

Appendices to:
Strong Communities:
Ways Forward

Appendix A - Case Studies
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A Report to
The Hon John Thwaites
Minister for Victorian Communities

Prepared by
Ministerial Advisory Committee
for Victorian Communities

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Appendix A

Case Studies

Appendix A - Case Studies

The Honeysuckle Recreation and Environment Project

The aim of the Honeysuckle Recreation and Environment Project was to unite the town on either side of the Honeysuckle Creek by developing the recreational facilities and general environment in this precinct.

Need for the project

The Honeysuckle Recreation and Environment Project was developed from the Community Capacity Building Initiative (CCBI) in 2001, when 120 local residents attended a community opportunity workshop to express their visions for the future of Violet Town.

Aims

A walking track around the creek area that links the north part of town to the main street, the rehabilitation and the revegetation of the creek, Indigenous wildflower garden beds and installation of picnic tables, the development of historical and cultural interpretation trail, improved sporting facilities and amphitheatre or soundshell.

Involvement

Residents, Violet Town Market Committee, Violet Town Action Group, Violet Town Action Group Environment Group, Community House Violet Town, Primary School, Shire of Strathbogie Violet Town, sporting clubs, Violet Town Arts Council, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Community Capacity Building Initiative and Today Tomorrow Foundation.

Achievements

In summary, project works totalling almost \$300 000 have either been completed or are about to commence. Some 52 community working bees and 16 community activities have been held, with over 1600 hours of voluntary labour contributed.

Specific projects completed to redevelop the Honeysuckle Creek include:

- Walking track and pathways to link various sporting facilities and more isolated parts of the town along the creek frontage.
- Historical and cultural interpretation trail.
- Extensive planting of indigenous species.
- Signage and historical markers.
- Environmental and Indigenous sculptures.
- Shaded outdoor preference platform.
- Redeveloped central market site.

- Footbridge across Honeysuckle Creek.

An official opening of the completed projects was held in early 2006.

Results

The works have resulted in the precinct becoming much more aesthetically pleasing and environmentally friendly with easily accessed areas and a new emphasis on being the hub of community, social, recreational and sporting activity.

Success Factors

- Strong community ownership from the outset.
- Initial planning process inclusive with more than 150 attending the community meeting and a very open process with good facilitators.
- The master plan from the initial meeting provided an excellent framework/ reference point as works continued and further funding was sought from various sources.
- Achievements were very visible.
- Great relationship with local government.
- A few key people in the community have specific expertise that has been used strategically and respectfully, and people have learnt much from them.
- The walking tracks and surrounds are very well maintained by both paid and volunteer workers.

Challenges

- Too many 'bits and pieces' of grants could have made the project very fragmented.
- No inbuilt evaluation so there was no framework to tell the whole story.
- The gap between funding application, the decision and the announcement is far too long.

Key learnings

Bringing the local community into the planning and design of the project at an early stage can promote a close and respectful relationship between the local government and the community.

The development of a community-based plan can bring together the range of community aspirations into an excellent framework to ensure the project is completed to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

e-ACE (Electronic Atherton Community Enterprise)

e-ACE has provided recycled computers, email, internet, and a community intranet free of charges to hundreds of households on the Atherton Gardens Housing Estate.

Need for the project

In 1999, a not-for-profit social enterprise *Infoxchange* gathered a huge stockpile of computers discarded due to the Y2K scare. These were recycled and offered to public housing residents in the Atherton Estate.

Aims

- To address the inequality of access to new information technologies among public housing estate residents.
- To use technology as a community building tool through an interactive website where residents can post news of local activities, exchange information and improve links between communities.
- To provide sustainable employment and educational opportunities to the long-term unemployed by running Community Jobs Programs.
- To address environmental issues by recycling discarded computer hardware

Involvement

Residents, Infoxchange, Swinburne University of Technology, Office of Housing, Homeground, City of Yarra, Jesuit Social Services, Atherton Gardens Residents Association.

Achievements

Over 550 recycled and refurbished computers with software, email, and intranet and internet access have been installed in resident's homes.

Three hundred residents have been provided with a basic 10 hour training session, offered in different languages.

Thirteen estate residents have been employed on the project so far and six are currently employed to work on the intranet site to roll out the network, run the Help Desk, provide training to residents and manage the website.

The Atherton Gardens Newspaper is sent as an infocast to over 400 email addresses every Thursday evening. The intranet site www.atherton.org.au provides residents with access to language newspapers and a broad range of community and government information.

Results

- The establishment of a community resource to strengthen the networks of residents
- Greater computer literacy amongst residents
- Increased training and employment opportunities for residents.

Success Factors

Setting up staff in foyers of the high rise towers, leafleting and approaching people as they walked around the estate were effective ways of letting residents know about the project

Being on-site was very important. People like being able to drop by and find out more about the project

Challenges

Door knocking wasn't a very effective way of establishing contact with residents as we found they were often not at home or were non-English speakers.

Delivering computers from off-site was very difficult.

Tenants were much more interested in volunteering for practical work such as training and working with computers. We had limited success in encouraging tenants to attend management committee meetings.

Key learnings

There was a high level of suspicion and at first; people found it difficult to understand why they were being offered free computers.

People seems more interested in using their computers for study or to communicate with people overseas than to establish new relationships. Likewise, the intranet service has been used to build on existing networks rather than create new ones.

Victorian Volunteer Small Grants

Forming lasting friendships

Fairview Home for the Aged in Warragul has developed an innovative solution to their need for more volunteers through a partnership with a primary school. A recruitment drive had attracted elderly family members and locals, but the residents had little contact with younger people.

A successful application for a Volunteer Small Grant of \$5,000 was targeted at recruiting young volunteers. Noojee Primary School was approached and children became buddies to the residents.

The children visit on a regular basis, sit and read books and share photographs and stories about their achievements. Some of the residents are teaching the children how to knit.

The result is the formation of strong bonds, which are bringing joy and laughter into the lives of the children and elderly residents.

Holy smoke

The Coatesville Uniting Church in Melbourne's East Bentleigh had been running a successful disco *Holy Smoke* for more than three years when a new commercial disco opened up down the road.

Rather than trying to compete, the church started the *Holy Smoke Chill Zone*, with youth club activities for up to 40 young people, with six to eight trained adults.

The group successfully obtained a \$5,000 Volunteer Small Grant for volunteer training and mentoring and essential equipment.

The Holy Smoke Chill Zone is for young people from 10 to 17 years, young people older than 17 are encouraged to be mentors to the under-10s waiting to join the group.

Volunteer umpires blow the whistle for their community

The Kyabram Sports and Recreation Centre needed new recruits to help umpire a range of sports for children and adults. Employees from the centre also saw the need to get young people more involved in physical activity and their community.

There was a lot of interest from teachers about giving young people who would not normally get involved in sports a chance to participate.

Having received a \$5,000 Victorian Volunteer Small Grant to help recruit volunteers, centre employees and local teachers approached a number of students and spoke with their families about the umpiring program. Twelve Kyabram Secondary School students aged 12 to 15 stepped up to the challenge and volunteered to help their local sports and recreation centre.

The program teaches volunteers about the philosophy of sport and the rules of the sport they have chosen to umpire. The volunteers receive one-on-one coaching from qualified umpires and eventually begin umpiring on their own. A year later there are 12 enthusiastic umpires who are helping themselves and the community to a healthier life.

This community initiative has boosted the students' confidence and helped bridge gaps between residents. The program has helped the new volunteers understand their important role in the community and has been a great way to inspire families who don't usually get involved in sport to experience the benefits of being active in the community.

Volunteering . . . it's interchanging

Interchange Outer East is a not-for-profit community organisation that offers support to more than 450 children and young adults with disabilities, and their families.

Interchange volunteers provide safety, supervision, fun and learning to participants with disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy and Down Syndrome.

Young people with a disability want to associate with people their own age, but earlier this year Interchange realised it didn't have enough young male volunteers to help with its programs.

Interchange has recruited 20 young men from Melbourne's outer eastern suburbs, who now see volunteering as one of their favourite things to do.

Young disabled people are getting more out of lives and their families have a break from their constant care.

Clients and volunteers go to the football or movies, swim, roller skate, go ten pin bowling, fly kites and have picnics.

Volunteers have made new friendships and developed more confidence and the experience has helped them become better leaders and team players.

Without volunteers, Interchange would need to pay more than \$100,000 a month to employ carers to work with the clients. None of the programs the organisation provides could run without their willing and enthusiastic volunteers.

Just Romans

Just Romans is a community enterprise employing socially isolated and long-term unemployed to make and install energy efficient devices to low income houses in the Goulbourn Valley area.

Need for the project

Inadequate window coverings can significantly increase energy consumption and costs and reduce people's amenity and comfort in the home. The Goulburn Valley Office of Housing faced continual requests from residents in the Shepparton area for decent blinds and energy efficient fittings to insulate houses. The Community Jobs Program, in partnership with a number of local community and government organisations, established the community enterprise *Just Romans* to make roman blinds and retrofit Office of Housing homes in the Shepparton area.

Aims

This community enterprise aimed to serve several interconnected purposes: energy and financial savings, skills development and employment opportunities.

Just Romans provides an opportunity for employees to participate in the administration, production, installation and quality assurance of the blinds and other energy efficiency fittings. In this way, employees are given the ability to learn work skills in a supportive environment before starting work with other employers.

Involvement

Just Romans is a unique collaboration between the Department of Human Services, Sustainability Victoria, and community sector organisations. It combines the energy expertise of Sustainability Victoria, the community development efforts of the Department of Human Services' Neighbourhood Renewal project with the employment and training program experience, local knowledge and networks of community sector organisations. Wangaratta-based Bruck Mills supplies the materials.

Achievements

Just Romans began with one person who supported a newly-arrived Parkside Estate family who urgently needed window coverings in their Office of Housing property.

It grew into a community enterprise employing eight members from the Shepparton community. Typically *Just Roman* employees were long-term unemployed, often with a history of difficult social, medical and family issues.

Following the initial success of *Just Romans*, the community enterprise was able to link in with the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Department for Victorian Communities through the Community Enterprise Development Initiatives to get help and funding to grow the enterprise sustainably. A working partnership was formed with the RMIT Business Entrepreneurial Course, whose students helped *Just Romans* develop a business and financial plan.

The enterprise now sells blinds at full price to other Neighbourhood Renewal projects in the Seymour, Chadstone and Ballarat areas. The project has contributed significantly to increased levels of trust and a sense of community.

Results

This community enterprise has delivered multiple social benefits for the local and wider community. Local people received training and meaningful employment, with tangible benefits for their neighbours and the wider community, resulting in increased levels of trust and a sense of community.

The newly-acquired skills have been used to increase both the appearance and comfort levels of Parkside Estate's Office of Housing properties.

The community's liveability, appearance and amenity have been significantly enhanced and environmental and financial savings have been made.

Success Factors

Comments on the aesthetic appeal of the new blinds, the increased comfort level in their homes and the polite and confident manner of those installing the devices were frequent. On an individual level, *Just Roman* blinds has brought about a marked change in its employees who, through the work and training opportunities provided by *Just Romans*, are much more employable, enjoy a greater degree of respect and are much more willing to be involved and participate in the wider community.

