

SEE-Change website archive

Projects



SEE-CHANGE

Kitchen Table Conversations

During 2015 SEE-Change supported Kitchen Table Conversations.

How do kitchen table conversations work?

A small group of 8 to 10 people meet in a quiet space for 2 to 3 hours to share their views and concerns and to explore their needs related to a particular topic. There may be as few as one or as many as 200 groups having these conversations.

On the first occasion each person speaks on the matters that are of importance to them.

Everyone has a say, everyone is listened to.

A scribe summarises the results and sends them to the participants.

Participants may decide to meet more than once, perhaps to focus on taking action to promote goals and improve things.

Two meetings generally provide a simple and effective way for people to give voice in a place where all interests, concerns and ideas are heard and respected – not just the issues promoted by politicians and lobby groups.

At the meetings people share their cares and concerns, hopes and dreams, and in doing so build a powerful sense of community and inter-connectedness. These conversations provide a means to create an informed and active electorate and to identify and start to implement solutions. They also have the potential to influence our leaders with a vision that truly represents citizens.

- [Download the Kitchen Table Conversations Hosting Kit as a pdf](#)
- [Download the information and training presentation as a pdf](#)

Canberra Kitchen Table Conversations coordinated by Belconnen SEE-Change

The Kitchen Table Conversation (KTC) project was launched on Tuesday 23 September 2014 with a 2 hour public meeting inviting and showing people how to become a host for a Conversation.

Eighty people from across Canberra attended and about twenty people went on to become a host for a KTC.

KTCs involving approximately 180 people from across Canberra were held between September and November 2014. These conversations reflected on five questions:

- What is important to you?
- What are your hopes for the future?
- What are your concerns?
- What needs to change?
- How can we make change happen?

The process concentrated specifically on dialogue and respectful listening – not debate or advocacy, and consensus was not sought.

On the 3 December 2014, 25 hosts and organisers held a debrief on what worked well, what hosts learned about the process and what could be done differently.

The room was enlivened by a sense of public participation and open source democracy at work. In sharing their experiences, the hosts and scribes described their satisfaction at the Kitchen Table Conversation process and their keenness to move to the next stage of discussion and action both within their own groups and in the broader Canberra community.

A universal experience was initial nervousness about opening up discussions with friends and neighbours on the issues which concern them, and then great satisfaction and relief at the communication that followed as people talked freely about the issues that were impacting on their lives.

On Tuesday 24 February 2015, the *Voices of the People in Kitchen Table Conversations* Report was released.

Results of the Canberra KTCs

At the end of the kitchen table conversations coordinated by Belconnen SEE-Change in November 2014, each group sent a record of their conversation to the Coordination Group. The coordinators produced a consolidated report of what the participants in the groups were thinking about and wanting to do.

With assistance from ACTCOSS, this has been published as a report called *Voices of the People* and has been delivered back to each group.

You can read either the full A4 Report or the A5 Executive Summary downloadable from the links below.

- Download the full A4 Report as a pdf
- Download the A5 Executive Summary as a pdf
- Download the Evaluation Survey from 15 hosts as a pdf
- Download the four page summary of the host debrief meeting as a pdf
- Download the unedited collation of the records of each gathering as a pdf

You can learn more about this initiative by reading the article by Ross Peake in The Canberra Times:

www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/the-political-power-of-kitchen-table-conversations-20140905-10c74c.html

What can you do now?

- Run your own KTC using the Host Kit above
- Get involved in the [Canberra Alliance](#) who will be conducting more KTC's in the near future
- Share the report with your community and talk about what they want

Canberra Alliance

Following on from the very successful Voices of the People in Kitchen Table Conversations project held in late 2014, several groups identified the need for a new structure to be formed to ensure the ongoing 'Voices of the People 'are heard by policymakers and politicians.

In collaboration with ACTCOSS, Fair Go for Canberra, March Australia (Canberra) and Australia21, SEE-Change organised a public meeting on Monday 23 April 2015 to discuss the possibility of creating a Canberra Alliance.

The key questions posed for the meeting were:

- Do we need a Canberra Alliance?
- What might be its purpose and function?

