



**WINNING WAYS:** The Hepburn Wind team with their Premiers Sustainability Award. From left, Kate Redwood, Tracy Anthony, Taryn Lane and Per Bernard. Picture: **ADAM TRAFFORD**

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# Award for Hepburn Wind Leading the way

By **EVAN SCHUURMAN**

A COMMUNITY co-operative on the verge of producing electricity for the first time has been recognised by the Victorian Premier.

Hepburn Wind, Australia's first community owned wind farm, took out the community award at the Premier's Sustainability Awards last Thursday night.

Chairman Simon Holmes a Court said people around the country were now talking about the Hepburn model, which he hoped would cause more regions to embark on similar projects.

"Woodend and Castlemaine are keen to follow the lead and this will make it easier for

them by opening doors to government and opening minds in their communities for the model," he said.

The co-operative is expected to begin feeding electricity into the grid this week. Mr Holmes a Court said the wind farm would generate more power each year from its two turbines than all the houses in Daylesford consume.

"It's the very first time a community in Australia has initiated and then built a renewable energy project at a community scale," he said.

"While everyone's been sitting around for the past five years or so and saying that the government should do more about renewable energy, a small group of locals – and then more and more people – have gotten

excited about this idea and just got on with it."

The Hepburn Wind team were presented with a trophy made from a recycled W-class tram, but Mr Holmes a Court said the award was simply a step in the right direction.

"The prize we've always kept our eye on is the original goal, generating electricity," he said.

Judges commented that Hepburn Wind scored strongly across all areas of assessment, giving praise for the project's strong vision, long-term strategy and local focus. The co-operative generated \$9 million for the project by launching a share offer, which was taken up by 1650 people.

The share price will go up from \$1 to \$1.10 on July 1.

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