Just Romans demonstrates the very good working relationship between State (Department for Victorian Communities, Sustainability Victoria and Department of Human Services) and local government (City of Greater Shepparton), business (Bruck Mills) and community members.

Challenges

Just Romans is a very positive model but the project's viability is very tenuous. Its financial base is very small and sustainability is a constant concern. Other employment initiatives and programs are being discussed to maintain the momentum.

Key learnings

The size of the work groups was the key to the trainee community members' increased skill levels and confidence in transferring them to new situations. The teams who carried out retrofits and energy audits were very small, up to four people, allowing for individual support from the supervisor.

The positive feedback indicates how effective small community enterprise projects can be in creating real solutions to community issues.

Sorghum Sisters Community Enterprise

The *Sorghum Sisters* is a fully operational enterprise that produces and sells traditional Horn of African food with an Australian twist. The *Sorghum Sisters* provides a real training base from the kitchen of the local Carlton Primary School for Somali and Eritrean women. Food made by the *Sorghum Sisters*, includes Injera a staple of Horn of Africa communities and a type of savoury crepe filled with curry, and Tuna Fatira, similar bread to roti, but made with tuna. The *Sorghum Sisters* also make various biscuits, dips, cheese platters and sandwiches.

Need for the project

Newly arrived refugees often face systemic barriers to gaining employment and have very low bases of personal capital upon arrival in Australia. With none or little formal education, low skill capabilities and insufficient English language competencies, these people have few traditional pathways into formal work.

Achievement

The Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES) model of social enterprise attempts to address the unemployment issues faced by these communities by providing work and training experience within an active industry context. The process to develop the social enterprise model of community engagement involves four steps. Initially consultation with the target community is conducted to identify what sort of enterprise (i.e. food handling, cleaning, office administration or wood machinist), would be suitable. The next stage involves capacity building with the target population in the identified industry context, and this is followed by the development and implementation of business or revenue streams. Commencement of Job Network Training indicates that the enterprise is fully operational.

Employees of the *Sorghum Sisters* are all mothers or grandmothers of children from the local primary school. Prior to their involvement with the *Sorghum Sisters*, these women were reluctant to have much contact with the school community at all. The women often come from war ravaged homelands and with little or no formal schooling at all, face large barriers to employment and experience significant social dislocation issues. The women come together within the context of the *Sorghum Sisters* social enterprise to be trained by a qualified chef who adapts the program to suit the various literacy, language and social needs of the women. The tailored package involves training in good work and business practices, food handling and English language skills.

Involvement

Somalian and Eritrean women, Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES), Department for Victorian Communities, North Carlton Primary School.

Results

Commercial contracts between the *Sorghum Sisters* and community organisations, government departments and various local agencies mean that the women operate and develop skills in a real business environment. Working to deadlines, learning about quality control, finance administration, and ordering goods and equipment have been taught and learnt through the enterprise. The women complete Certificate 2 in Hospitality (Operation) through the enterprise.

The *Sorghum Sisters* has strengthened the interaction between the parent community and the Carlton Primary school, made good use of previously unused space at the school, and has had the added benefit of creating role models for the school children - many of whom haven't seen their parents participate in formal education and training before. The women of the *Sorghum Sisters* have a degree of autonomy and control in their working roles they've never experienced before. The interactive learning environment has allowed the women to develop the necessary skills to gain employment further a field.

Marnia is one of the *Sorghum Sisters*. According to her, the social enterprise is a very supportive environment for women who, upon arrival in Australia, experience significant language and employment problems that severely limit their ability to interact into Australian society. Marnia gets great pleasure and enjoyment from working with the women because they share similar backgrounds and experiences.

Success Factors

- The first cohort of participants was well selected for the program. Their hard work and willingness to learn underpinned the project's success.
- The training program prepared the participants well for their responsibilities and roles within the catering enterprise

Challenges

- The selection of the subsequent participants has been more challenging in the integration of their training into the already busy schedule of an established business.

Key learnings

The *Sorghum Sisters* creates a positive image of Muslim women in the workplace. The real work and training environment created by the *Sorghum Sisters* addresses the cultural, language, employment and isolation issues faced by refugees newly arrived into Australia. The social enterprise creates a context for the delivery of vocational training to a target group that commonly slips between the gaps of typical employment and social support.

Access for All Abilities

The Access for All Abilities program is designed to build the capacity of the sport and recreation sector to provide enhanced participation opportunities for people with a disability. The Access All Abilities program is delivered by a range of community and local government providers across Victoria. The Access All Abilities program provider in the Grampians region of Victoria is Wimmera Uniting Care.

Need for the Project

Through a genuine community connection and understanding of local issues, Wimmera Uniting Care recognised a correlation between the lack of positive media images of people with a disability in a sporting context and low participation levels in sport and recreation by people with a range of abilities. Wimmera Uniting Care acknowledged that an innovative approach was required to both assist local sports clubs to understand the benefits of involving people of all abilities in club development and simultaneously encourage active participation and involvement by people with a disability in community sport.

A project was initiated in partnership with the Wimmera Mail Times to develop feature stories on ten athletes of all abilities participating in ten different recreation and sporting activities. The success of the newspaper articles became the platform for the development of a travelling photographic exhibition formally launched by the Minister for Sport and Recreation in December 2004. The photographic exhibition assisted in generating a strong profile for the project and a high demand for complementary resources. In response to the demand, a booklet was developed in partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria based on the Stories About Ability newspaper articles. Over three thousand Stories About Ability booklets were initially published and distributed and a second print run supply was also exhausted. Due to the continuing demand, a DVD has now been developed featuring people of all abilities participating in community recreation activities and features stories from both a participant and sports club perspective.

Aims

The Stories About Ability project was originally designed to bridge the gap between low participation levels and the lack of mainstream media acknowledgement of people of all abilities in community sport. As the initiative grew in popularity and gained a higher profile across the State, it evolved into an extremely useful tool for sharing information about the benefits of participation and involvement in community sport, provided a recognised platform to highlight the value of community connections and revealed the positive contribution that participation in community sport can make in the lives of people of all abilities.

Involvement

Wimmera Uniting Care, community sports clubs in the Wimmera Region, editor and staff of the Wimmera Mail Times, Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) through Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV).

Achievements

An extraordinarily high level of genuine interest in the project has been generated and this been the catalyst for the development and evolution of the three resources/projects produced. A greater understanding of the capacity to use sport and recreation as a vehicle to engender positive community connections and outcomes has also resulted. This understanding has been shared with partners who may not otherwise have had exposure to, or opportunity to understand these benefits.

Results

A greater choice of participation opportunities for people of all abilities has been achieved as a result of the project. A complementary outcome has been the greater number of sports clubs and associations exposed to the benefits of becoming more open, accessible and inclusive through connection with the Stories About Ability project. For example, increased participation by a local athlete with a disability has resulted in increased involvement in all aspects of club development by his extended family members and friends.

Exposure to the Stories About Ability project has been the starting point for new partners and Special Development Schools, Access for All Abilities providers and State Sporting Associations and people of all abilities and their local sporting clubs. This project model has also provided a template for other areas within Sports and Recreation Victoria to tell their stories of the impact of government funding in communities.

Success Factors

The administrative and financial support provided by Department for Victorian Communities through Sports and Recreation Victoria has assisted in lifting the profile of the project and provided extra coordination capacity. Development of a resource such as the DVD has created the capacity to continue to 'tell the story' using a user friendly, modern approach. Communicating the story with an equal focus on individuals of all abilities and sports clubs has resulted in the resource being uniformly useful to two key target groups.

Challenges

Overall, the project was successful and very few problems were experienced. Given the project received additional support from Department for Victoria Communities, it has resulted in additional requests from other Access All

Abilities Program Providers to undertake similar projects. This has been raised as part of a formal consultation process through a recent evaluation of the Access All Abilities Program and will be addressed as part of the repositioning of the Program into the future.

Key learnings

The key learnings are associated with the power of a simple, positive message and how a joint understanding of the benefits of using sport and recreation as a vehicle for the development of social capital can reap ongoing rewards.

Wimmera Transport Connections Program

Wimmera Transport Connections Program is one of nine pilot projects across predominately rural and regional Victoria supported the Transport Connections Program with funding for \$2.1 million over three years. The pilot projects aims to be inclusive of the community they support by developing flexible approaches and practical solutions for addressing transport disadvantage. Transport Connections Program is a joint initiative between the Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Infrastructure (DoI), Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) and the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Wimmera Transport Connections was auspiced by the Wimmera Volunteers Inc and the Coordinator is located at the Wimmera Volunteers' offices in Horsham.

Need for the project

The Victorian Government established Transport Connections Program in 2003 to address the access and mobility needs of transport disadvantaged communities and individuals in rural and regional Victoria. Disadvantage in access to transport is a significant factor impeding individuals and communities, both in terms of economic and social participation and has increasing warranted the development of targeted response.

Aims

- Improve access and mobility for people experiencing transport disadvantage in the Wimmera region in an effective, planned, equitable, sustainable and informed manner.
- Facilitate the development of community orientated, inclusive, flexible transport initiatives in the Wimmera Region.
- Make better use of existing transport services and resources through new and co-ordinated approaches, education and the provision of information.
- Address issues of isolation and alienation and develop the capacity of people to contribute and participate in the activities of their communities.

Involvement

The Wimmera Transport Connections project has received input and guidance in various forms from a number of project partners and key stakeholders. There has been representation on the steering committee from organisations including local government, health service providers, transport providers and representatives of state government departments and state government funded projects such as Rural Access Wimmera and the Wimmera Primary Care Partnership.

Achievement

The Wimmera Transport Connections Project has successfully implemented a number of projects including distribution of Local Government Areas specific transport guides and the implementation of a new transport services. With National Australia Bank support, a van was purchased for use by community organisations. A car pooling network was established to assist regional students to attend classes in Horsham. Furthermore, Wimmera Transport Connections are working on the development of a range of transport projects, in partnership with the Department of Infrastructure, as announced in the “Moving Forward” Provincial Statement.

Results

Transport Connections projects have highlighted opportunities that exist in our communities to make better use of the transport resources that are available, including a school buses. On a more local level, the project has generated greater discussion around what *can* be done, rather than what can't. Communities are working in partnership more regularly – a great example of this is the car pooling initiative.

Challenges

There has been some difficulty in engaging stakeholders to the projects. In the implementation of projects, the indicative support for the transport services may not translate into actual service use. There is also a limited number of appropriately sized buses for communities with a small number of members.

Success Factors

Some of the strengths have been the whole-of-government approach, the steering committee with wide representation, being auspiced by an organisation independent of the Shire, and working to support other regional project or events.

Key learnings

The importance of an ongoing collaborative process between project stakeholders and the Wimmera Transport Connections to ensure communities/stakeholders has some ownership of the project throughout the development and implementation stages. This ultimately provides the project greater opportunity for success.

It was important for the project worker to be funded for the planning and implementation of the project.

The importance of brokerage funding from within the budget of the Transport Connections project to enable the development and implementation of smaller projects, without having to source funding from external sources.

There is difficulty in creating sustainable transport services in this region without supplementary income support, either through brokerage, sponsorship or other government subsidies. The distances that people have to travel to access services makes the provision of transport expensive and subsequently out of the reach of some of our most isolated and disadvantaged community members.