Rich discussion took place with the 69 attendees at the meeting and some key outcomes from the meeting were:

- There is a firm appetite for extending the process of kitchen table conversations to a broader cross section of Canberrans.
- There is a recognised need for improved civil engagement, neighbourliness and community empowerment.
- There was less of an appetite for moving quickly towards a structure like the Sydney Alliance but a recognition that we need to develop a legitimate Canberra process for trust and inter-group discussions that could lead to action on the issues that are identified in Kitchen Table Conversations.

About Us

Partners

Modified on February 26th, 2018.

SEE-Change partners with a range of different organisations, businesses and individuals to deliver [projects](#) and to provide [discounts for our members](#).



The ACT Government Education and Training Directorate's role is to ensure access to a high quality education for all and to position the ACT to lead the nation in educational outcomes for students. SEE-Change acknowledges the Education and Training Directorate's support for the [Parliament of Youth on Sustainability](#) project. For more information visit www.det.act.gov.au.



The ACT Government Environment and Planning Directorate consolidates ACT planning with a strong commitment to respond to climate change and protect the environment. SEE-Change acknowledges the Environment and Planning Directorate's ongoing support for all of our activities. For more information visit www.environment.act.gov.au.



The ACT Council of Social Service Inc (ACTCOSS) is the peak representative body for not-for-profit community organisations, and disadvantaged and low-income citizens of the Australian Capital Territory. ACTCOSS has the twin roles of representation and advocacy. SEE-Change acknowledges the ACTCOSS support for the [Voices of the People](#) project. For more information visit: www.actcoss.org.au.

Locally owned and operated, Alexander Watson are the experts in making buildings comfortable and energy efficient. They also offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit alexanderwatson.com.au.



The Association of Independent Schools of the ACT (AISACT) represents all seventeen independent schools in the ACT. SEE-Change acknowledges AISACT's support for the [Parliament of Youth on Sustainability](#) project. For more information visit www.ais.act.edu.au.



Australia21 is a not for profit research company which specialises in addressing some of the difficult issues facing Australia. Their approach is guided by the evidence and they are not aligned with any political party. For more information visit www.australia21.org.au.

The Australian Institute of Architects is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia, and works to improve our built environment by promoting quality, responsible, sustainable design. SEE-Change has been collaborating with the Australian Institute of Architects on the [Sustainable House Tours](#). For more information visit architecture.com.au.

The Australian National University (ANU) is a world-leading university in Australia's capital. Their focus is on research as an asset, and an approach to education. SEE-Change acknowledge's the ANU's support with venue support for the [Parliament of Youth on Sustainability](#) project. For more information visit www.anu.edu.au.



Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) believe that climate change is the single greatest threat facing humanity, and puts young people and future generations at risk. They also believe that addressing the climate crisis is our biggest opportunity to create a world that is more sustainable, just and fair. SEE-Change has collaborated with AYCC on a range of projects. For more information visit www.aycc.org.au.



Beyond Zero Emissions Inc. is a not-for-profit research and education organisation aiming to transform Australia from a 19th century fossil fuel based, emissions intensive, economy to a 21st-century renewable-energy-powered clean-tech economy. SEE-Change has collaborated with BZE on the [Zero Carbon Canberra project](#). For more information visit www.bze.org.au.



Canberra Loves 40% was formed as a group of community organisations and concerned Canberra residents who secured an ambitious, but achievable, CO2 emission reduction target of 40 percent for the ACT. But achieving a legislated target was only ever the first step. Now we need to come together as a community and embrace the opportunities this target presents. SEE-Change has collaborated with Canberra Loves 40% on a range of projects, including [Car Share](#) and the [Curtain Retrofit Project](#). For more information visit love40percent.org.



The Catholic Education office of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn is proud of the quality of the 56 Catholic Schools across the Archdiocese. SEE-Change

acknowledges Catholic Education's support for the [Parliament of Youth on Sustainability](#) project. For more information visit www.cg.catholic.edu.au.



