

# Our Community **MATTERS**

Your community knowledge bank helping groups survive, improve, grow and innovate



## Resources, News, Innovations and Tips on:

- ✓ Funding, Finance & Membership Management
- ✓ Leadership & Advocacy
- ✓ Management & Training
- ✓ Marketing & Media
- ✓ Boards, Committees & Governance
- ✓ Community & Business Partnerships
- ✓ Insurance & Risk Management

[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

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Welcome to the latest edition of *Our Community Matters*, our regular free community update. It is yet another benefit of membership of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) - the premier destination for Australia's 700,000 community, education and non-profit groups. Ourcommunity.com.au provides community groups with the latest funding and fundraising news as well as practical management and board and committee advice and the opportunity to list for free online donations through the [Australian Giving Centre](#).

A summary of our services is listed at the end of this newsletter. If you have trouble reading this newsletter or have any comments please let us know at [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au).

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## 1. Welcome by Rhonda Galbally AO, CEO of [ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

Welcome to the latest edition of Our Community Matters.

It has been a very exciting month for Our Community with the first of a series of seminars being held for community groups and businesses wanting to get involved in a community business partnership. The seminars, which are a key element of the National Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service, will be held across Australia in coming months. This edition we provide all the information on the wheres and whens, as well as a help sheet to get your community group started on the path. Our second help sheet this edition looks at why community groups need to start doing operational research, with some tips for how they can get started.

One of the most important aspects of running a successful community group is to keep up-to-date with the latest information and trends that could impact on your group. With this in mind, this edition includes a range of handy resources that will help keep you informed. These include a new guide to finding, understanding and using "community statistics" – those numbers that describe things like access to services, social isolation, diversity, civic participation, health, education and employment. Most people would rather not ever have to deal with statistics but the reality is that you can use them to good effect to strengthen your community group and sell your cause. This guide will help you work out how.

Another resource we look at is the new Giving Trends bulletin, which will help you to understand who's giving to what, and what factors are influencing how people choose the recipients of their donations. It's important to note that most of these factors are well within a community group's control so make sure you take note of what you could be doing to attract more donors.

Also in this edition we outline a new insurance database – and why it could help your community group get a better insurance deal – and how your group could be affected by the Federal Government's new spam laws.

We also have an insightful interview with environmental sustainability leader Molly Harriss Olson, a new report measuring Australia's social progress, information about National Volunteer Week and much more.

A couple of final points. Firstly, a quick welcome to all of the new members who have joined Our Community in the past month. I hope you find this newsletter a valuable tool in running your group.

And lastly, a quick reminder that the upcoming Communities in Control conference is nearly full. About 1400 people are expected to attend the groundbreaking conference, which will be the biggest ever hosted by the Moonee Valley Racecourse and the biggest community conference ever held in Australia. We are almost at capacity so you only have a couple more days to confirm your registration. For copies of the program or to register go to <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/files/Communitiesincontrol.pdf>.

**RHONDA GALBALLY AO**  
Chief Executive Officer

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## 2. Measuring Australia's social progress

Australians do more volunteering than a decade ago, are still overwhelmingly willing to "help out their neighbours" and continue to give healthy donations to community groups and charities, according to a new Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) report.

However the report, entitled *Measures of Australia's Progress*, also found that despite a rise in income in the past decade, significant barriers remained for some sectors of Australian society when it came to making ends meet or accessing support.

The report gathers recent ABS statistics into a single document to measure Australia's progress. Some of its findings point to a strengthening of community support and social capital in Australia, including:

- A significant jump between 1995 and 2002 in the percentage of Australian adults who had done voluntary work in the past 12 months. In 1995, 24 per cent undertook some voluntary work – that increased to 34 per cent in 2002.

Significantly, the biggest increases were in the 18-24 year-old age group (up from 17 per cent to 28 per cent) and the 55-64 year-old age group (up from 24% to 38%).

A 2000 ABS report – *Voluntary Work Australia* – also showed about one in 10 adults volunteered for management work, to sit on committees or manage a service or program.