Winda Mara Aboriginal Cooperative Community Dreaming Leadership Project

The Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation works in partnership with local schools and a range of community and business organisations in the Glenelg region of South Western Victoria. Winda Mara's Community Dreaming Koori Leadership Project aims to strengthen Indigenous youth participation and leadership in the Shire of Glenelg. The project is jointly funded by the Community Support Fund, VicHealth and Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

Need for the project

The Community Dreaming Project was initiated to strengthen the self-confidence, resilience and leadership skills of the Indigenous young people living in Hamilton, Heywood and Portland and to increase their capacity to participate in civic life and contribute to the cultural strengths and sustainability of their communities.

Aims

The Community Dreaming Leadership Project aimed to develop a leadership program to foster enterprise culture amongst young Indigenous people. The program used learning techniques and mentoring to improve self esteem, confidence and leadership skills to strengthen family relationships.

Involvement

The Winda Mara Corporation works in partnership with local schools, community and business organisations and local government, depending on the specific projects. A total of 29 young people have participated in four specific programs; the event management project, young people's information technology project, the keeping place project and the cemetery gates project.

Achievements

The programs are coordinated into three phases:

- The preparation phase with young people exploring the relevance and meaning of community, includes leadership camps, community workshops and community liaison and networking.
- The community projects phase where young people design, manage and put their own individual community projects into action with the facilitator's support.
- The review and celebration phase with reviews, presentations, evaluation and future planning.

The pilot phase included organising and participating in a range of community involvement, field trips and many successful fundraising activities. Amongst successful activities included a 24-hour marathon to raise money for the Cancer Council, the development of a Road Youth Group for former substance abusers, a concert for a local nursing home, and a community celebration.

Results

The training and activities of the 2002 Leadership Program were integrated into the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) senior school curriculum at the two local schools. The current project has expanded with an employment program in the Heywood/Portland area.

Participants have gained an increased sense of belonging and social cohesiveness, improved self esteem and more flexible and persistent attitudes. Their exposure to different organisations has given them greater awareness of networks and planning in the wider community.

Positive feedback from the wider community and the building of trust and confidence between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and positive media exposure of young people has greatly improved relationships in the community. The program has been broadened to include the extended families of the young people involved.

Success Factors

The projects have been integrated well into the other activities of Winda Mara and effective long-term partnerships with local educational and other institutions have been established.

Participants have developed stronger self esteem, assertiveness, networking and negotiation skills through strong partnerships between local schools, and community and business organisations.

Challenges

Administrative difficulties delayed the incorporation of the Indigenous think tank the Network of the Future, so the network could not fully support the project's first year. Now the Network of the Future is incorporated it will provide the necessary support, direction, coordination and advocacy between the various Indigenous projects.

Key learnings

There is a need for a strong overarching body to coordinate, lead, support and drive individual projects. Projects that are well integrated into the other activities of their Indigenous organisation succeed better.

Paying attention to developing effective long-term partnerships with local educational organisations is essential.

Youthcentral

youthcentral is the Victorian Government's online initiative for young people in Victoria aged 12 to 25. More than just a website, it is a one stop shop for young people that provides information and employment opportunities, links young people to their peers, government and their communities and also offers programs to support voluntary participation.

youthcentral (www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au) was launched on 10 December 2004, and marked the completion of the redevelopment of the Youth Employment Link. This redevelopment was a joint initiative between Employment Programs and the Office for Youth.

Need for the project

The internet has been acknowledged (United Nations World Youth Report, 2005) as a mechanism that can significantly reduce the decline in traditional participation and civic engagement by young people.

The need for the development of *youthcentral* was driven by:

- Government's commitment through DVC to strengthen engagement opportunities for young people within their local communities.
- Young people's limited awareness of, and access to, coordinated information that serves their needs at the local level.
- The continuing pockets of high levels of unemployment and marginalisation among young people in some local communities across the state.

Aims

youthcentral was created to tap into the way young people are now seeking information, by making government services and information easy to access for young people through a unique, youth-oriented, single web access point.

It seeks to improve the delivery of careers, employment, education and training information to young people and to engage young people by linking them with government and their local communities. *youthcentral* also offers real employment and voluntary participation opportunities for young people involved in all aspects of the site's development, building skills and providing work experience.

Involvement

The Department for Victorian Communities is the lead agency for this project. It runs collaborative partnerships with the Department of Human Services, Premier's Drug Prevention Council, Consumer Affairs Victoria, Privacy Victoria, Department of Education and Training, Department of Sustainability and

Environment, Victoria University, TAFE, Multimedia Victoria, VicRoads, TAC, Victoria Police, Local Shires and community organisations.

Achievement

- Young Victorians now have access to improved skills and work experience, better community networks and access to quality information. The participation of almost 3,300 young people from all over Victoria through creative content, design, multimedia productions, workshops and consultation.
- More than 110 individual young people have been actively employed on the project as Roving Reporters and Editorial Team members.
- User research conducted with more than 1000 young people indicates we are exceeding their expectations in information provision, design and the participation model.
- *youthcentral* has performed well, often enjoying the highest weekly market share in terms of both visits and pages viewed of all other Australian State government youth websites. Since its launch to late May in 2006, it has exceeded 1 million page impressions.

Results

- Improved opportunities for diverse young people to participate in shaping their community's future and develop their skills and networks via locally driven *youthcentral* participation initiatives.
- Improved access for young people to relevant, youth oriented information including employment, training and services at the local level.
- New opportunities created to forge local partnerships between young people, government, local businesses and their community.
- Enhancement of the Victorian Government's reputation as a world class innovator in the development of online services and engagement programs targeting young people.
- Significant cross-departmental initiatives established including the creation of a Schoolies Week sub site for the Premier's Drug Prevention Council as well as numerous online community consultations and campaigns on behalf of departments, agencies and statutory bodies.

Success Factors

- The youth-generated content is very popular and the youth participation model has been viewed by many young participants as an excellent training and employment opportunity.
- The high turnover of content on the website has ensured return-visit loyalty of the website's user base.
- Content partnerships with other government departments and agencies have provided more efficient and cost effective communication of key government messages to young people.

Challenges

- Yet to consolidate a truly effective online marketing strategy to raise awareness of youthcentral among young people.
- Local level content can still be improved.
- There is a degree of difficulty in tailoring some participation projects to specific disadvantaged groups of young people eg. culturally and linguistic diverse communities (CALD) and Indigenous communities where one size doesn't fit all.

Key learnings

- Buy-in from key organisations which support and represent particular groups of disadvantaged young people is essential to ensure the right opportunity is offered in the right way with underpinning support.

Young Parents Access Program

Corio Bay Senior College is the only Victorian secondary school to feature accredited on-site childcare to help young parents continue their education. Corio Bay Senior College offers students VCE and alternative education pathways with a broad range of subject choice. Students can opt for full or part-time study. The Young Parents Access offers affordable, accessible on-site childcare, intensive parent support, mentoring, visiting outreach services, social activities and personal development.

Need for the project

The Young Parents Access Program (YPAP) is a local response to an identified need. Corio Bay Secondary College is located in the northern suburbs of Geelong and was identified as one of the top 10 communities of disadvantage in the Barwon South Western Region in 2001. It was also ranked at the fifth most disadvantaged area in Victoria by the Jesuit Disadvantage Study, with the lowest concentration of high income earners and tertiary qualifications. According to the 2001 census, the Corio/Norlane area has five times the national average of young single parents. However, this data is skewed by the relocation of single mothers into the local public housing estates. As such, teenage mothers in Corio face the most complex risks.

Aims

The Young Parents Access Program aims to support young parents in the education system and also help them develop their parenting and life skills.

Involvement

Corio Bay Secondary College, Department of Education, Department of Human Services, the Rotary Club of Balwyn, the City of Greater Geelong, Deakin University and the Smart Geelong Local Learning and Employment Network.

Achievements

The on-site childcare gives young mothers easy access to their children during the day, which alleviates separation anxiety and helps their educational outcomes. Childcare staff can informally observe parent and child interactions and provide targeted information on parenting skills and nutrition if required. Further opportunities are offered for young parents to discuss a range of social, parenting and life issues which may impact on their ability to remain in education and to help them cope with the tensions between being a young parent, a student and a teenager. A coordinator and part-time parent support worker also support students by liaising with the childcare centre, school staff and external agencies. They also provide counselling to identify any personal, social or education issues the student may be experiencing.

In cooperation with a local youth centre, The Courthouse, students have also developed a play titled 'Mums on the Run' to reflect their experiences. This play and the program were presented at the Dusseldorf Learning Choices Expo held in Brisbane in 2005.

Results

Of the six students enrolled in the first year, two have enrolled in TAFE courses, two have enrolled in university degrees, one student became a mother happily for the second time and one student discontinued her studies. From the present cohort of 30 young mothers, one student has been elected as school captain and another student is demonstrating the level of academic excellence required to achieve her goal of acceptance into a university science degree. Over a dozen students have completed a range of short course TAFE qualifications, including food handling and first aid, to strengthen their employment prospects.

Success Factors

The advocacy role of the coordinator and parent support worker has helped students in their personal development and by getting this assistance with their interactions with Centrelink and other government agencies. Through this support, the students build their confidence and become better equipped to advocate for themselves. There is also an opportunity to attend after school classes twice a week to concentrate on academic concerns.

Challenges

In the legislative arrangements for the provision of childcare, the students are allocated 30 absent days a year, but unfortunately school holidays are not permitted to be counted in these absences. If a student wants to return to her family away from Corio during the extended period of the school holidays, full fees for the childcare during this time may be charged if the student accrues more than 30 absences.

Key learnings

The Young Parents Access Program has demonstrated flexible, practical solutions to support pregnant and parenting teenagers in continuing their education. By adopting a multidimensional approach, a program that provides on-site childcare, health services, social support and case management enables students to complete their education and progress on a career path leading to economic security and an ability to contribute to their community.

This support breaks the 'seemingly inevitable cycle of poverty' as a consequence of teenage pregnancy, and overturns the negative stereotypes of young single mothers. The Corio Bay Secondary College wants to extend the program by establishing a kindergarten as part of its childcare program. The college also wants to establish a transitional program of basic numeracy and literacy for parents who may require this before entry into Year 11.

Enterprising Women

Enterprising Women provides access for women from migrant communities to financial literacy programs delivered through interpreters, pre-business training, no-interest business capital, and ongoing support.

Need for the project

Enterprising Women was initiated to strengthen community by working with women from migrant communities who live in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. The project has a particular focus on women who are marginalised because of language, ethnic or cultural background, income, education, settlement and unemployment – either as single issues affecting their lives and access to services or more often as combination of many of these factors.

Aims

Enterprising Women was designed to increase social and economic participation by engaging women through a peer-directed network that provides further leadership opportunities for women involved in the project.

Involvement

The project was developed by migrant women from the northern region of Melbourne with Women's Health in the North as the lead agency in partnership with Northern Migrant Resource Centre. It is funded through the Community Support Fund. A community development worker and a part-time training officer support the project. The steering committee includes a project participant, United Nations Australia Association, Northern Area Consultative Committee, Office of Small Business Victoria, Kildonan Child and Family Services, Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES), ANZ and the Victorian Local Governance Association. Additional partnerships formed to deliver the project include Australian Taxation Office, Consumer Affairs Victoria, local business women in the northern region, Darebin Enterprise Centre, Work Cover and many more.

