

# Collaborating with Neighbours to Increase Effectiveness of Deer Control and Management



Photo credit: FYXO

## Examples of effective collaborative deer control programs, and how they came to be.

### Benefits of Local Programs

Deer management works best at a landscape level. The more landholders are engaged, the better the deer management outcomes. The essential element is neighbours talking with neighbours, collaborating as a community. Forming a community deer action group with clear goals and good communication between all members is consistent across all successful groups.

### Why work together?

Working together to manage and control deer provides multiple benefits, including:

- sharing goals, achievements, resources and learnings
- increases feeling of community and support
- one plan can cover multiple private properties
- planning and coordinating control efforts can reduce the number of shoot nights each month, aid in communication of works, better selection of safer shoot sites and cost sharing (if required)
- having adjoining control properties increases the area of effective impact and enables controllers to 'jump the fence' if (when) the deer are in the neighbouring property

### Nillumbik Land Management Incentive Program - LMIP

- Up to 50% contribution by Council to a group of landholders for land management works
- A minimum of 5 adjoining or nearby properties are required to be eligible.
- The guidelines are available on Council's website
- Contact Council's Land Management Officers for full details and eligibility – 9433 3111 or [environment@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

### Forming formal and informal groups of neighbouring landholders

- Designate a leader of the group who will help get other landholders on board, and will act as the main contact person for the group
- The group can be set up with varying structures, one way is to join an existing incorporated group e.g. Landcare Victoria
- Council's Community Development Team can offer advice with setting up a community group. Contact [community@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:community@nillumbik.vic.gov.au) for further information

## Engaging with your Neighbours

Three great community examples with different collaboration approaches that led to successful deer control.

### **Cardinia Deer Management Coalition**

The group connects rural landholders with volunteer deer controllers that have been vetted to meet standards outlined by CDMC and expected by the broader community.

- Invited coalition membership via letters and social media; encouraging landholder and broader community interest
- Landholders contact CDMC for advice on deer control. A volunteer assessor is sent to the property to determine suitability of control.
- If the site is a safe location for control, the assessor will provide a list of controllers. Landholder selects the controller and manages all arrangements
- CDMC incorporated to minimise their legal risk and joined Landcare to access cheaper insurance.
- Collects data to measure success of the program



### **Jumping Creek Catchment Landcare Group**

Decided a community initiative was needed to manage deer in response to growing numbers of deer sightings in this peri-urban area.

- Letter to neighbours and members of the Landcare group to discuss the deer problem
- Collaborated with Middle Yarra Landcare Network and Manningham Council to conduct a community meeting raising concerns about deer, followed up by a meeting of interested community members to be involved in a deer control program
- Focuses on community engagement through education, talks and community meetings

- Deer management program focused on two areas;
  - Monitoring
    - Vegetation comparison
    - Camera traps installed and maintained
  - Culling
    - Shooting program across many properties
- Members pay an annual fee - combined with Manningham Council co-contributions, this pays for professional deer shooting across properties

### **Nillumbik Residents in Research – Deer Action**

This group began with one concerned resident contacting Council. A site visit was organised which involved five landholders, a Council officer and a deer controller. Landholder interest was raised, and they began engaging more of their neighbours.

- The group letterboxed, emailed and talked to their neighbours
- The group now has 15 properties involved
- Council is assisting with shoot plan development
- All landholders share the cost of deer control, and may also be eligible for a Council LMIP grant, making it a more affordable control option benefitting their community

### **Where to from here?**

- Start talking to your neighbours about deer control and forming a collaborative community group
- Decide the spokesperson for the group, method and frequency for communicating with the members
- Decide the deer management outcomes the group want to achieve
- The following factsheets provide useful information, regarding deer control programs. These are available from the Council's website [Deer - Nillumbik](#).
  - Deer Management Factsheet
  - Deer Identification – Species, scats and damage
  - Checklist for landholders considering deer control
  - Deer Control in peri-urban areas – what you need to know
  - Hunting and harvesting deer
- Read the LMIP grant guidelines on Council's website – you may be eligible for financial support
- Contact Council for further advice and support, 9433 3111 or [environment@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)
- Council's Deer Directory provides a list of deer contractors - [Community deer directory - Nillumbik](#)