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# BURREN JUNCTION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BRAIN STORMING WORKSHOP

Let's explore the possibilities!



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Facilitator: Helen Dugdale  
AUSTRALIAN BRAIN COACHING



## Introduction:

The aim of this workshop is to establish a Burren Progress Association (or equivalent name) to act with the Section 355 Committee (Hall Committee) as an umbrella group for local clubs and groups to work together to improve the town.

To help build capability and resilience by supporting community-based skills that are not just focused on a particular group or organisation and will be inclusive across the community.

This remote agricultural community has been very badly affected by years of ongoing drought. This has resulted in diminishing school numbers, with families of farm employees leaving the district, the closure of the RSL Club, and the closure of our one local fuel station and shop. There is nowhere in Burren Junction to buy a loaf of bread, a litre of milk or a cup of coffee.

The establishment of a Progress Association to work with all the many local groups will aid in coordinating improvement programs, apply for grants, hold working bees etc. At present there are a handful of very active community groups, the CWA, the Fishing club, the Campdraft Committee, the Hall Committee and the P&C who all meet independently. It will be a very positive project to align all these groups with one over-arching group which will help lessen volunteer fatigue and come up with exciting new innovations for our town. Creating such a positive and exciting focus will also build skills and leadership which will stand the town, and the individual people working within it, in good stead for the next inevitable seasonal downturn. This will enhance community identity, wellbeing and a sense of place and become an even more friendly and inclusive community with a stronger social fabric. Local people also recognise the need to improve Burren Junction to make it more attractive for newcomers to come and live and for tourists to visit. There is a need to attract and retain people to the area, both as a source of employees and as supporters to sustain local businesses, now and into the future.

The aim of this workshop was to engage and encourage people with enthusiasm and positivity to gather good ideas and willingness to move forward.



## Workshop Outcomes:

The workshop was hosted by community organizer Lucinda Stump, with financial support from a grant for Strengthening Communities. 33 people attended, representing a range of organisations and individuals. It was held in the beautifully renovated Supper Room of the Hall, and the food supplied by a local company, Miguel Catering, was plentiful, and very conducive to a constructive meeting.

Helen Dugdale, the facilitator, based the meeting on Edward de Bono's 'Six Thinking Hats' for running efficient meetings. First of all, everyone brainstormed what they thought were the assets of Burren Junction. Then over the next hour, they were given different coloured post-it notes and one minute to write down their ideas on each of the following questions:

- (2nd) what they thought Burren needed in general,
- (3rd) their 'blue sky' dreams for Burren,
- (4th) what obstacles they could foresee,
- (5th) they were then asked for ideas on specific projects
- (6<sup>th</sup>) they were then asked to prioritize projects
- (7th) then asked how they would like to be involved.

After each of these questions, the ideas were gathered and posted on a whiteboard. There then ensued a 5-minute discussion and a round up of the ideas, before going onto the next topic. In this way, everyone who attended had a chance to put forward their ideas and no one missed out, everyone's opinion was collated and included in this report.

*"Lots of positive energy emanating from Burren and a head of steam that will be used to move the community forward."* Quote from workshop participant.

1<sup>st</sup>. The following list includes what people believe are the assets of the Burren Junction district:

Employment opportunities	Internet availability in town	Quality education at pre and primary school	Pub
Farming	Talented people	Big sky	Pool
Community	Rail access	Campdraft	Oval
Space	Highway	VRA	Park
Safety	Post Office	Natural environment	Native tree nursery
Low cost of living	Hall	Fire Brigade	Delta Ag
		Bore baths	Graincorp



2<sup>nd</sup>. The next part of the meeting asked people what they **generally wanted to see happen**, to either improve what they already have and/or develop new projects. (\* some of the responses were mentioned by more than one person)

Fix the bore	Walking track from town to the bore baths	Local shop selling food etc	Support and service from local Council
More representation on local council	Improve infrastructure and facilities	Improve Emergency Service delivery	Improve the visual appeal of the town
Form a community group	Encourage more trades and services	Start a tourist attraction	Encourage further employment opportunities
Encourage tourists	Develop infrastructure	Tidy the town	Café for locals and tourists
Develop new infrastructure	Paint a blue tree of despair	Social events for all ages	Gravel the school bus route
Develop a cohesive plan of direction	Attract people to the town, tourists and residents	Encourage more people to volunteer	Make the town more appealing as a place to live
Service station, bakery, café, coffee cart	Shop/mini-mart	Improve existing businesses	Improve cultural activities
Improve tennis court, and sports facilities	After school sport	Social sport – touch football, tennis	Light up Oval

3<sup>rd</sup>. The next step was to gather suggestions that were considered **Blue Sky**, maybe too ambitious but doesn't hurt to think big. Some possibilities could become a reality or lead to some other types of ideas. For example – a 3-star restaurant – you never know, a fully trained chef may want to move to the area for the peace and a slower lifestyle.