Results

Half way into the three year timeframe Enterprising Women has already accomplished many great outcomes. Highlights include:

- Two hundred and twenty nine women have been reached through the project (total target over three years is 300 women by 2008) and have participated in business training, financial literacy programs and women's network meetings. An additional 51 women have participated in one off financial information sessions.

- Businesses have been established such as childcare, importing, bookkeeping, women's driving school, Spanish language school, exercise programs, clothes retail, catering, art and traditional crafts.
- Women have been linked into services such as employment assistance, TAFE training and education, welfare, domestic violence support, health, housing, financial counselling, English language training, childcare and mainstream business networks and training programs.

Achievements

- Many women have participated with backgrounds from Pakistani, Sudanese, Indian, Italian, Greek, Eritrean, Colombian, Malaysian, Aboriginal Australian, Irish, French, Iraqi, Turkish and Afghani. Some women receive Centrelink incomes, some work part time or casually and others, mainly newly-arrived women, cannot get welfare assistance and rely on partners or family and friends.
- Northern Enterprising Women is a not-for-profit support network for women from migrant and marginalised backgrounds starting out in small business and self employment. The network is managed by women from the community who were elected by their peers. They meet regularly in the outer northern suburbs of Melbourne and currently have over 50 signed members. Increasingly local women from mainstream backgrounds are joining the network which is a positive community building result.
- An encouragement award for multicultural women in small business was developed as a partnership between the partner agencies and Northern Enterprising Women. Prizes included \$2000 donated by Darebin Enterprise Centre and many other business assistance services donated by local businesses.
- A women's market provides participants with an opportunity to trade at low cost.

Success Factors

Free childcare at all programs, sessions and meetings gave many more women the opportunity to participate. A sustainable network, driven by women from the community and women participating in the project, has ensured on-going community based support for women after the project. This has also been an amazing opportunity for women to take up leadership roles and advocate on behalf of other women in their community.

Challenges

Initial resistance to mixing health and finance occurred because the links between poverty and financial exclusion, and women's health and wellbeing hadn't been considered before. Microfinance and enterprise development for women has a long tradition in developing countries, but using microfinance as a community development strategy was a concept largely unheard of in the Australian context. There was also some reluctance to acknowledge that poverty does exist in our society. The year 2005 being declared United Nations Year of Microcredit added credibility to the project. The interest-free loan limit needs to be higher than \$2000 and repayments could begin after a few months rather than immediately.

Key learnings

- Sometimes removing just one barrier which others take for granted, like access to childcare or competitive credit can be the catalyst for changing people from feeling isolated and disengaged to being healthy participating community members.
- The best results for the community are achieved when people are given opportunity and are empowered to make their own decisions about their own future. The program is succeeding because women are seen for their potential, not labelled or dismissed because of their current circumstances.

Women Who Mean Business

The Women Who Mean Business three year project began in February 2004 and involves women in eight local projects across the Gippsland region to develop their talents in leadership, business and the arts.

Need for the project

The project emerged from The Gippsland Women Network's (GWN) "The Box" prior initiative that highlighted issues affecting many rural communities across Gippsland. These included limited employment opportunities for young people, and those attempting to diversify from the traditional land use activities, shortage of community volunteers, and of art and limited culture appreciation and exhibition space for local artists. The Women Who Mean Business concept emerged to address as many of these as possible and provide opportunities for women throughout the entire region.

Aims

The project aims to achieve increased business and employment opportunities for women in the region, provide networking opportunities, develop skills, partnerships and education opportunities, and share information and skills, and increase women's involvement in promoting Gippsland's tourism potential.

Involvement

Eight projects were established with over 3000 Gippsland residents in project activities and more than 160 Government, Business and Community groups involved. A project management team and eight part time project officers oversaw the project. Local government, business and community organisations have supported the individual projects.

Achievements

Meeniyah/Leongatha – creation of a quilt celebrating women in South Gippsland. The quilt was toured throughout Gippsland and exhibited in various galleries, promoting the region.

Warragul – Arts Discovery Trail and over 50 bollards celebrating Gippsland's heritage. The Baw Baw Shire has enhanced this project and will continue to work with women to make the pathway into a major art walkway tourist attraction to promote the region.

Stratford/Maffra – Garden for Humanity is a place for locals and tourists to gather for recreation and enjoyment.

Latrobe Valley Group – "tucker n Tales" recipe and story book. Book sales will sustain further community projects.

Buchan – Art and Craft Gallery – Buchan Gallery supports locals to sell their goods as well as encouraging tourists on route to the Buchan Caves to stop and enjoy the town of Buchan.

Swifts Creek /Omeo – Travelling Photo and Art Exhibition. The project encouraged the locals to support local events as volunteer numbers have been decreasing.

Orbost – Magical Garden and Community Pathway that incorporates native plants and sculptures.

Yarram – Four Day Spring into Art Festival held over Melbourne Cup weekend to celebrate the arts in various locations around the district. Over 2500 attended the festival which will continue to be held to attract tourists to the region. The festival encouraged the Wellington Shire to fast forward the establishment of the Yarram Gallery in the Old Court House.

Results

The Women Who Mean Business have developed a range of outcomes including the transfer of skills for use in other community projects and business ventures, raised profiles of local women, increased understanding of how to work with government for the community benefit, ongoing partnerships with government and community organisations, and an increase in tourism and economic benefits for towns hosting Women Who Mean Business events.

Success Factors

Some of the strengths of the project were combination of skills development and local project development, successful funding applications for projects, skill development workshops, the part time project officers and the diversity of the local projects.

Challenges

There were difficulties around the lack of delegation amongst some volunteers creating a greater workload than expected. Paid part time project officers were asked to undertake their responsibilities beyond their paid hours. The diversity of projects presented challenges in reconciling the difference in the priorities and approaches amongst the members.

Key learnings

A workshop was held almost two years into the project to identify learnings that devised ten golden rules for a successful community development project:

1. Effective communication is vital.
2. Community projects mean working together.
3. Accept the group will take time to develop – use the time wisely.

4. Have a plan, write it down, update it when necessary.
5. Keep good written records.
6. Enjoy the project – its challenges, the personalities, the setbacks and the achievements.
7. Recognise that everyone in the team has great skills.
8. Look after the people in the team – they are your greatest asset.
9. Share resources, the workload, the excitement and the disappointments.
10. Keep it in perspective.

Golden Plains Community Planning

Golden Plains Shire is a predominately rural shire with a population of 16,730 people serving a large number of towns and communities located between the major regional centres of Ballarat and Geelong.

Need for the project

Golden Plains Shire is made up of more than 35 small communities, many of them with little or no infrastructure. Services are limited with no secondary school, one pharmacy, one doctor's clinic and one bank. The Shire recognized that given the restrictions it faced in servicing a diverse range of communities, the best way to address local issues and plan for the future was to carry out a community planning process. Golden Plains Shire Council recognises that the sustainability of local communities depends on engaging local communities in township planning and identifying issues, needs, opportunities and solutions.

Aims

The Golden Plains Shire Community Planning model brings together groups of residents to develop community plans for their locality. The project aims to:

- Give communities the opportunity to be more focused on their own individual issues and plan for the future.
- Identify local solutions to local problems.
- Provide a complete approach to planning that combines all of the social and economic aspects and involves the whole community.
- Increase residents' participation and improve their quality of life.

Involved

More than 80 community coordinators bring together residents in their local shires to put their community plans into action, based on identified needs, problems, goals and opportunities. They commit to building a working relationship with council and other stakeholders based on trust and respect.

Achievements

Over 19 towns have developed their own community plan with the help of a community development facilitator provided by the shire. These community plans consequently have become a key negotiation point between local communities and commercial, community and government stakeholders to work in partnership to address the plans' priorities.

Results

Since community planning began in 2001, local communities have achieved staggering results in township priority projects in education, childcare, recreation, health, social services, transport, housing, economic opportunity and infrastructure development.

Success Factors

Some of the strengths of the project were the sense of ownership of the local plans by the community, the appointment of an external facilitator, and the strong framework underpinning the community planning process. This framework developed a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities, designated a local government officer to be the central liaison officer, educated community members and council staff on the community planning process, identified short-term projects for a quick win for local communities and developed an action learning process to build the skills of decision makers.

Challenges

There is a need to make sure that information is communicated back to the local community regularly.

Key learnings

- Community plans need to be owned by the community, not council.
- An external facilitator is necessary to build trust and openness into the community planning process.
- The allocation of a small amount of funds through the Shire's Community Grants Program to enable local communities to immediately get on with short-term priority projects.
- Using an 'action learning model' to help community coordinators to increase their experience, knowledge of and skills in facilitating local community projects.
- Communicating a successful project result generates further community interest in and motivation for the project.
- Developing partnerships between residents, community groups, governments, service providers and business increases the likelihood of positive and sustainable responses to local needs and issues.
- Celebrating the successful implementation of projects is important.
- Community building is a long-term process that brings about cultural change in the way in which communities, governments and service providers relate and work to get sustainable results for the community.

Community Building in Ararat

Ararat Rural City Council is located 200 kilometres west of Melbourne with a population of 11,600 with approximately 70% based in the urban environment of Ararat City.

Need for the project

During the 1980's and 1990's, the municipality was marked by a period of economic and social decline with the loss of a number of support industries, falling housing prices, and educational & employment opportunities. Both the Jesuit Social Services Study by Vinson and the Department of Human Services Burden of Disease study identified a significant level of social and health disadvantage across the municipality.

The sense of community was also disparate, brought about by the 1996 amalgamations of the Shire of Ararat (rural area) and the Ararat City Council (Ararat city area).

Aims

The Ararat Community Building project builds on another extremely important community building initiative, the Asset Based Community Development Project. The Asset Building Community Development Project (ABCD) was a VicHealth funded 18 month project established in 2001 to 'engage local communities in the rural townships across the municipality in the promotion and development of economic participation through a collective and community owned approach to economic growth and social productivity'.

Involvement

Both projects were supported by steering committee made up of residents, Councillors, Council Officers, and organisations such as the Regional Development Board, State Government, East Grampians Health Service and the University of Ballarat.

Achievements

Community Building began with the ABCD Project conducting a number of meetings in the rural townships to inform each community about the project and to recruit residents. This was followed by a Community Opportunity Workshop to assist local communities to envisage their future, identify potential projects and enlist local support for ongoing activity. Working Groups in each community developed Township Community Actions Plans (CAP) (which detailed their community's history, vision and strategies of how to get there). These documents would later play an important role in place-based planning. The seven communities were supported to conduct surveys in their communities that aimed

to provide a picture of that community's skills, assets and qualities to incorporate in the CAP. Training was provided to assist communities develop a number of appropriate skills, including project management, team building and submission writing.

The number of communities involved in developing community action plans has grown since the initial Asset Building Community Development project. Those towns originally involved in developing community action plans are undertaking reviews and three new towns are developing their first community plans.

Results

Many of the communities have been successful in achieving the tangible goals and projects set out in their Community Action Plans including a rural transaction centre, numerous streetscape projects, a community bank, festivals, feasibility studies and master plans, community hubs, water projects and community infrastructure upgrades.

