



## RECYCLING and NOWRA TIP TOUR

15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

On a beautiful sunny winter morning, 20 of us assembled at the Council Administration Offices ready for our trip to the Nowra Tip as part of our Slow Food `Conversation on Recycling`. A big thank you to Shoalhaven City Council for organising it and to our chatty guide and recycling guru Fiona Scheurs. We learned from her that the West Nowra Tip is the largest recycling centre in the Shoalhaven and `where all the exciting stuff is`. We were not disappointed as our tour took us round the enormous area in a minibus which made it possible to see the different processes spread round the site.

We saw their polystyrene bricking/sausage machine, how the huge amount of cardboard is handled, the copper wire stripping facility, the green waste mountain and how it was transformed into `compost` (free), glass crushing/washing to produce `sand` (some of which went into the new Nowra Bridge) and the pile of mattresses for recycling. Fiona also talked about how they are working with local universities to come up with new processing technologies such as making tiles out of textile waste.

We saw how they prepared the landfill `cells` with polythene lining and piping systems to extract methane (used for power generation) and to manage the leachate produced (not allowed to leave the site and so contaminate local water). Currently they have about 5-6 years of landfill capacity but are preparing for the new system which will minimise land fill even further and substantially extend this capacity (the Bioelektra system was chosen but may now be replaced by one of the other two companies that tendered).

Back to the Nowra Library for a very welcome morning tea of sandwiches and cakes, all supplied by SCC and much appreciated. Fiona then led a discussion on the “dos and don`ts” of recycling and what should go into the Yellow Bin. Lots of questions which she handled very well, often using her table of `stuff` to illustrate her points.

Overall, we had an extremely interesting, informative and entertaining morning. We were all surprised by how much the Council is doing to reduce the amount of landfill. Our take home message from Fiona was not to forget what we had learned and to spread the word.

