

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 Advice

Council officers can provide advice for property owners, including weed and pest animal management, fencing guidelines and other control options.

This can involve site visits, over the phone advice, or emailed information.

- Contact Council's Land Management or Biodiversity Officers for more details – 9433 3111 or 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 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
- Council's Deer Directory provides a list of deer contractors - [Community deer directory - Nillumbik](#)