It is the less tangible instances that are more significant and are often the result of the community building processes used to "get there" rather than the projects themselves. Some of these examples include a stronger 'identify' and 'voice' in the local townships, meaningful relationships developed between community groups and the Council, new leaders emerging and communities changing from negative and demanding in their request to one forming productive relationships with each other and key stakeholders.

Success Factors

Strengths of the projects included the financial and administrative support to the local projects and groups, locating a coordinator within Council, the place-based approach of community planning and providing community groups with resources and funding.

Challenges

There were difficulties in the low availability of volunteers and volunteer burnout. Involving communities in planning and decision making requires a lot of time, energy and resources. The role of volunteers in our community and the support required for this to continue needs to be re-evaluated. There were also difficulties in engaging all residents and groups in the process. It is important that projects come quickly afterwards after the development of the Community Actions Plans to keep communities involved and so that those agencies and the communities take these plans seriously.

Key learnings

How the principles of community building and their relationship to place-based planning are incorporated into the everyday business of Council, other agencies and State and Federal Government.

Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre

The Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre (CNLC) delivers a variety of community development and further education programs. Established in 1973 as the Carlton Contact Neighbourhood House, it merged with Carlton Adult Reading and Writing Program to create the Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre in 2002.

Need for the project

In 1973 a group of Carlton women needed space for a local playgroup. They lobbied local government and were given an upstairs space at the local community centre to use as a base. The community centre promoted self help and life skills, provided advice on personal problems and offered a limited form of material aid. More recently, the centre's activities expanded to include a range of literacy, numeracy and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs catering to the increase in migrants from the Horn of Africa settling in the local area.

Aims

The centre provides important community development and further education programs in multicultural and socio-economically diverse Carlton. These programs build the language and learning skills of migrant parents and children living in the Carlton high-rise housing estate nearby.

Involvement

Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre is managed by a volunteer committee of management with a full time centre manager and community development worker and part time further education coordinator. The centre also works with many other local agencies through the Carlton Local Agencies Network, including the Carlton Baths Community Centre, Church of All Nations - Community Support Agency; Carlton-Parkville Youth Services, Carlton Family Resource Centre, North Yarra Community Health Centre, Adult Multicultural Education Services and Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria.

Achievements

Like other Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres, Carlton offers a wide-ranging selection of community development and further education programs. Some programs target specific groups in need like the elderly; mildly intellectually disabled adults, and women, while other programs are open to community members from all walks of life. The centre is also involved in development, further education and research activities. For example, funds from City West Water were used to install a water tank and carry out garden development as part of an environmental awareness and sustainability project.

In 2004 the centre worked with the Church of All Nations and the Carlton Parkville Youth Services to design and run four very successful programs delivering the anti-gambling message to English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, Australian native speakers, young people from the Horn of Africa and Carlton high-rise tenants. The centre offers information and referral assistance for local people to help them with Federal Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Centrelink papers, domestic violence and adoption issues, finding affordable housing and suitable counselling services and many other queries. It also acts as an advocate and has developed important networks for Neighbourhood Houses, including organising and assisting with a Horn of Africa Women's Forum and acting as the secretary of the North East Neighbourhood House Network.

Results

- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have improved their employment opportunities by learning English.
- There have been forums for women refugees on handling racial discrimination, improving their employment opportunities and other areas of interest.
- Community development programs have given people the confidence to try new skills, meet new people and learn new tasks. They reduce isolation, which in turn improves people's health.
- The isolation of elderly people is reduced, with excursions improving connectedness and providing some excitement. Their health improves as they are better connected to people who care for them.
- The creation of the first ever Horn of Africa young women's basketball team at the Coburg Basketball Stadium.

Success Factors

- Bringing people from diverse backgrounds together and having them feel comfortable. There is a zero tolerance of any '..isms..' like sexism and racism.
- Sharing of life experiences across cultures leads to greater understanding, tolerance and mutual respect.

Challenges

There are insufficient funds to recognise the huge time it takes for the process of community development. Outcomes are measured in activities or programs or classes, and there is no acknowledgement of the time taken to meet, plan, support, write submissions, advise management committees and liaise with local providers.

Key learnings

- Working collaboratively with local agencies when sufficient grant funds are made available is a great model for addressing emerging community needs.
- Working with local people and key community leaders openly builds trust and better facilitates any community processes.
- It is important to celebrate any successful projects.

Tangambalanga Community Centre

Tangambalanga, with a population of around 400 residents is the social and commercial focus of the lower Kiewa Valley area. The district's sporting and social activities have traditionally focussed on the Coulston Park area as the home of the football, tennis, bowls and RSL clubs. One of the challenges is that Tangambalanga, like other small nearby communities, is rapidly becoming a 'dormitory town' for Albury/Wodonga, with some people not engaged at all in community groups and activities.

Need for the project

The facilities at Coulston Park have been housed in a hall and several other smaller buildings transported from the Bonegilla Migrant Camp over 40 years ago. The existing community hall, the original Bonegilla Migrant Centre hall, serves as various sporting club rooms, a senior citizens' activity centre and the venue for school concerts and other functions. These facilities are run down and unfit for many of their current uses.

Aims

The aim of the project is the establishment of a multi-purpose facility to meet the diverse needs of residents from Tangambalanga and surrounding districts.

Involvement

At least 15 local groups use the existing community hall for a range of sporting, welfare, arts and social activities and events. These groups and others were consulted in the Indigo Shire's master planning process. As a result of this broad and intensive community input, the Shire substantially modified their original proposals for the provision of community facilities to service the district.

Achievement

The Tangambalanga Community Centre layout and facilities have been developed by a steering committee comprising community, Council and professionals to ensure the centre met community needs.

The Community Centre now under construction will be a multi-purpose facility providing for all community groups and the local primary school. Incorporated into the centre are consulting rooms for visiting services and meeting room facilities for different sized groups and organisations. The facilities will cater for current and future needs of the community.

Results

The Community Centre is eagerly anticipated by the many community groups using the inadequate current facilities and these groups have worked

cooperatively with Council to ensure that the new centre will suit the purposes and needs of very diverse groups and individuals.

The addition of smaller rooms suitable for consulting rooms will encourage service providers and professionals such as audiologists, podiatrists, rural counsellors, etc to visit Tangambalanga on a regular basis so that locals don't always have to commute to regional centres to access services.

In the meantime, Council and the community have been working towards priorities identified on the renegotiated master plan, and with the support of the State Government have achieved improved drainage, upgraded swimming pool facilities, upgraded netball courts and new netball/bowls change room facilities. The financial and in-kind support of the community has been vital in achieving these milestones.

Success Factors

The consultation process was genuine with planners listening to the community and incorporating their ideas and knowledge of what's needed into the overall plan and the establishment of a steering committee with strong local representation ensured that the transparent process will continue throughout the project.

Other factors included:

- A very open planning and consultation process renegotiating the Indigo Shire's master plan with the community.
- The Indigo Shire continuing to work closely with the community, especially through the Shire's Health and Wellbeing Officer.
- Community groups' strong participation, including sport and recreation, integrated services, senior citizens and young people.

Challenges

The final two stages of the Coulston Park Master Plan are the upgrading of the football club change rooms and construction of a skate park. Council is currently liaising with regional representatives of Sport and Recreation to facilitate joint funding of these projects. They would have liked to apply for a Football and Netball facilities grant this year, but were unable to meet the timeline so will apply in the 2006-2007 funding round.

Other challenges included:

- Involving the commuting community, many of who live in Tangambalanga but work for and engage in Albury/Wodonga.
- The timing of grant applications by various divisions of the Department for Victorian Communities was not sympathetic to the communities' timeline.

A place-based integrated block funding approach to community projects like these can overcome this.

Key learnings

The decision to raise the matching ratio from 1:1 to 2:1 for funding for rural Community Infrastructure Projects has been an enormous help for small Local Government Areas (LGAs) embarking on projects such as this where huge numbers of volunteer hours have raised thousands of dollars for the various community facilities.

The Coulston Park upgrade represents a strong example of whole-of-government cooperation to meet the needs of a small community. Local Government demonstrated flexibility in the consultation process consistent with the Community Support Fund Guidelines and the process has ensured a real sense of community ownership of the process. Council Officers' respect for community and local expertise resulted in modification of their original master plan to accommodate the particular needs of this community. The relationship is ongoing especially through the Shire's Health and Wellbeing Officer. The Coulston Park upgrade is a strong example of local government and community working closely together.

Rosedale Multi-Purpose Community Centre

Rosedale, located about 200 kilometres east of Melbourne, has just completed a new multi-purpose facility to replace its ageing community facilities.

Need for the project

Rosedale experienced significant economic decline in the 1990s. Unemployment rose to almost 9 per cent and house prices fell by 25 per cent. A number of substandard community facilities were scattered throughout the town to service the current population.

Aims

To replace the existing facilities spread around the town with a centrally located multi-purpose facility gives an opportunity to make stronger links between the various services.

Involvement

The funding partnership included the Department of Human Services, Small Towns Development Fund (RDV), Community Support Fund (DVC), Regional Partnerships, Federal Department of Transport and Regional Services and Wellington Shire Council.

The key stakeholders partnership includes the Central Gippsland Health Service, Wellington Library Service, Rosedale Neighbourhood House, Rosedale Preschool, Rosedale Senior Citizens Club and Wellington Shire Council. These stakeholders also committed funds to the project. Other interested groups and general community members were also welcomed and encouraged to participate in the key stakeholders' group.

Wellington Shire will directly manage the facility, overseen by an advisory committee of user groups and community members.

Achievements

The Rosedale Multi-purpose Facility incorporates a new public library, community health centre, neighbourhood house, senior citizens' centre and meeting rooms for various local community groups. A children's centre provides preschool, day care, before and after school care, occasional care and maternal and child health care. There are consulting rooms for a range of health and allied professional service providers within the community health service's accommodation.

Results

This project is an excellent example of cooperation between different tiers of government and of the service sectors they support. The co-located agencies are working together and planning their service delivery in a way that makes access even easier for the community. Sharing premises allows for agencies to be more aware of the range of services and programs delivered by others and, importantly, who accesses them.

Success Factors

The wide range of service providers agreeing to relocate to the multi-purpose facility in the centre means that all sectors of the Rosedale community have a reason to visit. In doing so, they may learn about and use something new, such as the library or a course at the neighbourhood house.

What worked particularly well was the merging of all the early learning services into one coordinated unit to allow for more to be done for children.

Challenges

The first groups are yet to move in to the just-completed facility so it's difficult to predict how it will work beyond the planning phase and into implementation.

The timeline blew out by three months but it was important to allow for groups to work through issues and gain agreement.

We were unable to persuade the Historical Society to participate.

A privately run aged-care facility was under consideration but did not proceed.

Key learnings

- Be patient and open to all the community.
- Invest sufficient time and resources for key stakeholders to achieve buy-in and ownership of the project. This allows the services to accept not being kings of their own castles.
- Collectively we can achieve more than the sum of the individuals. The spin-offs for small towns are considerable. There are significant community benefits from cooperative service provision as duplication is avoided and greater understanding and appropriate cross-referral between services is possible.

Seniors 'Go For Your Life' in Boroondara

The Inner East Primary Care Partnership for a Seniors 'Go for your Life' project is designed to improve the quality of life of isolated older people who have complex needs by supporting them to take part to strength training programs.