Biggest BBQ	Night Sky astronomy talks	Camping, camp ovens, night sky talks	Wellness Centre at the Bore Baths
Crowd funded – housing/time share	Pop-up Drive in movies	Childcare	Paths
Caravan Park	Resort	Market Days	Tennis tournament
Helicopter Scenic flights	Town website	Clean up Tidy Town Day	Big Annual Event Market Day perhaps
Car rally – 'Amazing Race'	Bush amusement park for kids	Social event ie Ball, "Back to Burren"	Vintage Car meet
Highway lined with old farm machinery, showing history of farming	Glamping domes, to stay and star gaze	Develop an area of land with Native plants, several hundred species	Skyscraper – first 2 floors for businesses, and top 10 floors for accommodation.
Steam train trips eg, Orient Express	Heated swimming pool	NW tennis Championship	Encourage quality Chefs ie, pop-up restaurant
Ski Park	Day care	Mud trials/car rally	IGA
Air Show	Open Air Cinema	Business centre	Truck stop
Country Music Festival	Circus	Michellin 3 star restaurant	



4<sup>th</sup>. The next step was to ask people what they **specifically wanted to see happen**

Little athletics	Shop	Walking track	Café
Paint the silo	Local artists selling their craft	Rural services, eg mechanic	Rebuild the Railway café
Service Station	Tree planting around the town	Restore tennis court and building	Outdoor movie nights
Fence around the existing playground	Tennis/Touch football competitions	Viewing platform at silos, as a tourist attraction	Improve access to Centrelink and Medicare
Tourist Info centre	Improve Bore baths	Walking track to Bore	Truck parking area
Graincorp Hwy bypass	Nature trails	Bird watching	Artesian bore GAB (Great Artesian Basin)
Develop a unique and interesting tourist attraction, eg the Big Wheat	Paint grain shed roof at silos.	Kitchen facilities for campdraft and community sports	Cafe /gallery/gift shop in the Hall, selling local items, and hosting workshops
Story of BJ on public display	Improve aerodrome access	Plant Trees north of rail line	Bitumen the drive through at grain silos
Improve aesthetics of town as you enter.	Monthly art lessons	Artists workshops	Artwork for sale to tourists

5<sup>th</sup>. Participants were then asked to list possible **obstacles** to improving Burren Junction:

*Council	*Number of People and time to do these things	*Funding	*Enthusiasm of people involved
Land availability	*Public liability	OH&S	Not many attractions
Remoteness	Extreme weather	Droughts	Viability of new businesses
Grant applications	Negativity	Covid	Making decisions
Differing opinions			

\*mentioned by more than one person



6<sup>th</sup>. After posting all the above suggestions on the board and reading them out for discussion with the group as a whole, people were then asked to vote on which was their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> **priority**. This list was collated and the number of votes for each suggestion are as follows:

**Priorities:**

Shop/service station	30
Bore Baths renovations	17
Trees/walking path to Bore	15
Tourist Attraction *	14
Tidy town	12
Tennis championship/ sports	7

(\* to be decided eg paint silos, viewing platform, wetlands at Bore etc)

7<sup>th</sup>. Participants were then asked what are the **next steps** they thought needed to be done: (\*mentioned by more than one person)

*Start a committee	Come up with an appropriate name for the organisation eg Progress Association	Improve Wikipedia entry about Burren Junction	Employ someone to initiate this
Short list top 3 ideas	*Lobby Council	Shire representative	Divide into sub-committees, and develop budgets, timelines, and report back to full committee
*Find funding	Delegate tasks	*Tidy up the town.	*Shop that sells local produce
*Develop a Co-op	Use the water tower	Open Bore to use again	Plant native trees
Motivate people	Plan for next stage of growth/improvement	Get an ABN	

**Potential committee members:**

Philip Powell	Scott White	Kate Schwager
Andy Tyrna	Toby Moore	Steve Gardiner
Sandy Stump	Kerry Carroll	Kim Powell
Susie Marshall	Rodney Slack-Smith	

***"If you can imagine it, then you can do it".***

Please feel free to contact the Facilitator, Helen Dugdale if you have any questions: 0417 064507.

Or email [Helen@australianbraincoaching.com.au](mailto:Helen@australianbraincoaching.com.au)

