

GOOLWA TIDY TOWNS AWARD

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:09): Today, I wish to pay tribute to a town in my electorate. Standing, as it does, at the junction of one of the world's greatest rivers (the River Murray) and the mighty Southern Ocean, the river port of Goolwa has a special place in the history of both South Australia and Australia. Goolwa was built around the once thriving river trade that funnelled inland produce to export markets around the world. In the days before trains, planes and major road networks, the river was the nation's inland highway—the vital thread that linked producers to markets. Goolwa is the home of Australia's first railway. It is home to South Australia's first post office. It is at the doorstep of one of the most diverse and unique ecosystems in the world, for which it enjoys international recognition.

It is also home to one of Australia's most sustainably progressive communities. Keep Australia Beautiful (better known as KESAB) give Tidy Towns awards to recognise local community and individual efforts that are helping rural and regional communities become environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. In winning the Resource Recovery and Waste Management category of KESAB's 2009-10 Tidy Towns awards, Goolwa has shown other communities around Australia how, with vision, leadership, planning and commitment, ordinary citizens can achieve extraordinary results. That was the national award of the Keep Australia Beautiful program. Goolwa has also received a commendation for water conservation, further underlining its intelligent and valuable utilisation of vital resources.

The programs behind these awards may one day become standard procedure for all communities in a country where sustainable use of water is pivotal to survival and success. In a world increasingly focused on maximising resources and minimising waste, Goolwa stands as a beacon for 'how to' innovation and application. It is cited in the Tidy Towns 2010 Program Report for its community initiatives. Goolwa has a proud history of achievement in this field, being winner of Australia's Tidy Towns in 1998-99 and South Australian winner in 1996, 1998 and 2010.

Sustainability is the key to a healthy and successful future, and sustainability is at the core of the programs that underpin Goolwa's success. The Tidy Towns 2010 program report addresses many different areas of activity, such as: community action and partnerships; litter prevention; environmental innovation and protection; heritage and culture; and young legends.

The report refers to broad community alliances that complement Alexandrina council's strategic approach to sustainability. An example of this is the Cittaslow at Goolwa—a community-managed system of continuous improvement with sustainable outcomes, combining the energies of community, council and business. Goolwa is Australia's first Cittaslow town and the first outside Europe, where it began in 1999.

In relation to litter prevention, the report refers to 'positive litter control strategies and the community's commitment to keeping Goolwa litter free', noting the numerous bins evident throughout the town and the fact that many residents pick up litter during their daily walking regimes.

In the area of environmental innovation and protection, Goolwa has undertaken stormwater, waste water and coast care projects, as well as energy efficiency initiatives, including purchasing renewable power for street lighting.

Resource recovery initiatives, such as specialised landfill facilities, reduce the town's impact on the environment. Various recovery and recycling projects covering, among other things, building products and green waste provide business opportunities and employment for individuals with a disability. Similarly, environment education programs involve school students and the Aboriginal community working together, which improves understanding and extends social networks. Numerous changes to school infrastructure have improved efficiencies and reduced the school's carbon footprint. In keeping with the world stage theme, there is the following comment from a judge:

The whole Goolwa community and Alexandrina council are to be commended on their tremendous efforts in hosting the internationally-renowned Tour Down Under professional cycle race as well as community ride. Thousands of cyclists and spectators descended upon Goolwa and were well catered for and hosted by a willing and embracing community.

I had the pleasure and privilege of being present at the awards presentation in Canberra in April 2010. During the awards ceremony, Keep Australia Beautiful chairman, Don Chambers, said:

It is always a pleasure to be able to recognise and promote the work that many dedicated individuals and communities are undertaking to protect and preserve their local environment and history. Congratulations to the community of Goolwa for their local sustainability practices and education.

As the local member of parliament, I am proud to represent the people of the town of Goolwa.