Need for the project

In 2001 the Boroondara Primary Care Partnership identified 10 primary care issues that were impacting significantly on the Boroondara community. The priorities identified were the health and wellbeing issues, including depression and social isolation of older people. A service mapping exercise by the City of Boroondara in 2004 identified many opportunities to engage in a wide range of educational, recreational, and cultural activities and programs in Boroondara, but despite the large numbers of aged residents, they were not participating as expected. In fact the Boroondara YMCA reported that a relatively small number of 785 people aged 50 and over were using the Prime Mover program.

Research and consultation by the City of Boroondara found that the main barriers to participation by elders in community-based activities are the lack of available door-to-door community transport, a lack of assistance in direct care workers or volunteers and a lack of information about what is available. Older people expressed reluctance to participate at leisure facilities because of the preconceived notion that gyms are for the young and fit.

Funding made available by the Office of Senior Victorians allowed the project with to respond to these issues by specifically developing and implementing a model to improve the health, wellbeing and independence of older people by supporting them in strength training programs in community health and rehabilitation settings, and in local YMCAs.

Aims

The project's main objective was to develop, implement and refine a service model to inform others who may be considering ways to improve the health and wellbeing of people with complex needs through strength training programs.

Involvement

Caritas Christi Day Centre, Auburn House (a psycho-geriatric nursing home), Normanby House (St. Georges Hospital psycho-geriatric unit), Vision Australia, Multiple Sclerosis Society, the City of Boroondara, Boroondara Community Rehabilitation Centre, Elgin Street Centre, Inner East Community Health and Villa Maria.

Achievements

The project has introduced 88 older people to strength training programs in their local community and reduced isolation and loneliness by fostering the development of social networks.

Importantly, it has encouraged and supported older people who have complex health issues including multiple sclerosis, low vision, dementia or psycho-geriatric conditions and who faced barriers like a lack of information, transport and support, to successfully participate in a health and wellbeing program in a community-based setting.

The project has also built the capacity of community organisations to identify and respond to the needs of older people with complex health issues. The positive impacts of the program have encouraged management of Caritas Christi, Normanby House and Auburn House to continue funding and delivering strength training programs from their own budgets.

Results

The program has developed strength training for older people with complex needs through a partnership between key service providers. It has also increased opportunities for older people, to develop friendships, reduce isolation and establish networks to independently take part in activities and programs for better health.

Success Factors

The staff, who work directly with older people in the area, played an instrumental role in promoting the program. An understanding of the barriers to participation through lack of transport or assistance contributed to the design of the service model.

Challenges

The program grant underestimated the time and resources required manage the project, including assessments, coordination of participants, bus hire, driver time, program development and reporting procedures. The demand for transport among program participants was far greater than expected.

Key learnings

- That providing door-to-door transport is the key to enabling older people with complex needs to access community-based strength training programs. Inherent in this is a paid or unpaid person helping the participant as required.

- That there are many benefits from participation: improving physical strength, providing opportunities for socialisation and minimising isolation by getting out of the house and meeting new people.
- There is an additional sense of dignity for a frail older person attending classes at a mainstream recreation centre where there are people of all ages and stages in life.

Best Start - Broadmeadows

Best Start aims to improve the health, wellbeing, learning and development of all Victorian children across Victoria from 0-8 years of age. A whole-of-government early years project, Best Start was jointly established in 2002 by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Education and Training. The Broadmeadows Partnership Group has parent representation and is a formal partnership of 15 agencies working in the targeted neighbourhoods of Broadmeadows, Dallas, Jacana, Campbellfield, Coolaroo, Meadow Heights and Westmeadows.

Need for the project

A Best Start community consultation found that many families were disengaged from the community because of language and cultural barriers. Parents did not understand the benefits of early learning programs or how to access services or where they were available. Cost, the cultural relevance of programs, difficulty with enrolment and lack of transport also prevented parents using the programs. A Best Start survey of the primary schools in Broadmeadows in 2003 found approximately 20 to 30 per cent of children enrolled in school had not attended kindergarten, and the rate was much higher in some neighbourhoods. The children who had not attended kindergarten found the transition to school difficult, and often took two to three years to catch up with their peers.

Aims

The Broadmeadows Best Start Program works to optimise the health, development, learning and well-being of children, especially by engaging vulnerable members of the community such as Indigenous children, children experiencing marked poverty, children from different ethnic backgrounds and children with special needs. There is a focus on meeting these children's kindergarten and preschool needs. The program formed a partnership to connect early years service delivery and is continually developing a range of strategies in service coordination to use the available resources more effectively.

Involvement

The partnership involves management representatives from Hume City Council, Dianella Community Health, Broadmeadows UnitingCare, Orana Family Services and other community agencies and schools working with children and families in Broadmeadows. The partnership produces a regularly updated Community Action Plan. The membership integrates the Best Start Broadmeadows Partnership with the Australian Government's Communities for Children program to bring together local, state and commonwealth initiatives for the early years.

Achievements

Importantly Best Start has resulted in increased partnerships between primary schools and other early years services and community agencies, more referrals to support services and initial steps towards an integrated service delivery on school sites. The Broadmeadows Schools Redevelopment project has plans for five new schools sites based on the community hub model, to be set up over the next five years. Primary schools are keen to support the co-location of preschools and space for playgroups on these sites and to engage parents in their children's learning before and after children start school. More families are attending playgroups, with playgroups also being set up at primary schools, and preschool and primary school staff are now attending joint professional development sessions focusing on the early years.

Results

It is too early for definitive data on improvements but positive indications of changes are emerging. There is an increase in the proportion of children starting school who attended a preschool/child care program in the previous year; 2.7 per cent (42 children) in 2004-05, and an increase in preschool participation in 2005, with one new three year-old group and one new four year-old group being offered.

In 2006, three new four year-old groups have been offered. One school reported that 90 per cent of the children who enrolled for prep in 2006 had attended a preschool program in the previous year an increase from 53 per cent in 2004.

Success Factors

Facilitated playgroups with bilingual leaders have improved awareness of the needs of newly arrived families, where English is not their first language. Coordination between the library, playgroups and early childhood programs and schools has led to more parents attending library storytime.

Challenges

The frustrations of agencies not having enough time to address the work of Best Start have slowed progress. It takes time for agencies to develop a common agenda, share data and plan cooperatively, and much of this was done outside existing funding models. At the beginning of Best Start, there were not enough preschool or maternal and child health nurses to fill the available positions. Since then more preschool teachers have been employed to fill vacancies.

Key learnings

Partner agencies found that facilitated playgroups have been an important way to engage with families, particularly those who are the most isolated, like new arrived migrants, cultural and linguistically diverse communities (CALD) and local Indigenous families.

The transition to school program is seen as especially constructive and likely to result in measurable changes in preschool participation, parents involvement and their communication with teachers.

Somali Community

Need for the project

The Somali community in Victoria is one of Victoria's most disadvantaged. Most migrants from Somalia have arrived as refugees within the last 10 years. At the last Census in 2001 there were around 2500 Somali-born in Victoria, but it is estimated that the population has more than doubled since then. The unemployment rate of the Somalia-born was 47.1 per cent, compared to 6.8 per cent for the rest of Victoria.

The Somali community is made up of many disparate groups, reflecting the tribal loyalties of their homeland. In 2004, there were more than 25 groups claiming to represent the Victorian Somali community.

Aims

The project was designed to create a peak council that:

- Represents each of the Somali organisations.
- Represents the whole Somali community in general.
- Provides support for community strengthening projects.

The Somali Australian Council of Victoria Inc (SACV) is the new umbrella body bringing together many of the organisations.

One of the programs being managed by the SACV is designed to provide resources and information for the Somali refugee community, particularly to help women and young girls access mainstream services where there may be cultural and/or linguistic barriers.

The aim was to create an environment conducive for people to be able to communicate and address their needs and over time to set up a service to provide referrals, advice and advocacy. In essence, it was to help build an active, confident and resilient community.

Involvement

The Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) and many Somali community organisations including the:

- Somali Australian Community Development Association.
- Digil and Rahweyn Women Association of Australia.
- Somali Inter-Riverine Community Development Association.
- North Melbourne Somali Women's Association.
- Australian Somali Students' Association.
- United Somali Women's Organisation in Victoria.
- North East Somali Women's Association.
- Jilib Somali Relief Organisation.

- Australian Somali Youth Association.
- Somali Cultural Association.
- United Somali Organisation in Australia.
- Somali Support and Development Association.

Achievements

A new advocate body for the Somali community has been formed which is more representative than the one that previously existed. The Somali community has been formally recognised by the Victorian Government with the Premier hosting a reception at Parliament House. Several community-driven initiatives have been supported by funding from the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Results

The council provides an access point for government and non-government service providers to contact the Somali community, and it also provided an opportunity for Somali community to get support for community-driven initiatives.

The Victorian Multicultural Commission has provided 105 grants totalling \$222 710 to Somali community organisations since 1999. The grants range from \$14 000 for an orientation program for newly arrived refugees to many smaller grants for projects including festivals, office equipment, publications, community leadership training and professional development programs.

Success Factors

Bringing together different communities from Somali into one organisation through the guidance and support of the Victorian Multicultural Commission has helped consolidate the community's representative bodies.

Challenges

The gap between the scope and ambition of the community-initiated projects and the funding available brought some disappointment. However, it is acknowledged that the community development and strengthening objectives for the Somali can be developed over a longer time.

Key learnings

That with the right combination of professional guidance, goodwill and targeted resources, much can be achieved to bring groups together and forge new partnerships and alliances geared towards ensuring that the emerging Somali community can:

- shape their own future.
- encourage participation within the broader community.
- embrace diversity.

Appendix B

MACVIC Site Visits

Appendix B – MACVIC Site Visits

Maribyrnong

Met with:

- Cr Michelle Macdonald, Mayor, Maribyrnong City Council
- Kerry Thompson, CEO, Maribyrnong City Council
- Viv Amery, Chairperson, Maribyrnong Best Start Partnership & CEO, Tweddle Family Services
- Jane Hunt, Operations, Manager, Community Services, Mission Australia
- Kelly Linnell, Chairperson, Braybrook & Maidstone Neighbourhood Association
- Penelope Steuart, Manager, West Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
- Tim Liston, Chairperson, Doggies to Highpoint Resident's Action Group
- Klara Blazevic, Community Development Worker, Doggies to Highpoint
- Sandy Brien, Manager, Support Services, Department of Human Services
- Lyndsay Mason, Community Development Officer, Maribyrnong City Council
- Patti Manolis, Manager, Community Learning & Libraries, Maribyrnong City Council
- Jenny McMahan, General Manager, Community Wellbeing, Maribyrnong City Council
- Robert Were, Manager, Family Services and Community Projects, Maribyrnong City Council
- Nick Matteo, Manager, Community Planning & Advocacy, Maribyrnong City Council
- Robyn Roberts, Coordinator, Community Projects & Best Start Facilitator, Maribyrnong City Council
- Catherine Dwyer, Community Projects Officer, Maribyrnong City Council

Initiatives and organisations:

- Maribyrnong City Council
- DVC Local Team

Maidstone

- Best Start
- Walking School Bus
- Maidstone Community Centre

Braybrook

- Braybrook Neighbourhood Renewal

- Braybrook Community Centre - Tool Library and Community Garden
- Horn of Africa Youth Centre