- On an individual level, almost three-quarters of adults donated money to an organisation (according to 2000 research), with 84 per cent of those who already volunteered their time also donating money.
- 36 per cent of operating businesses made donations, 4 per cent helped support community projects and 11 per cent sponsored individuals or charities.
- Most people (93 per cent in 2002) felt they could ask their neighbours for small favours such as minding children or pets, watering gardens, collecting mail or borrowing equipment. Almost everyone surveyed (94 per cent) felt they could access support from outside their household in times of crisis.

However, people who were born overseas and were not proficient in English were more likely to report an inability to access support than people born in Australia (14 per cent compared to 5 per cent), and one in 10 people aged under 65 and who had a restrictive disability felt they could not access support in times of crisis.

- Real net disposable income per capita grew by about 2.8 per cent per year between 1993 and 2003, with the amount of real wealth per person increasing by 0.6 per cent per year during the same period. The real income for those considered less well-off improved by 8 per cent between 1994-95 and 2000-01.

But the level of people living in households with “housing stress” – where households are struggling to cover rent or mortgage payments, or where those payments are impacting on the household itself – remained steady at about 6 per cent between 1996 and 2001.

The full report is available to download at the ABS website or [click here](#) to link straight through.

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### 3. Getting to know your community by numbers

Stats got you stumped? Data making you dizzy?

Many otherwise intelligent people have been known to crumble at the thought of having to deal with “community statistics” – the numbers that describe local circumstances including access to services, social isolation, diversity, civic participation, health, education and employment.

But a new guide aims to provide communities with a roadmap through the maze, providing information about what data sets are, where to find them and how to use them to produce your own local profile.

The guide is designed to help people and groups get to know their community better and to serve as a tool to help shape efforts to build stronger and more cohesive communities.

And the potential for practical application of such knowledge is boundless. For example:

- A residents’ group may wish to search for data to support its contention that while its locality appears to have an appropriate mix of services, a number of new population groups with different needs have recently moved into the area.
- A community group might want to take action to improve the levels of physical activity in its community. A range of health, transport, environment and other data might be needed to support such a project.
- A small not-for-profit agency funded by a government department might want to bid for funding for an activity outside its traditional expertise to fill a gap in services to its community, but may be unsure what data is available to support its bid.

The publication, *Getting to Know your Community: a guide to using local data*, has been produced by the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) as part of the Department’s aim to strengthen communities.

While many of the data sources identified in the guide are relevant only to Victorian communities, community groups in other states can also benefit from the guide, particularly those wanting to learn how to build a community profile.

An electronic copy of the guide is available on the DVC’s website at [www.dvc.gov.au](http://www.dvc.gov.au) and copies are also being distributed to all Victorian regional libraries. CD ROM versions of the guide are also available.

For further information email to [margaret.o'loughlin@dvc.vic.gov.au](mailto:margaret.o'loughlin@dvc.vic.gov.au).

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## 4. Getting to grips with giving trends

Is your community group keeping up with why, how and to who people are giving their money?

If not, you may well be missing out on important fundraising opportunities – if you don't know who is giving to what, how are you going to work out how to reach the "who" and how to become that "what"?

One way of getting on top of the latest donation fashions is through the *Giving Trends* bulletin, produced by consultants [O'Keefe & Partners](#).

The bulletin says that time-poor donors tend to restrict their giving to two or three charities, rather than give smaller amounts to several organisations, and that now more than ever charities are expected to demonstrate high levels of transparency and accurate recording.

It says that donors, government and the media are increasingly concerned with how fundraising income is managed and how their donations are used, with "relationship development" (rather than new campaign concepts) emerging as a key to effective fundraising.

Learning how to look beyond their traditional support base and tap into the next generation should be a key priority for community groups, the bulletin says.

"Ranging between 22-42 years of age, members of 'Generation X' are predominantly single and have money to spend. However, they also tend to be less generous with a weaker sense of social responsibility."

