

# Building sustainable communities starts with a tidy town

For over 30 years, Keep Australia Beautiful has been encouraging people all around Australia to care for their local environment. Through its flagship awards program, the Australian Tidy Towns, sponsored by Hungry Jack's, Keep Australia Beautiful is able to recognise the local communities and individuals that are helping regional towns to become sustainable communities.

Tidy Towns is a popular and highly sought after form of recognition which encourages rural Australians to embrace the spirit of cooperation to carry out community-based environmental initiatives.

The program began with local communities focusing on litter and improving civic pride, but now encompasses a much wider programme of environmental initiatives that seek to ensure rural towns become more sustainable and improve their environmental, economic and social performance. Australia's current tidiest town is Collie in Western Australia.

This year 1,079 towns and schools entered the program, with tens of thousands of volunteers donating their time and efforts. The National Tidy Towns Judge is in the process of visiting each of the State Finalists who are now competing for the prestigious accolade of becoming Australia's Tidiest Town for 2007. Here's a snapshot of competing towns and why they've been chosen.





**CUE WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

The remote town of Cue took out the top honours at this year's WA Tidy Towns Awards. Cue's win was recognition of the commitment, dedication and enormous amount of hard work by all sectors of the community and was particularly strong in its Water Conservation and Cultural Identity projects. The Cue community has demonstrated that size and remoteness is no barrier to making a positive difference to its town and to the environment and is a worthy competitor for the national title.

**KINGSTON SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Having been the Best Medium-sized town in South Australia in 2002, 2003 and 2005, Kingston has also been named as South Australia's overall Tidy Towns winner. With a permanent population of 1500, Kingston has shown great progress over recent years and proactively works with and celebrates local indigenous people and their heritage and culture. This includes a partnership established between Reedy Creek's bush

food business Outback Pride, and TV's Lifestyle Channel, producing a new cooking show titled Outback Café, starring Renowned indigenous Chef Mark Olive. Kingston was especially commended for the way in which it had rated highly in all areas of assessment, namely for its overall physical appearance, for the extent of community participation and for special initiatives such as litter and waste management, heritage and cultural activities, environmental improvement efforts and environmental education, action and sustainability.

**BENALLA VICTORIA**

Benalla has won the Victoria's Tidiest Town Award for the second year in a row. Lodging an impressive 22 projects in their State's Tidy Towns Awards program, Benalla has emerged a clear winner with many diverse projects ranging from the Indigenous Gardens at Moira Reserve to the Balanced Productive Soils Project. The Indigenous Gardens at Moira Reserve aim to combine the history

and heritage of the district prior to European settlement. Meanwhile, the three-year Balance Productive Soils Project is a joint partnership between 14 local Landcare groups, the Department of Primary Industry, Button Bulk Fertilisers and Melbourne University and have promoted discussion of alternative methods of farming and grazing. Many other local activities and efforts ensured Benalla was able to retain its state title for the second time.

**LEETON NEW SOUTH WALES**

Leeton, in the heart of the beautiful Riverina region of southern NSW, last won their State's overall award in 1984 and has been a consistently strong performer in the NSW Tidy Towns program ever since, winning numerous category awards. The Leeton Tidy Towns Committee is energetic, committed and progressive and its Chair has been involved since the early 1990's providing strong continuity of ideas and ideals. The Leeton Shire Council is extremely proactive and offers the Tidy Towns Committee assistance in terms of funds, manpower, equipment and administrative help. This effective partnership between the Council, the Tidy Towns Committee and the whole community through Friends of Tidy Towns, has produced an outstanding result for Leeton.

**ROMA QUEENSLAND**

Roma is a community committed to enhancing quality of life for its residents and

honouring its rich cultural heritage. The town is easy to navigate and offers a variety of attractions in a well presented and friendly atmosphere. Australia's first oil and gas discoveries were at Roma and the town's fascinating industrial past is showcased at the Big Rig complex, which also houses an accredited information centre that is just one of a range of easily accessible public facilities in town. A suite of positive community and environmental initiatives, a strong and supportive local council and a welcoming and proactive local community make Roma a deserving winner of the title of Queensland's Tidiest Town for 2006.

**SWANSEA TASMANIA**

Swansea was able to pull together a dedicated group of organisations that formed the basis of their Tidy Town committee. With the assistance of the Glamorgan-Spring Bay Council they demonstrated that they were able to all work



Left to right: National Tidy Towns Judge, Dick Olesinski, Publicity Manager, Lara Shannon and Don Chambers, National Chairman of Keep Australia Beautiful.

together achieving a common goal to protect and improve their local environment. The high level of commitment from the community, and their sense of community spirit and togetherness has helped generate a positive flow-on effect and provided a lasting impact on resident's pride and confidence in their local community.

**TIDY TOWNS 2007**

The National Winner of the 2007 Australian Tidy Towns – Sustainable Communities Awards, will be announced at a presentation weekend being held in Ballarat, Victoria, Saturday 12 May 2007.

**TIDY TOWNS INFO**

For further information about Tidy Towns or attending the presentation weekend please visit [www.kab.org.au/tidytowns](http://www.kab.org.au/tidytowns) programs.

**VISIT A TIDY TOWN**

**ON YOUR NEXT HOLIDAY**

Wouldn't it be great if every holiday destination was also a 'Tidy Town' so you can enjoy visiting towns that place priority on civic pride and environmental improvement? Well now you can through online travel information and accommodation provider [TakeABreak.com.au](http://TakeABreak.com.au)

By visiting the website when planning your next holiday you can not only search by region and accommodation type, but you can now opt to browse Tidy Town destinations. This provides Tidy Towns participants with a higher level of exposure and a new avenue for promoting their localities as holiday destinations, whilst travellers and holiday makers can use the Tidy Towns awards to help find the best places to visit.