Footscray

- Doggies to Highpoint Community Building Demonstration Project

Loddon Mallee

Met with:

- Neale Chandler, CEO, Creating Confident Communities
- Craig Neimann, CEO, Loddon Shire Community Planning Project
- Sue Clarke, CEO, Bendigo Community Health
- Leanne Rosewall, Communications Officer, City of Greater Bendigo
- John McLean, CEO, City of Greater Bendigo
- Linda Beilharz, Manager, Community Services and Development Unit, St Luke's Anglicare
- Julie Cairns, Project Worker, St Luke's Anglicare

Initiatives and organisations:

- City of Greater Bendigo
- DVC Local Team

Maryborough

- Connecting Confident Communities - Community Building Demonstration Project

Bridgewater

- Loddon Community Planning
- Bendigo +25
- Eaglehawk Neighbourhood Renewal
- B-Central (Youth Centre)
- Bridgewater Public Hall

Geelong

Met with:

- The Hon. Lisa Neville, MLA, Member for Bellarine
- Toni Sharky, Acting Principal, Newcomb High School
- Stuart Pett, Principal, Whittington Primary School
- Michelle Seacomb, Coordinator, Whittington Child Care Centre

- Leah Power, Community Development Officer, Community in Action
- Julie George, Coordinator, Bellarine Living and Learning Centre - Neighbourhood House
- Rob McHenry, Executive Officer, G21
- Sheree Holdsworth, EO, BacLinks
- Steve Boyle, Principal, Corio Bay Secondary College
- Rob Gardner CEO, Create (Geelong) Inc.
- Tim Harrop, Manager, Community Services, Department of Human Services
- Chris Ferguson, Regional Coordinator, Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
- Glenda Strong, Regional Director, Barwon South West, Department of Education and Training
- Lynden Costen, General Manager, The Courthouse
- Cr Lou Brazier, City of Greater Geelong
- Jane Wager, Community Development Officer, City of Greater Geelong
- Cathy Walker, Community Development Officer, City of Greater Geelong

Initiatives and organisations:

- DVC Local Team
- G21
- Business and Community Links
- Young Carers Access Program
- CREATE (post compulsory school age training and employment programs).
- FReeZA
- Techheads (technical skill training for the performing arts)
- Communities in Action
- Bellarine Living and Learning Centre - Neighbourhood House
- The Courthouse

Grampians

Met with:

- Geraldine Christou, Project Manager, Wendouree West Community Renewal Project
- David Clarke, Chair, Steering Committee Pyrenees Shire Demonstration Project
- Cr Glenice Harrison, Pyrenees Shire
- Geoff Robbins, Community Development Worker, Avoca Health Service
- Maria Rice, Community Building Worker, Pyrenees Shire
- Stephen Greenall, Former Chair of St Arnaud, Community Capacity Building Initiative Committee

- Cr Karen Douglas, Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Adrian Tylers, Rupanyup and District Consultative Committee
- Peter Brown, CEO, Wimmera UnitingCare
- Jo Bourke, Project Chair, Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water
- Ray Campling, CEO, Yarriambiack Shire
- Mary-Lu Amos, Manager, Community Economic Development, West Wimmera Shire
- Gina Lyons, CEO, Northern Grampians Shire
- Peter Smith, Manager, Corporate Services, Hindmarsh Shire
- Cr Bernie Dunn, Horsham Rural City Council
- Christine Harrison, Manager, NEXUS and Convenor, RYAN
- Jo Devereaux, Executive Officer, Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN
- Susan Griffith, School Focused Youth Service
- Marian Mathews, General Manager, *Art Is* Horsham Arts Festival
- Denise Leebruggan, Awakenings Arts Access Australia
- Di Trotter, Executive Officer, Wimmera Sports Assembly
- Bernadette Hetherington, Agency Liaison Officer, Wimmera Primary Care Partnership
- Phil Sabien, Executive Director, Wimmera Development Association
- Angela Murphy, Community and Enterprise Manager, Horsham Rural City Council
- Chez Graymore, CEO, Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative
- Mandy Noble, Manager, Community Development, Ararat Rural City Council

Initiatives and organisations:

- DVC Local Team
- Wendouree West Community Renewal Project
- Pyrenees Shire Demonstration Project
- Draft Avoca Community Action Plan
- Rupanyup and District Consultative Committee
- Wimmera Mallee Pipeline
- Regional Youth Affairs Network
- Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN
- ADVANCE
- Ararat Community Building Initiative
- Wendouree West facilities including playground, shops, HUB site and recreation reserve.
- St Arnaud community hall and theatre
- Lord Nelson Park (integrated sport facility)
- Community Resource Centre
- Rupanyup Hotel (community owned)
- Minyip / Murtoa Football Netball Club

- Horsham North Community Health Centre

Gippsland

Met with:

- Jane Barr, Chair, Baw Baw Latrobe LLEN
- Mick Murphy, Executive Officer, Baw Baw Latrobe LLEN
- Paul O'Hare, Project Officer, Baw Baw Latrobe LLEN
- Dorothy Hoare, Trafalgar Youth Resource Centre
- Kathy West, Community Wellbeing Officer, Department of Human Services
- Michael Fozard, Trafalgar Resource Youth Centre
- Chris Buckingham, Consultant
- Brendan Kingwill, President, Trafalgar Chamber of Commerce
- Fiona Beckley, President, Trafalgar Community Development Association
- Cr Ruth McDonald, Mayor, Baw Baw Shire Council
- Glenn Patterson, CEO, Baw Baw Shire Council
- Leslie Smith, Community Development Officer, Baw Baw Shire Council
- John Ernst, Coordinator, Trafalgar Community Project
- Peter Williams, Chair, Trafalgar Recreation Precinct Committee
- John Carney, Trafalgar Strategic Plan
- Eva Bateson, Trafalgar Senior Citizens Association
- Dorothy Hoare, Trafalgar Youth Centre
- Nick Pabst, Youth Representative, Trafalgar Strategic Project Plan Board
- Chris Hamilton, Regional Manager, Gippsland, Work for the Dole Program, Try Youth and Community Services
- Julie Hocking, Senior Project Manager, La Trobe Ministerial Taskforce, Department of Human Services
- Philip Marsh, Executive Officer, Latrobe City Council
- Annie Slocombe, Gippsland Accommodation and Rehabilitation Support Services
- Margaret Dawson, Recruit Net
- Jeanette Teague, Adult Community & Further Education
- Sheryn Renfew, Quantum Community Care
- Morwell Neighbourhood House Committee Of Management Representatives: Liz Mayman, Denise Baulch, Vicky Osborn, Judith Turley.
- Susan Welsh, Publicity Officer, Morwell Neighbourhood House
- Philip Marsh, Executive Officer, Latrobe City Council
- Ali Khan, CEO, Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative
- Bess Yarram, Chairperson, Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative
- Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative Morwell Representatives: Esme Thompson, Jenni Solomon, Vera Briggs.

- Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative Bairnsdale Representatives: Madge Celiy, Francise Prickett, Roger McIvor.
- Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative Sale Representatives: Jason King, Daphne Yarram, Sandra Neilson.
- Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative Lakes Entrance Representatives: Kath Solomon
- Phyllis Andy, Lake Tyres Trust
- Cr Jane Rowe, Mayor, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Steve Kozlowski, CEO, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Kate Nelson, Group Manager, Community, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Anna Cook, Community Development Officer, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Linda Wilconson, Chair, Youth CAAB Committee
- Ian Campbell, Rural Community Development Officer, Rural Development Victoria
- Marlene Rickhuss, Community Planner, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Bruce Smith, Remote Youth Worker, Youth CAAB Community Building Project
- Ryan Earles, Project “Wot Tha”, Youth CAAB Community Building Project

Initiatives and organisations:

- Baw Baw Latrobe Local Learning & Employment Network
- Trafalgar Community Development Association (TCDA)
- TRY Youth & Community Services
- Morwell Neighbourhood House
- Ramahyuck Aboriginal Cooperative
- Youth CAAB Community Building Project

Doveton & Noble Park

Met with:

- Bill Collopy, Manager, Planning and Development, Manager, South East Region Migrant Resource Centre
- Jacob Lee, Manager, Aged & Disability, South East Region Migrant Resource Centre
- Peter Jarrod, Refugee Settlement Program Manager, South East Region Migrant Resource Centre
- Carl Wulf, CEO, City of Greater Dandenong
- Cr Maria Sampey, Mayor, City of Greater Dandenong
- Cr Claire O’Neil, Springvale South Ward, City of Greater Dandenong
- Cr Roz Blades, Keysborough Ward, City of Greater Dandenong
- Mike Tyler, CEO, City of Casey

- Cr Roland Abraham, Four Oaks Ward, City of Casey
- Cr Brian Oates, Myuna Ward, City of Casey
- Jan Lake, Regional Director, Southern Metropolitan Region, Department of Education and Training
- Helen Russell, Manager Housing, Primary and Complex Care, Southern Metropolitan Region, Department of Human Services
- Grant Ludlow, Pastor, Baptist church
- Doveton Neighbourhood Renewal Residents: Jerry Davidson, Norminda Villaneu, Janice Johnson, Brian Johnson, Tammy Tilley, Joe Brenan, Eva Paulska
- Eric Warren-Smith, Doveton Neighbourhood Renewal Representative, Neighbourhood Renewal - Victoria Residents Committee
- Jodi Berry, Manager, Doveton Neighbourhood and Learning Centre
- Helen Russell, Manager, Primary and Complex Care and Housing, Department of Human Services
- Jo Hartigan, Implementation Manager, Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
- Kerri Elso, Employment and Learning Co-ordinator, Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
- Snr Sgt Mike Jenkin, Endeavour Hills, Victoria Police
- Nigel Hutchinson, Principal, Doveton Secondary College
- Glenn Taylor, Youth Program Manager, Greater Dandenong Community Health Service.

