



# **SHARYN HUNNISET & GREG POWELL LISMORE COMMUNITY SOLARFARMS**



POWERING THE  
FUTURE TOGETHER

#CECongress17  
@C4CEau

C4CE



# Community Energy Congress 2017

## ‘Stories of Success’

Lismore Community Solar

**Sharyn Hunnisett & Greg Howell**





# Presentation Outline



Sharyn – Lismore City Council:

- What is Farming the Sun – *Lismore Community Solar*
- Why Lismore City Council got involved
- Challenges and Key messages of success

Greg – Director/Investor

- Community investor perspective of success





# Northern Rivers Snapshot







# Farming the Sun

## 'Lismore Community Solar'





# Farming the Sun

## 'Lismore Community Solar'



Sport & Aquatic Centre



East Lismore STP





# Community Consultation

What if our  
community could design  
its future?



*Imagine* our environment

***‘Lismore being a  
Model of Sustainability’***

*LCC's goal is to  
“self-generate all  
Councils' electricity  
needs from renewable  
sources by 2023.”*

**Farming the Sun –  
Lismore Community Solar Farm Project**





# Lismore Community Solar

## Key Challenges



- ▶ RET – Political uncertainty
- ▶ Business model development
- ▶ Is it legal for Council to borrow from the community?
- ▶ Site constraints STP
- ▶ Was the community interested?







# Lismore Community Solar

## Key Challenge – Spatial Constraints





# Lismore Community Solar

## Key Challenges



## Was the Community Interested?

Investor Pledge Launch – June 2015



**August 2016:**

**The Share Offer was Fulfilled in a matter of weeks!!**





# Lismore Community Solar



## Key Messages:

- ▶ **Councils CSP** and **Renewable Energy Goal** provided the policy structure to support community energy projects.
- ▶ **Most important: Valuing more than the bottom line!**
  - ▶ The investment equation for this project is considered to be far greater than finances alone.
  - ▶ The most significant benefits are the community partnerships, local investment, the showcase model – National profiling.
- ▶ It's not a clear straightforward path!



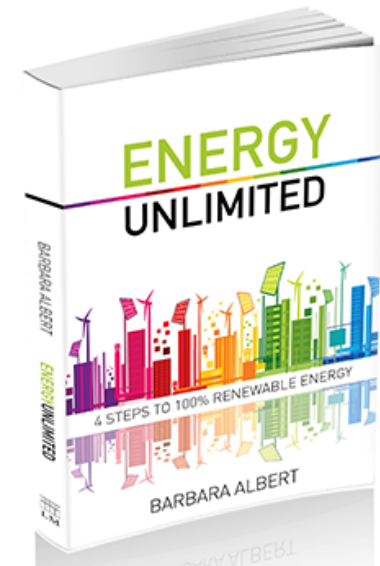


# Lismore Community Solar National Recognition

- ▶ OEH Sustainability Advantage Silver Partner



- ▶ Winner 2015
  - ▶ Local Government Sustainability
  - ▶ and Overall Regional Winner







# Lismore Community Solar



- ▶ Success as a Community Group:
  - ▶ Getting renewables up and running locally
- ▶ Success as a Director of community owned company:
  - ▶ Having a simple, easy to manage, low effort model
- ▶ Success as an Investor:
  - ▶ Getting a good, safe return from an ethical investment





# Lismore Community Solar



- ▶ Success was achieved by:
  - ▶ Advisory panel (6 local members)
  - ▶ One company for each solarfarm (20 shareholders)
  - ▶ Offering good safe return (>5%)
- ▶ Greater success:
  - ▶ Helping others with this model to get more renewables installed!

