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## WELCOME NOTE

Welcome to the eighth edition of the Realise Newsletter and to the first newsletter of 2007.

I hope the festive period was a memorable one for you and for all those close to you. Festivities are a reward for slogging away all year. Rewards themselves are necessary to our survival and prosperity as a species.

In terms of the group over the festive period the my time was spent meeting new people that want to help, exchanging ideas with others and obtaining experiences that will go on to form inspiration for the future.

I'd like to welcome the new members and wish everyone all the best for the new year.

## THE POOL ROOM

This month the song 'My Utopia' by Alanis Morissette goes straight to the Pool Room.

Alanis Morissette sings about her dreams of a Utopia or a better world for all. It inspires the fact that when, one day, humankind is living in such a period, unimaginable to us will be what terrible things aren't happening. It highlights the fact that to achieve positive results we must focus on positive goals.

The song lyrics can be found on the website listed at the bottom left of this page, under the menu - 'Pool Room'.

## OVERCROWDING PRISONS

According to reports British prisons are again reaching a crisis point where overcrowding is an issue (The Courier Mail). One may recall a time in history when this resulted in scores of convicts sent to Australia (late 1700s).



Bogo Road Gaol - <http://www.boggoroadgaol.com.au/>

Some of the suggestions for alleviating the crisis are as follows:

- Foreign nationals may be sent back to complete their sentences in their respective countries.
- Releasing some prisoners early.

- Reducing the standard of crimes punishable by imprisonment.
- Having a waiting list for jail spaces.
- Building prison ships and prison camps.

Standard news reporting generally explains the problems and the short-term solutions to this problem. With the overcrowding of prisons one wonders if any crime prevention schemes are being applied to reduce the amount of crime at the source.

Crime prevention tends to be separated into two areas.

- Preventing crime through design, physical deterrents and security measures.
- Preventing crime through social development or 'Social Crime Prevention'.

A British report on the 'Successes and Failures of Neighbourhood Crime Prevention' based on 15 years of experience with crime prevention policy and practice explained how prevention through physical deterrents and security measures often achieves short-term results but mainly tends to displace the crime or change the type of crime in a neighbourhood.

The report suggested that "*Crime prevention policies could be based more soundly on a community reconstruction approach that recognised the need for a longer-term investment in social and economic development*".

Social Crime Prevention strategies are normally considered by governments and communities to target the causes of crime throughout the development of individuals. While the idea of Social Crime Prevention can imply the fault of the community over the individual this is not the case. Education about the roles and responsibilities of an individual in society is a part of a commitment to Social Crime Prevention and place the final decision to act on each person.

Such strategies are aimed at motivating individuals to do the right thing, strengthening communities and the relationships within them (Northern Territory Government). Communities with strong relationships can then work more effectively towards creating a better world for its members and for surrounding communities.

While the prison system bulges and

## CONTACT DETAILS

website:  
[www.geocities.com/realiseabetterworld](http://www.geocities.com/realiseabetterworld)

email:  
[realiseabetterworld@yahoo.com.au](mailto:realiseabetterworld@yahoo.com.au)

editor:  
Steve York  
c/ 16 Victoria St.  
Windsor Q 4030

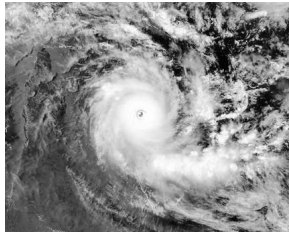
works to separate individuals from society, it may be a good time to seriously examine the benefits of Social Crime Prevention for the long-term prosperity of our communities.

#### References:

The Courier Mail (03.02.07) 'UK May Again Export Convicts' Successes and Failures of Neighbourhood Crime Prevention - <http://irf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/H149.asp>  
Northern Territory Government 'Guide for Community Crime Prevention Partnerships' - <http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/ocp/docs/guide.pdf>

#### CLIMATE CHANGE - WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The issues surrounding climate change has been in the headlines lately. These articles informing the wider public have been timely in the wake of cyclones, floods and drought to the Australian continent with predictions of more of the same if we are to persist with the present carbon emissions as a result of our needs for energy.



Cyclone - <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/>

While these articles may be informative about the issue they often neglect to suggest ways that individuals can make a difference and contribute to a solution. Most news stories tend to paint a grim picture that we are to rely on the government and business for our solutions. This article attempts to draw a link between the issues and solutions for individuals.

Union of Concerned Scientists suggests a number of ways to reduce your personal impact on climate change:

- Reduce vehicle emissions by using a fuel efficient car.
- Choosing a renewable energy programme for your home.
- Energy efficient appliances and devices.
- Turning off and unplugging appliances that are not required.
- Insulating your home.
- Plant trees in your yard or with your local bush-care group.
- Protecting forests by reducing your need for wood products and only purchasing plantation timber.

[http://www.ucsusa.org/global\\_warming/solutions/ten-personal-solutions.html](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/ten-personal-solutions.html)



Planting trees - <http://www.nuestras-raices.org/>

In addition to these suggestions for reducing your impact you could try the following:

- Walking or riding a bicycle to your nearby destinations.
- Buying local products and services, reducing transport emissions.
- Driving economically and reducing vehicle trips made.
- Reducing, reusing and recycling.

Apart from making changes in your own lifestyle the other most effective way you can contribute to the solutions of climate change is to be a good example and influence others around you. While it may be frustrating that you can't force others to make changes it is important to allow them the freedom to make their own decisions.

Carbon emissions are an output in nearly all of the products and services we rely on so it is easy to get caught up in the negatives. But this world we live in was built by optimists and optimistically, a society of wise individuals would find opportunity to respond and contribute to the solution.

#### WHAT'S COMING UP?

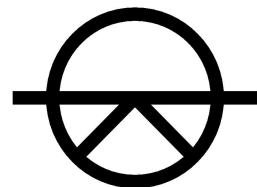
Sustainability Living Festival  
Venue: Federation Square,  
Melbourne, Victoria  
Dates: 16 Feb - 18 Feb 2007  
More info: [www.slf.org.au](http://www.slf.org.au)

Walk for Sustainable Transport  
Meet: Queens Park (cnr George and Elizabeth St), Brisbane, Queensland  
Date/Time: 17 Feb 2007, 11am  
More info: [sustainable-transport.blogspot.com](http://sustainable-transport.blogspot.com)

The next Realise group meeting will be held in March to discuss and select a team of volunteers named 'The Cornerstones'. It is envisioned that this team will produce a management committee who will operate Realise A Better World.

Formation of 'The Cornerstones'  
Venue: TBA, Brisbane, Queensland  
Date: Sun, 11 Mar 2007  
Time: TBA  
More info: Available on website and in the March newsletter.  
Please feel free to make suggestions via email for the agenda of this meeting.

#### REALISE A BETTER WORLD



To receive these free monthly newsletters send a blank email to: [realiseabetterworld@yahoo.com.au](mailto:realiseabetterworld@yahoo.com.au)

#### CONTACT DETAILS

website:  
[www.geocities.com/realiseabetterworld](http://www.geocities.com/realiseabetterworld)

email:  
[realiseabetterworld@yahoo.com.au](mailto:realiseabetterworld@yahoo.com.au)

editor:  
Steve York  
c/ 16 Victoria St.  
Windsor Q 4030