CDNet: The Community Development Network ACT, has been providing support and information to the development sector in the ACT and surrounding areas for over four years. The mailing list is currently distributed to over 2800 members. SEE-Change has been collaborating with CDNet on the [Champions of Change](#) workshop. For more information visit www.cdnet.org.au.



Canberra City Farm is establishing learning hubs where the community can creatively share knowledge and experience of socially, economically and environmentally responsible food production and sustainable living. SEE-Change has been collaborating with Canberra City Farm on their sustainable food and living displays and other food-related projects. For more information visit www.ccfarm.org.au.



The Canberra Environment Centre works directly with the community to ensure the best environmental outcomes for the ACT through targeted education, information and practical application. SEE-Change works closely with the Canberra Environment Centre to cross-promote and strengthen sustainability in the ACT. For more information visit www.ecoaction.com.au.



Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) is a dynamic, connected and diverse vocational education and training provider, offering quality skills development to individuals, employers and industry in Canberra, Australia and globally. SEE-Change has collaborated with CIT on the [Zero Carbon Canberra project](#). For more information visit www.cit.edu.au.



Commonsense Sustainability Solutions is a local Canberra business delivering high quality personalised advice and education. They support consumers, businesses,

government and organisations to make more informed choices to improve their sustainability in the areas of building, energy, transport, food, waste and recycling, water, finances and social connections. Commonsense Sustainability Solutions also offers [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit www.commonsss.com.au

It's about you. Always!
Communities@Work

Communities@Work provides a broad suite of quality community programs of social value and practical benefit. Their vision is for a resilient and socially inclusive community that cares for the well-being of all. SEE-Change has worked closely with Communities@Work on a No Dig Gardening event. For more information visit www.commsatwork.org.



Conservation Council ACT Region are the voice for the environment representing community environmental and sustainability groups in the ACT region. SEE-Change is a member of the Conservation Council and collaborates with them on various activities. For more information visit conservationcouncil.org.au.



Earth Basics is dedicated to bringing you a great range of effective, environmentally responsible products to suit the modern lifestyle. They also offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit www.earthbasics.com.au.



The Ecotel Narooma Motel has been established by the Kerans Family to provide unbeatable value in accommodation while achieving growing ecological benefits. They also offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit www.ecotel.com.au.

ENJO Australia is passionate about chemical-free and sustainable living. Pioneers of a modern and mindful approach to cleaning through their environmentally responsible fibre cleaning range, ENJO Australia is on a mission to shine a light on sustainable living, and introduce a simple change to cleaning routines for healthier homes all around Australia. For more information visit enjo.com.au

The Food Co-op is Australia's oldest food cooperative, located right here in the heart of Canberra. The Food Co-op is a member owned, not-for-profit cooperative which exists to offer a sustainable method for Canberrans to source their food, and to provide a safe communal space. The Food Co-op stocks a range of local, bulk, organic, and alternative goods; it also has a café and serves discount lunches. They also offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit foodco-opshop.com.au



Fusion Canberra is part of the national and international fellowship of Fusion International, a Christian youth and community development organisation born in Hornsby, Sydney in 1960, and now in 15 other countries. Fusion International's vision is to bring young people and their communities together with hope. Fusion Canberra's vision is to create a Canberra and world where nobody gets left behind. SEE-Change has collaborated with Fusion Canberra on a Food Security campaign. For more information visit fusioncanberra.org.au.



GoGet's aim is to provide a reliable, convenient and affordable transport service that: allows people to live car-free; decreases car usage; improves local air quality; removes private cars from local streets; increases patronage for public transport; and allows people to lead more active lives. GoGet also offers [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit www.goget.com.au.



Callanetics Canberra is Canberra's first Callanetics studio, and is owned and operated by SEE-Change member Virginia Cooke. No, it's not calisthenics! Callanetics is an exercise program that involves taking a muscle into extension and then 'pulsing' into that muscle. The result is great flexibility, body tone, strength, and sense of wellbeing. For more information visit www.callaneticscanberra.com.