The bulletin says that the Baby Boomers market, with its high levels of disposable income and strong sense of social responsibility, also requires intense development – but community groups will only tap into that market effectively if they can demonstrate clear outcomes from their contributions.

Other trends identified in the report include the move towards use of celebrities in fundraising and publicity campaigns, and the positive response of donors to personal, one-to-one appeals (although unsolicited telephone calls were at the bottom of the list).

And it highlights the factors potential supporters are now considering as they ponder to whom to direct their cash and support. These include:

- How well the organisation is run
- Respect for what the organisation does
- Personal involvement and emotional appeal
- Concern for issues that the organisation addresses
- Personal need or anticipated need for the organisation at some time
- Civic pride and community responsibility; guilt feelings
- The donor's age and lifestyle
- The organisation's level of media exposure
- Emergency situations and natural disasters

"(Not-for-profit organisations) should not overlook the fact that they can have a great deal of control over most of the factors," the bulletin says.

People wanting a copy of the Giving Trends bulletin can email [kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:kathyr@ourcommunity.com.au).

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## 5. Our Community Leaders – Great Australian Leaders in Focus

Internationally recognised environmental sustainability leader **Molly Harriss Olson** is the subject of this month's *Great Australian Leaders in Focus* segment, a series which features the thoughts of some of Australia's best-known community leaders.

Already we have featured renowned singer, activist and the President of the Australian Conservation Foundation, **Peter Garrett**, the tireless former Australian of the Year, **Sir Gustav Nossal**, former World Cup-winning Wallaby captain **John Eales**, the 2003 Australian of the Year, **Professor Fiona Stanley**, Clean Up Australia founder, **Ian Kiernan** and one of the country's best known jurists, **the Honourable Justice Michael Kirby**.

All those interviews can now be read on the [Leadership Centre](#) at [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au). Also on the Leadership Centre, which is a joint initiative with the Department of Family and Community Services, is a series of free [Help Sheets](#) and Australia's [largest free database of leadership courses](#) and opportunities.

**Molly Harriss Olson** is Director of the Australian-based international policy firm, [Eco Futures](#), which works to build sustainable strategies with business, government and civic leaders. She is also Convenor of the National Business Leaders Forum on Sustainable Development, which brings together leading local and international innovators in sustainable development.

During the 1990s Ms Olson was appointed by US President Bill Clinton to work on developing a broad-based national action strategy on sustainable development. She has served on a variety of high profile Australian Boards, including the Australia Institute, Clean Up Australia and the Australian Building Energy Council.

In 1995, Ms Olson was selected to be a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Leaders for Tomorrow program, which is made up of people born after 1950 who have distinguished themselves as recognised leaders in the world community.

**We started by asking her who she considered to be the three great leaders of our time?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:**

- Nelson Mandela
- The Dalai Lama
- Mother Teresa

Because they have shown tremendous vision, self sacrifice and accomplishments against the odds. (Also Lowitja O'Donoghue.)

**Our Community: What are the three attributes you would consider to be essential to a leader? And Why?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:** Integrity, perseverance and vision, because the vision is needed to recognise a problem, injustice or opportunity; integrity is needed to gain respect and cooperation from friends and foes; and perseverance is needed to stay on the path.

**Our Community: What are the three greatest barriers to new leaders emerging in Australia?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:**

1. Homogenisation of culture and political agendas
2. Complexity of the current problems and solutions (i.e. climate change)
3. Party monopoly over political selections

**Our Community: What advice would you give to a potential leader to take them to the next stage?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:** Take care of your body and soul – you will need the physical and emotional strength to persevere.

**Our Community: Nature or nurture – are leaders born or bred?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:** Both – they need the capacity (born) to rise to the occasion or challenge presented.

**Our Community: What do you consider to be the three top leadership issues facing the nation?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:**

1. Environmental protection / water, climate change etc.
2. Reconciliation
3. Global governance and Australia's role

**Our Community: What insights have you gained personally on your leadership journey?**

**Molly Harriss Olson:** Support for what you need often comes from the least expected places! Keep your ears and heart open for creative solutions.

