABC Shepparton	97.7 FM	(03) 5820 4011	alburywodonga.regional@abc.net.au
Hit FM, Bendigo	91.9 FM	(03) 5430 2888	bendigo@hit.com.au
Triple M, Bendigo	93.5 FM	(03) 5430 2888	bendigo@triplem.com.au
Hit FM, Shepparton	96.9 FM	(03) 5821 1260	reception.shepparton@sca.com.au
Triple M, Shepparton	95.3 FM	(03) 5821 1260	reception.shepparton@sca.com.au
OneFM, Shepparton	98.5 FM	(03) 5831 3131	admin@fm985.com.au

TV outlets	Frequency	Phone	Email
WIN News, Bendigo	Nightly	(03) 5430 3599	bennews@winvic.com.au
WIN News, Shepp	Nightly	(03) 5823 3699	shenews@winvic.com.au

Other Media	Phone	Email
Echuca Moama What's On	(03) 5482 1111	sarah.crossman@mmg.com.au stuart.addicott@riverineherald.com.au
The Guardian- Tourist News	(03) 5032 2161	edit@theguardian.com.au rduff@theguardian.com.au
Weekly Times	(03) 9292 2961	wtimes@theweeklytimes.com.au
Country News	(03) 5820 3229	editor@countrynews.com.au

Your Checklist

Connect

- Connect with Campaspe's Event Support Officer on 03 5481 2887
- Subscribe to Campaspe Shire Council's Economic Development e-newsletter <https://tinyurl.com/syh6sew>
- ATDW listing – ensure your listing is up on time and up to dated
- Consider becoming a paid member of Echuca Moama & District Tourism to get a serious tourism and event leg up <https://www.echucamoama.com>

Marketing

- List your events – kick start with a Facebook event page run via your business page, use ATDW's free event listing
- Are all of your contact details up to date and are you responding to queries in a timely manner?
- Use consistent hashtags to gain traction and support #mycampaspe #lovewhereyou live – or make up your own to promote in the lead up to, during and post event or your business
- Tags - don't forget to tag @campaspeshire and other regional partners to score reposts, shout outs and ultimately their followers viewing your posts!
- Logo - do you have high res versions of your logo
- Photos – are you using up to date high res photos to capture your audience?

Media

- Update your media database regularly and ensure you're addressing your email communications to the right person
- Contacts are king – so keep adding to your list every day/week/month!
- Be aware of media deadlines – add them to your diary and get content in well ahead of time!
- Invite a select group of media to attend your event?

Ticketing

- Are your tickets affordable, easy to access and purchase?
- Collect data from ticket holders for post event analysis & demographic identification

Industry Training

- Campaspe Eco Dev team run regular upskilling workshops that range from digital marketing, search engine optimisation and business planning throughout the year. Sign up to our e-newsletter and check Council's Facebook page to stay informed.
- Murray Regional Tourism + EMDTA also run training sessions. Eco Dev team will let you know when they're on through our monthly e-newsletter.

Post event evaluation

- Audience – who attended? Was it who you expected? Use info to improve year on year
- Review your strategy – all methods have gaps, limitations and bias. Consider the cost-benefit of paid advertising and spending \$\$\$ where it has best bang for buck!