Laros Technologies specialise in dynamic and superior building technology that outperform standard Australian building methods. They collaborate with Architects, Engineers and Builders to achieve superior sustainable buildings and supply the full suite of building technology required to achieve Passivhaus construction methods. SEE-Change has collaborated with Laros Technologies on the [Zero Carbon Canberra project](#). For more information visit www.laros.com.au.



Naturally Clean is a range of all natural laundry and cleaning products, which are safe for you and the environment. Naturally Clean products contains no soaps, chemicals or phosphates and are made only from natural ingredients, which are completely biodegradable and mostly edible. For more information visit [Naturally Clean](#)



On the Rivet stock a full range of Trek bikes, the best bicycle collection on the planet. They also offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit ontherivetcycles.com.au.



Permaculture eXchange is a registered not-for-profit incorporated educational organisation serving Canberra and the surrounding districts. Their passion is helping people establish sustainable agricultural systems (on many different scales) based on permaculture principles. For more information visit www.permacultureexchange.org.au.



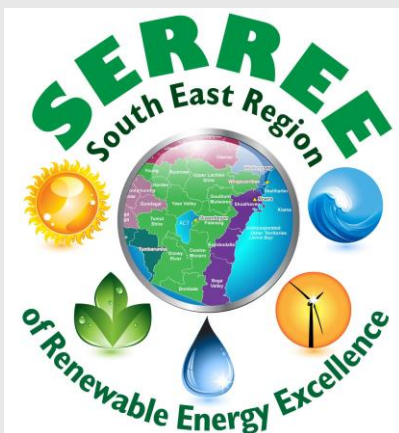
Popcar is about challenging inferior traditional concepts about personal mobility and making things better. Through leading technology we want to redefine what and how a journey during daily life can be. Popcar currently has 10 vehicles in Canberra, including 4 Hybrids, in the hope to see more people drive eco-friendly vehicles and offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit www.popcar.com.au.



The Power Saving Centre Canberra is your go to centre for education on all your renewable energy and power saving and needs. The company specialises in designing tailor made systems to provide the best energy savings and returns for clients. SEE-Change has collaborated with the Power Saving Centre Canberra on the [Zero Carbon Canberra project](#). For more information visit www.psccan.com.au.



Pushys is Australia's leading Online Bike Retailer selling top brand Road, Mountain and BMX Bikes, Scooters and Accessories with unequalled knowledge and skills in the local market. For more information visit www.pushys.com.au.



SERREE is an initiative to establish the south east NSW-ACT as an exemplar region of renewable energy excellence. SERREE is led by Regional Development Australia ACT, and is currently funded and supported by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, the NSW and ACT Governments, RDA ACT and Southern Inland and SERREE Corporate members. SEE-Change has collaborated with the SERREE on the [Zero Carbon Canberra project](#). For more information visit www.serree.org.au.



The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia has more than 40,000 members and volunteers, who work hard to assist people in need and combat social injustice across Australia. SEE-Change has collaborated with St Vincent de Paul Society on the [Curtain Retrofit Project](#). For more information visit www.vinnies.org.au.



Switched on Cycles are importing good quality, mid-priced electric bikes to Canberra, to get more people out and riding, helping their own fitness and leaving the car at home. They also offer [SEE-Change member discounts](#). For more information visit switchedoncycles.com.au.



Urban Agriculture Australia is a dynamic and resourceful collaboration between community based urban food farming groups, environmental groups and local businesses in the Canberra bio-region. Their mission is to inform and educate our community about urban agriculture's potential and how we can have a sustainable lifestyle, so that the community has control of the most essential items of daily life - secure and healthy food and shelter. SEE-Change has been collaborating with Urban Agriculture Australia on their sustainable food and living displays and other food-related projects. For more information visit www.uaa.org.au.



Volunteering ACT is Canberra's volunteer resource centre and the peak body for volunteering in the ACT. Their role is to represent and support volunteerism, to promote its potential and growth for the common good and to respond to the many opportunities and challenges created by such a diverse activity. SEE-Change is a member of Volunteering ACT and appreciates the wonderful volunteers who have come to SEE-Change via Volunteering ACT. For more information visit www.volunteeringact.org.au.