**Our Community: Who have been your own leadership mentors and how did they assist in developing your own leadership style?**

## Molly Harriss Olson:

- Jane Goodall (Wildlife Research, Education and Conservation) – by example, and later in life in friendship.
- Richard Cooley (dec.) – (Professor, University of California at Santa Cruz) – an accomplished naturalist, economist and sculptor who showed me what a whole life could be – passion, purpose, inspiration.

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## 6. Partnerships seminars – coming soon to a town near you

The Regional Seminar Series of the Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service kicked off this week, with the first seminar held in the central Victorian town of Bendigo yesterday.

Federal Minister for Family and Community Services, Senator Kay Patterson, launched the seminar series – the first of which was held at Bendigo's Capital Theatre and attended by about 120 people.

Our Community CEO Rhonda Galbally presented the Bendigo seminar – the first of 12 to be held around Australia between now and mid-September.

"The Bendigo seminar is the first in an Australia-wide series to promote the benefits of community groups and businesses joining together to strengthen their local community," Senator Patterson said.

The seminar series is aimed at both businesses and community organisations wishing to investigate partnerships, and will cover a number of topics, including:

- What is a community business partnership?
- Explanation of the benefits to business, community organisations and the wider community of successful partnerships;
- Partnership models, including combinations of activities such as employee volunteering, mentoring, in-kind support, pro-bono or discounted services, and sponsorship;
- The elements of successful community business partnerships;
- What businesses and community groups need to do before entering a partnership; and
- What resources are available to organisations seeking partnerships.

The Bendigo seminar was warmly received by participants, prompting some spirited discussions among attendees after it finished.

Senator Patterson said the Regional Seminar Series was a key element of the National Community Business Partnerships Brokerage Service.

"The regional seminar series targets businesses and community groups wanting to work together, make a difference and find out more about forming a partnership - all with the aim to create and inspire more community business partnerships," she said.

Registrations are open for the remaining 11 Regional Seminars:

- **1 July:** Morwell - Latrobe City Council
- **27 July:** Geelong - City of Greater Geelong
- **4 August:** Dubbo - Dubbo City Council
- **17 August:** Wollongong - Wollongong City Council
- **19 August:** Newcastle - Newcastle City Council
- **25 August:** Gold Coast - Gold Coast City Council
- **26 August:** Shepparton - City of Greater Shepparton
- **1 September:** Mount Gambier - The City Of Mount Gambier
- **9 September:** Merredin - Wheatbelt ACC
- **14 September:** Cairns - Cairns City Council
- **15 September:** Rockhampton - Rockhampton City Council

For further information or to register for a seminar, contact Lidia Milevski on (03) 9320 6807.

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## 7. Questions to ponder before committing to a community business partnership

While we're on the topic of community business partnerships, it's interesting to note that most of Australia's top companies still seem to be struggling with how to improve their social and environmental performances.

A new corporate social responsibility ranking report gives only Westpac, Telstra, Origin Energy and Insurance Australia Group a "pass mark" for their environmental performance, while only five companies (Westpac, Telstra, BHP Billiton, AGL and Alumina) scored more than 50 per cent for their social performance.

The report – [Australia's Top 50 Companies: a ranking for corporate social responsibility](#) – was part of a joint initiative involving the Australian Consumers Association and the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Many businesses – big and small – are now trying to improve their social performance by forming a partnership with a community group.

For community groups considering such a relationship, there are a few issues you should discuss before making a commitment. They include:

- Knowing whether your group has the resources and administrative ability to commit to a partnership without stretching itself too thinly and adversely affecting current operations.
- Knowing what your group can offer a potential business partner.
- Being clear on how your group would like to benefit from a partnership with a business.
- Being clear on how a partnership can best help your group achieve its aims.
- Being aware of your worth, and not under-selling your group, its good reputation and good name.
- Knowing what your group's aims and values are, ensuring any potential business partners share your group's outlook.
- Knowing which businesses or sectors would not be appropriate to partner with.
- Knowing which local businesses are in harmony with your organisation's values system and could be potential business partners.

