Hosting a Planting Day or Working Bee

Planning

- Consider feeding your volunteers it makes them feel valued and gives an opportunity for socialising.

- Involve local landowners – eg. ask to help with morning tea, provide access, toilets and off road parking if possible.

- Bring just enough plants so that all can be planted within the scheduled time frame. Volunteers find it motivating to 'finish the job' and it is better to get the job completed and wind up early. If it's hard to estimate, hide some plants away that you can grab if need be.

- Understand the planting rates of different groups. We find school children plant and guard approx. five plants per hour and community volunteers eight to ten per hour.

On the day

- Place a flag or sign at the entrance to the site to guide volunteers.

- Welcome people and introduce yourself. Have your name handwritten in the clear pocket of the hi-vis vest.

- Have volunteers sign in on a recording sheet. Encourage them to provide their email addresses if they wish to receive updates and newsletters. Ask if they are happy to be in photos.

- Display a written health and safety board and verbally address any site-specific hazards, such as debris in an old dumping site.

- Tell people the format of the session and what they will be doing eg. planting then a break for morning tea together. Let them know who else is involved with running the planting and who can be asked questions.

- Pair new volunteers with those who have more experience to provide guidance and support.

- If working with a larger group, provide a demonstration of planting techniques to ensure everyone understands the task.

- Give an update at morning tea on progress and what next.

- Stick to the advertised start and finish times to respect volunteers' time commitments.

- Take photos throughout the event to document progress and celebrate achievements.

By following these steps, you can effectively organize and run a community planting day or plant maintenance session, ensuring a positive experience for volunteers and successful completion of the project goals.