



COMMUNITY: Charlie Winter, Alan Brennan, Jeremy Pudge, Rob Taber and Jo Heslin with kids benefiting from the community partnership. Photo: Tim Barnsley

Funding to help clear the smoke

By LUCAS FORBES

THE Environment Protection Authority has given Armidale Dumaresq Council \$60,000 to continue trying to reduce wood smoke emissions.

Council sustainability coordinator Carol Davies said the money would be spent on education programs, rebates to encourage people to switch to more efficient heaters and wood smoke patrols.

Most of the money will be spent on education programs, which Ms Davies said will focus on the importance of burning a fire hot so it produces less smoke.

Last year the state government awarded council with \$50,000 even though they asked for \$60,000.

This year however, the state government gave the full requested amount.

Ms Davies thought this could have been influenced by Council winning an award from Local Government NSW for their program in reducing wood smoke.

Council figures indicate the amount of wood smoke is decreasing every year.

In 2013 Armidale's wood smoke pollution levels were higher than the World Health Organisation's recommendation on 18 days.

By comparison in 2012 there were 24 days exceeding the recommended amount and the year before that there were 26 days.

Ms Davies said Council was willing to work with people who have smoky chimneys to help them reduce their emissions.

"It's not about pointing the finger it's about encouraging people to use their heaters better," she said.

Vegetables grow for young and old

By LUCAS FORBES

PATHFINDERS has started donating vegetables to Meals on Wheels so they can provide elderly people with fresh produce.

Already the youth services organisation has supplied 700

cobs of corn and plenty of potatoes from its Tilbuster Station.

The crops at Tilbuster are tended by young people who are clients of Pathfinders and EACH.

Pathfinders chief executive Alan Brennan said without

those young people they could not have grown a crop on Tilbuster.

"It's a testament to the resilience of our young people that they have been able to produce such a crop of vegetables in some of the worst conditions the area has seen in

a decade," he said. The donation coincides with Meals on Wheels opening its own commercial kitchen which allows them to prepare their own meals. Meals on Wheels coordinator Jo Heslin said the new deal worked out for everyone.