After making sure your organisation is clear on these things, your group also needs to make sure there is support for a partnership with a business. Without unity and enthusiasm for a partnership it is unlikely to work.

For more information on Community Business Partnerships, community groups can refer to the Community Business Partnership Brokerage Service, located at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/partnerships).

The national service is an initiative of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership, administered through the Australian Government's Department of Family and Community Services. Our Community manages and sustains the service with its associate partners, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Municipal Association of Victoria.

A dozen new Help Sheets have just been released onto the site. There are also Case Studies of community business partnerships, ideas for partnerships in the Partnership Ideas Bank, and a free partnership Matching Service.

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## 8. At last, some good news on the insurance front

Some rare good news has surfaced in the ongoing struggle for fairer public liability insurance, with the announcement of a new database that will finally record claims made against insurers.

In the past, insurers have claimed that the community sector was a bad risk – thus the high premiums – despite the fact that there was little evidence of this.

(In fact, the groundbreaking Our Community survey carried out in 2002 found that 96 per cent of groups had not had a single claim in the previous five years.)

As Our Community has repeatedly pointed out, the community sector has been unfairly hit by insurance premium increases, given that there is little or no evidence that this sector has a poor claims history.

But in a move that should be welcomed by all community groups, the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) has released final specifications for a National Claims and Policies Database, which will include detailed policy and claims data for public liability, professional risk and medical indemnity/malpractice.

All APRA-regulated insurers will be included in the database and APRA says state and territory insurers have also agreed to take part.

Importantly, the new system should lead to better pricing that is based on **actual** rather than **perceived** claims made by the community sector.

NSW community groups have a second reason to smile on the insurance front, with the release of a new scheme to provide affordable public liability insurance.

NCOSS Community Cover, which aims to provide “competitively priced” insurance policies to those groups who have struggled to afford the recent steep rises in insurance premiums, was launched by the Council of Social Services of New South Wales (NCOSS) and Aon Risk Services late last month.

The policies will cover a variety of areas, including public liability, personal indemnity, property, motor vehicle, and personal accident insurance policies.

AON and NCOSS said “appropriate and affordable” insurance was vital for community groups, charities and not-for-profit organisations and they were hopeful the new scheme would provide access to good quality cover at affordable prices.

Our Community recommends that any community group seeking insurance arrange quotations from at least two sources to compare prices and coverage.

In NSW, groups can also access public liability insurance through Community Care by telephoning 1800 023 456 or online at [www.community-care.com.au](http://www.community-care.com.au). GIO Insurance can also provide various cover suitable for community groups – in NSW contact Mark Emery on (02) 8296 6707 or email to [Mark.Emery@suncorp.com.au](mailto:Mark.Emery@suncorp.com.au).

For information on public liability insurance for your state and access to free risk management Help Sheets visit [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/insurance/insurance\\_main.jsp](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/insurance/insurance_main.jsp).

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## **9. Australian spammers forced back into the tin**

We all dislike spam cluttering up our email, and we've all wanted somebody to do something about it.

Well, now they have.

The Federal Government has passed a new law to try to reduce the amount of spam finding its way into Australian inboxes. (In case you don't know, spam is the common term for unsolicited email messages – the electronic equivalent of junk mail.)

It's too soon to be sure whether the new law is going to be effective (most spammers are outside Australia and can't be prosecuted) but we can already see that it could make some trouble for community groups, who are going to have to look carefully at their email practices to ensure that they comply with the new law.

The penalty provisions of the Spam Act 2003 came into full effect last month. From now on, anyone who sends anybody unsolicited commercial email to a recipient will risk prosecution, unless:

- a) the recipient has consented to receive such messages, either expressly or by giving implied consent; and
- b) the sender of such messages has clearly identified themselves in the body of each message; and
- c) the recipient has been provided with a clearly presented and easy means with which to opt out of receiving any future messages from the sender.



The Act provides some exceptions for a registered charity (few community groups would fall into this category), a registered Australian political party or any Government body.