Initiatives and organisations:

- Doveton-Eumemmerring Neighbourhood Renewal
- South East Migrant Resource Centre
- Greater Dandenong Community Health Service and Carwatha College
- Noble Park Demonstration Project - Proud to Participate
- City of Greater Dandenong
- City of Casey

Wangaratta & Shepparton

Met with:

- Cr Robyn Machin, Mayor, Strathbogie Shire
- Jodi Bjorksten, Grants and Recreation Coordinator, Strathbogie Shire
- Yvette Campbell, Administration Manager, Merriwa Industries
- Peter Gibson, Disability Manager, Merriwa Industries
- Bruce Campbell, Community Projects, Merriwa Industries
- Yvette Campbell, Administration Manager, Merriwa Industries
- Cr Don Joyce, Mayor, Rural City of Wangaratta

- Cr Tanya Tatulaschwili, Rural City of Wangaratta
- Cr Rozi Parisotto, Rural City of Wangaratta
- Malcolm Styles, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Rural City of Wangaratta
- Barry Martin, Director, Business Services, Rural City of Wangaratta
- Ruth Tai, Director, Human & Cultural Services, Rural City of Wangaratta
- Angela Craven, Teacher, Yarrunga Primary School
- Neil Pryor, Principal, Yarrunga Primary School
- John Teasdale, President, Yarrunga Primary School Council
- Kath Nero, Yarrunga Community Action Group
- Cr Peter Graham OAM, Mayor, Shire of Indigo
- Cr Jenny Dale, Deputy Mayor, Shire of Indigo
- Cr Barbara Murdoch, Shire of Indigo
- John Costello, CEO, Shire of Indigo
- Sally McCarron, Manager, Health & Wellbeing, Shire of Indigo
- Phil Prior, Assets Engineer, Shire of Indigo
- Peter Croucher, Kiewa Lions Club
- Margaret Bates, Red Cross, Catholic Women's League
- Philip Guthrie, Coordinator, ASHE
- Justin Mohamed, Director, ASHE
- Jason Briggs, Student Support Officer, ASHE
- Sally Simson, Director, University of Melbourne Goulburn Valley Initiative
- Carol Smith, CEO, Rumbalara Football Netball Club
- Aboriginal Community Facilitation Group Representatives: Joyce Doyle, Geraldine Atkinson, Vicki Atkinson, John Martin, Robbie Britten, Paul Briggs, Rex Atkinson, Michael Tynan.
- Morris Sleep, Principal, Wanganui Park Secondary College
- Ken Murray, Assistant Principal, Wanganui Park Secondary College
- John Sciacca, Community Links Leader
- Leo Ryan, Project Manager, Parkside Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
- Mary Reid, Housing Manager, Hume Region, Department of Human Services

Initiatives and Organisations

- Violet Town Honeysuckle Recreation and Environment Project
- Merriwa Industries
- Rural City of Wangaratta
- Yarrunga Community Links Program - Yarrunga Primary School
- Tangambalanga Recreation/Community Centre
- Rumbalara Football Netball Club
- Shepparton Aboriginal Community Facilitation
- Wanganui Park Secondary College
- Parkside Neighbourhood Renewal Program

Atherton Gardens

Met with:

- Peter McNicol, Manager, Neighbourhood Renewal – North, Department of Human Services
- Sherri Bruinhout, Project Officer, Neighbourhood Renewal Fitzroy, Department of Human Services
- Harald Klein, Director, Neighbourhood Renewal, Department of Human Services
- Atherton Gardens Residents Association
- Cr Jackie Fristacky, City of Yarra
- Cr Annabel Barbara, City of Yarra
- Craig Kenny, Director, Community Development Division, City of Yarra
- Dimitria Katsikis, Coordinator, Youth and Family Support, City of Yarra
- Rod Clements, Team Leader, Youth Services, City of Yarra
- Michelle Blanchard, Youth Participation Officer, City of Yarra
- Dinna Tayao, Grassroots Networking Manager, e-ACE

Initiatives and organisations:

- Neighbourhood Renewal
- e-ACE - IT community enterprise
- Fitzroy Learning Network
- Yarra Community Youth Centre

Laverton

Met with:

- Cr Carl Marsich, Mayor, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Cr Ann Lindsay, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Bill Jaboor, CEO, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Peter Hunt, Director Community Services, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Philip McDonald, Director Works and Assets, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Laverton Together Action Group Representatives: Val Davis, John Elso, John Mullenger, Michael Perner.
- Henry Szkuta, Principal, Laverton Secondary College
- Paul Jenkin, Principal, Laverton Plains Primary School
- Paul Lishman, Principal, Laverton Primary
- Jane Downey, Chair, Visy Cares Links Centre
- Paul Ellender, Executive Officer, Westbay LLEN
- Friends of McCormack Park and Laverton Creek
- Laverton Community Garden Working Group

- Andrew Shannon, Environmental Officer, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Mark Hobbs, Coordinator, Youth Services Hobsons Bay City Council
- Peter Hunt, Director, Community Services, Hobsons Bay City Council
- Leanne Butson, Coordinator, Community Facilities and Access, Hobsons Bay City Council

Community Facilities visited:

- Laverton Secondary College
- McCormack Park
- Community Garden
- Woods and Lohse Street Youth Drop In Centre
- Laverton Community Centre

Golden Plains

Met with:

- Cr David Cotsell, Mayor, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Rod Nicholls, CEO, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Lenny Jenner, Director, Community Services, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Steven Sagona, Executive Projects Officer, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Louisa White, Team Leader – Community Development, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Jean Evans, Community Development Officer, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Teegan Kelley, Youth Development Officer, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Neil Noelker, Consultant for the Community Development Program, Noelker Consulting
- Alexandra Tascas, Manager, Primary Care Partnership Project Golden Plains Shire, Department of Human Services
- Cr Bill McArthur, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Cr Kevin Knight, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Cr Geraldine Frantz, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Cr Jenny Jones, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Cr Jenny Blake, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Cr Des Guinane, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Rod Nicholls, CEO, Golden Plains Shire Council
- Steven Sagona, Executive Projects Officer, Golden Plains Shire Council

Initiatives and organisations:

- Golden Plains Shire Council
- Community Planning
- Teesdale Women's Group

Women Who Mean Business

Met with:

- Mary Salce, Project Management Committee
- Jo McCubbin, Project Management Committee
- Di Deppeler, Project Management Committee
- Deb Milligan, Project Officer for Omeo
- Kate Earle, Project Officer for Orbost & District & Buchan & District
- Tina Hambleton, Project Officer for Yarram & District
- Michelle Tisdale, Project Officer for Morwell / Moe
- Lara Whitehead, Project Officer for Warragul
- Meg Viney, Manager, the Quilt Project, Meenyian
- Beth Ripper, Co-Project Officer for Maffra / Stratford
- Councillor Bob Haldane, Deputy Mayor, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Councillor Jane Rowe, Mayor, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Garry Watts, Shire Far East Area Supervisor, East Gippsland Shire Council
- Stephen Henry, Forest and Biodiversity Manager, Orbost, Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Gail Wright, Regional Marketing & Communications Officer, East Region, Parks Victoria
- Graham Box, Park Ranger, Cape Conran Coastal Park, Parks Victoria

Initiatives and organisations:

- Buchan Art Gallery Launch
- Orbost & District Enchanting Community Garden Pathway Project
- Stratford Garden of Humanity Launch
- Women Who Mean Business, Showcase, Marketing and Business Forum, February 2006

'In the Community' Yarra Ranges '- 10 June 2005

Appendix C
Consultations

Appendix C – Departmental and External Consultations

Departmental Consultations

Senior Executive Group

MACVIC

Joan Kirner (Chair)

Denis Moriarty

DVC

Yehudi Blacher, Secretary, Department for Victorian Communities

Terry Healy, Deputy Secretary, Department for Victorian Communities

David Adams, Executive Director, Strategic Policy and Research

Charles Lane, Executive Director, Community Strengthening and Volunteering

Damian Ferrie, Director, Community Strengthening

Prue Digby, Executive Director, Local Government Victoria and Community Information

Louise Hill, Executive Director, Corporate and Organisational Development

Peter Hertan, Executive Director, Sports and Recreation

Strategic Policy and Research (SPAR) & Community Strengthening and Volunteering (CSV)

MACVIC

Joan Kirner (Chair)

Denis Moriarty

Lyndsay Mason

Julie Hansen

Debbie Coyle

SPAR

David Adams, Executive Director, Strategic Policy and Research

Gina Hanson, Senior Policy Officer, Strategic Policy and Research

Ian Richardson, Manager, Policy Development, Strategic Policy and Research

CSV

Charles Lane, Executive Director, Community Strengthening and Volunteering

Damian Ferrie, Director, Community Strengthening

Cath Peterson, Manager, Statewide Program, Community Strengthening

Charles McShane, Community Engagement Manager, North West Metropolitan

James Montgomery, Community Engagement Manager, Southern Metropolitan

Wendy Allen, Community Engagement Manager, Barwon South West

Community Engagement Managers

MACVIC

Joan Kirner (Chair)

Denis Moriarty

DVC

James Montgomery, Community Engagement Manager, Southern Metropolitan Region

Charles McShane, Community Engagement Manager, North West Metropolitan Region

Angela Verde, Community Engagement Manager, Hume

Toly Sawenko, Community Engagement Manager, Eastern Metro

Kath McEntee, Community Engagement Manager, Gippsland

Don Peterson, Community Engagement Manager, Loddon Mallee

Peter Rademaker, Community Engagement Manager, Grampians

Wendy Allen, Community Engagement Manager, Barwon South West Region

Individual Consultations

Secretary & Deputy Secretary

Yehudi Blacher, Secretary, Department for Victorian Communities

Terry Healy, Deputy Secretary, Department for Victorian Communities

Strategic Policy and Research

David Adams, Executive Director, Strategic Policy and Research

Community Strengthening Volunteering

Charles Lane, Executive Director, Community Strengthening and Volunteering

Damian Ferrie, Director, Community Strengthening

Cath Peterson, Manager, Statewide Programs, Community Strengthening

Jeff Rich, Manager, Community Enterprise, Community Strengthening and Volunteering

David Penman, Manager, Volunteering, Community Strengthening and Volunteering

James Montgomery, Community Engagement Manager, Southern Metropolitan

Charles McShane, Community Engagement Manager, North West Metropolitan

Angela Verde, Community Engagement Manager, Hume

Toly Sawenko, Community Engagement Manager, Eastern Metropolitan

Kath McEntee, Community Engagement Manager, Gippsland

Don Peterson, Community Engagement Manager, Loddon Mallee

Peter Rademaker, Community Engagement Manager, Grampians

Wendy Allen, Community Engagement Manager, Barwon South West

Local Government Victoria and Community Information

Clare McArdle, Director, Sector Development, Local Government Victoria

People and Community Advocacy Division

Angela Jurjevic, Director, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

Lill Healy, Director, Office for Youth

Fiona Sharkie, Director, Office of Women's Policy

Ministerial Advisory Committees

Women in Rural Communities Taskforce

Ministerial Advisory Council for Senior Victorians

Statutory Body

Victorian Multicultural Commission

External Consultations

Committee for Melbourne & Melbourne Cares

Janine Kirk, Executive Director, Committee for Melbourne

Simon Robinson, Executive Director, Melbourne Cares

Centre for Community Engagement and Policy Alternatives, Victoria University

Sue West, Coordinator, Community Building Projects

Professor John Wiseman, Acting Executive Director, Centre for Community Engagement and Policy Alternatives

Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne

Professor Mark Considine, Director, Centre for Public Policy

Agora Think Tank

Ivan Deveson, Chair, Agora Think Tank
Anne Turley, Executive Director, Melbourne City Mission
Juli Dugdale, Assistant to the CEO, Melbourne City Mission

VCOSS

Cath Smith, Executive Director, VCOSS
Carolyn Atkins, Policy and Advocacy, VCOSS
Kate Colvin, Policy and Advocacy, VCOSS
Marilyn Webster, Manager, Social Policy and Research Unit, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service
Paul Linossier, Executive Director, McKillop Family Services

Victorian Local Government Association

Beth Davidson, President, Victorian Local Government Association
Janet Rice, Vice-President, Victorian Local Government Association
Andrew Rowe, CEO, Victorian Local Government Association
Rae Perry, Chief Operations Officer, Victorian Local Government Association

Municipal Association of Victoria

John Hennessy, Sector Development Manager, Municipal Association of Victoria
Gavin Mahoney, Senior Policy Officer, Municipal Association of Victoria

Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres

Merial Clark, CEO, Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres

Victorian Healthcare Association

David Webb, State Manager, Victorian Healthcare Association

Adjunct Professor Hayden Raysmith, RMIT