

Support for own turbines

By Monique Patterson

DAYLESFORD residents have endorsed a community wind farm.

The Hepburn Community Wind Energy Group has been researching the possibility of installing one or two wind turbines that would be owned and controlled by local residents.

More than 50 residents attended a community forum last Wednesday to discuss the project.

Group spokesperson Per Bernard said the community response was very positive.

"We were rapt to see so many people at the forum," he said.

"It shows that the people of Daylesford are very keen on environmental issues."

Mr Bernard said two wind turbines could support the energy needs of more than 2000 local homes.

However, Mt Franklin's Christian Wild said wind turbines would industrialise the area's landscape and impact on local amenity through shadow flicker and noise.

He also said the turbines posed an unacceptable risk to birds and bats.

Mr Bernard said the

group wanted the community to consider both sides of the argument.

"That way we can all make an educated decision," Mr Bernard said.

Mr Bernard said small-scale community wind farms were very popular throughout Europe.

"Communities produce their own clean energy as well as receive good returns on their investment," he said.

Mr Bernard said community wind farms also gave money each year to local initiatives.

He said feedback sheets handed out at the end of the night indicated 95 per cent of people supported the community wind farm.

The group will expand its research and find appropriate sites.

"There is a lot of work to be done and this initial very positive feedback gives us the encouragement to really move forward," Mr Bernard said.

"We will be continually reporting back to the community to consult and seek further feedback with regular information, meetings and workshops."

For more information on the project contact Mr Bernard on 0418 133 426.