It's on-line at <http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/cgi-bin/download.pl?/scale/data/pasteact/3/3628>, (but beware if you're easily confused by lines such as "A person must not send, or cause to be sent, a commercial electronic message that ... is not a designated commercial electronic message".

In any case, the minimum you have to do from now on is:

- a) allow everybody to opt out of your electronic information (newsletters, bulletins etc.) and fundraising systems, and
- b) work very hard at getting people to give you permission to send them information and fundraising appeals.

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## **10. Why community groups need to take a good look at themselves**

Prime Minister John Howard has confirmed that next week's Federal Budget will contain a \$5.3 billion boost for research and innovation.

Not much of that, if any, will go to community groups because community groups tend to devote very little of their resources to research.

This may not be such a good thing. If you don't have an eye to the future, you tend to do things the way they've always been done.

There's a possibly apocryphal story about gun crews in the mechanised artillery in the British Army during World War II. Standard procedure was to assign six men (equality was not a big issue then) to each crew. Someone noticed that the sixth man had nothing to do, and asked what his purpose was. No one knew. Regulation books were consulted. At last there came a sheepish reply: "To hold the horses." Nobody had thought to up-date the manual.

Most community groups are focused on doing the job in front of them, and are generally having to run as fast as they can to stay in the same place. Even so, it may be worth taking a break off the treadmill to look at whether there's a better way to do things.

This isn't about academic research, where you study a subject to find the truth for its own sake: it's operational research, where you study your methods and work out how to improve them.

Operational research:

- **Looks at how you run your organisation**  
Does information move around your organisation freely? Do your staff learn from each other? Are your methods recorded in a manual? Do your performance reviews include what the employee would like to change?
- **Looks at how you measure your success**  
Have you got performance goals to tell you how you're doing? Can you tell from your records which of your activities are most successful and which are lagging behind? Do you vary your methods and see which ones work best?
- **Looks at how you go about achieving your goals**  
Are there any shortcuts you could use? Are there any alternative paths to your desired outcomes that might be more efficient?

All community groups need a process to ensure their operations are under continuous examination and where the outcome of that examination is fed back into the operations.

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## 11. Community Briefs

### Participate, Activate, Create

National Volunteer Week kicks off on Monday, with organisers urging Australians to “participate, activate, and create”.

The annual event provides a national focus for organisations wanting to recruit volunteers and an opportunity to promote the value of volunteering to the community.

Volunteering Australia CEO Sha Cordingley urged people to join the army of 4.4 million Australian volunteers who already offer their services to their local communities and community groups.

“Many community groups are constantly looking to involve more and more volunteers in the work they do, and there is just such an amazing variety of volunteer positions available,” she said.

Ms Sha said positions advertised on Volunteering Australia’s volunteer recruitment website, [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au), had included puppeteers at a children’s camp, water aerobics assistants and volunteers to craft pouches for orphaned possums.

And she said that some of Australia’s most vital community services, including beach patrols, rural firefighting services and environmental awareness programs, also relied heavily on a volunteer workforce.

To find out what’s happening in your corner of the country contact your local council or log onto the Volunteering Australia website at <http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/NVW.html>. Community groups can also list their own events at the Volunteering Australia website.

### Australians say “no thanks” to tax cuts

The tax cuts that are expected to form a major plank of the Federal Government’s upcoming budget may not get a particularly warm reception, two new polls have suggested.

A poll undertaken by Roy Morgan Research for the National Welfare Rights Network found that nearly nine out of 10 Australians would prefer the Government to use any excess money to fix problems in the community, rather than deliver tax breaks.

The results were based on the response of 609 people Australia-wide, who were asked if they would prefer a \$5 a week tax cut, or the Government to use the money to fix problems in areas such as health, education, aged care, homelessness and poverty relief.

A total of 88.4 per cent of respondents chose the latter option.

NWRN president Michael Raper said that people on the lowest incomes would get no benefit at all from a \$5 tax cut because they were too poor to pay tax.

