

Press release

29 April 2019

The Bellambi op shop that Illawarra residents know and love is joining the Green Connect family and they're inviting the whole community to a morning tea on Saturday 11 May to celebrate.

Green Connect – a social enterprise of Community Resources – has been creating jobs, reducing waste and growing fair food in Wollongong for more than eight years. We employ over 100 young people and former refugees to strengthen community and care for the planet. Community Resources has been running the op shop since July last year. Bringing it into the Green Connect family will mean more outcomes for the community, particularly young people and former refugees. Kylie Flament, Green Connect General Manager, said:

“We’re excited to welcome the Bellambi op shop into the Green Connect family. The op shop is already known and loved for good reason. We plan to build on its very strong foundation to create more reuse, volunteer and employment opportunities with the local community.

“We’re looking at some interesting pathways for reuse and recycling that aren’t done widely, to make products available locally and maximise what we keep out of landfill.

“We have been training, supporting, mentoring and employing people in horticulture and waste management for years. Now we can do the same in retail, meaning more opportunities for those who need them.

“We are passionate about doing the right thing by people and the planet and the Bellambi op shop is a fantastic example of how we can do both.

Alana Dale, Retail Assistant added: “The Bellambi op shop is already known for doing things a bit differently. We sell clothing by weight. This is simple and easy and means you get more bang for your buck. We charge \$10 per kilo and you can get quite a few items in a kilo, which might be charged at \$10 each in other op shops. We often have customers telling us how amazed they are at how cheap it is, but that’s part of what we do for the community – we make things affordable.”

As for the job, Ms Dale says “I would never go back to standard retail. I can be so creative here, making colourful displays and trying different things. You’ll see that the shop is different every time you come, and that’s fun for staff, volunteers and customers.”

Mark Burnes, Retail Assistant, adds: “The op shop is a great place to come up through the ranks. I started out doing work experience and then as a volunteer, and now I’m paid to run the shop and I love it here. I’m excited about helping others to do the same.”

On Saturday 11 May, the op shop will be open from 10am to 2pm and Green Connect is inviting people to bring a plate along for a community morning tea at 10.30am, mingle with the Green Connect team and connect with others who are passionate about op shopping. Plus there’s 20% off storewide all day.

For further media information, contact:

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About us:

Green Connect is a social enterprise of Community Resources, a national not-for-profit creating jobs that make our communities better. Green Connect employs young people and former refugees to do environmental work. We grow fair food, help events and organisations reduce waste to landfill, and offer labour hire to likeminded organisations. We also provide training and support to help people find suitable, long-term, fulfilling jobs and careers.