“The verdict of ordinary Australians is that politicians could spend this sum more wisely on fixing problems in the community,” he said.

The NWRN survey results supported the findings of an earlier ACNielsen poll, which found that three-quarters of Australians would prefer money to be spent on public services than tax cuts.

### UK Charities to get dormant bank cash

British charities could be in for a windfall if proposed new laws are put in place to force banks to hand over an estimated £15 billion that is lying in dormant accounts.

While the Government has called on banks and building societies to come up with a voluntary scheme for distributing unclaimed cash to good causes, some banks believe the Government will need to legislate.

The push seems to be designed to encourage banks to make a greater effort to find “lost” customers, rather than holding unclaimed cash in bank coffers – however, it has the potential to provide a boon to cash-strapped charities.

Neither the Government nor the banks have ever proposed that missing customers should lose their money – at issue is what is done with cash in dormant accounts until it is claimed.

Perhaps it is time for a similar push in Australia, where the money from dormant accounts goes into Federal Government coffers.

### **International award for Australian philanthropists**

High profile Melbourne philanthropists Jeanne and Richard Pratt have been honoured with the Variety Club's highest international award in recognition of their charity work.

The couple was presented with the Variety International Humanitarian Award in Sydney on May 2.

Variety, a worldwide children' charity which is dedicated to helping sick, disabled and disadvantaged children, has its origins in the entertainment industry.

The award, which was presented at the Variety International Convention, is designed to acknowledge someone who has shown "unusual understanding, empathy and devotion to mankind".

This is the first time the award has been given to an Australian – when Sydney first hosted the conference in 1989 the award went to Sammy Davis Jnr. Other recipients have included Audrey Hepburn, Frank Sinatra, Jerry Lewis, Bob Hope and Roger Moore.

The Pratt Foundation has distributed \$140 million since it was established in 1978.

The Pratts have also spearheaded a campaign to encourage more Australian businesses to spend more of their profits on the community.

### **Rewriting the tale of two cities**

A great example of a multi-sector partnership has emerged with the launch of a three-year project to bring together traditional and new residents of Melbourne's oldest suburb.

The project involves converting a building at Port Melbourne Primary School into a community meeting space and a hub for family and children's services.

Other facets of the project include employment of a community development worker, as well as training, mentoring and 'buddying up' systems to support people who don't normally participate in community affairs.

An annual event is also planned to be held at the school – with its exact shape and form to be determined by the local community.

The \$500,000 "community hub" project is being funded through a cocktail of state and local government grants, contributions from two local schools and in-kind support from a large local business – a good example of how much can be achieved when a project looks to diversify its funding sources.

Project partners include the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Human Services, Port Melbourne Primary School, Beacon Cove Neighbourhood Association, local business representatives, local residents representing both the older and newer residential areas, representatives from a neighbourhood agencies network (once it is established) and the City of Port Phillip.

Mayor Dick Gross said dramatic population changes had transformed Port Melbourne from a tight-knit, working class suburb into a much larger, more diverse suburb.

"Port Melbourne is now a community of extremes. Many of the new residents boast high incomes but there are still sizeable numbers of people on low incomes, living in public housing," he said.

Ward councillor Julian Hill, said the project would help prevent the future of Port Melbourne becoming a "tale of two cities".

### **One City, One site**

For those communities that haven't yet moved into cyberspace, a project taking place in the NSW town of Wollongong could provide an example of a good way forward.

A group of Wollongong residents is taking the first steps towards establishing the town's own community website as part of the trail-blazing One City One Site pilot project, which is developing a community website portal structure for all communities.

The pilot project is based on a domain name system which reserves and restricts the use of geographic names in website addresses, as well as linking directly back to the wider state website.

For example, the Wollongong community website portal would be located at [www.wollongong.nsw.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.au) and would link back to the wider NSW webpage.

This has come about after the Federal Government asked the Australian Domain Name Authority to set up domain names for every city, town and suburb in Australia. These domain names are intended for the whole community and can only be used by a genuine local community effort.

The Wollongong portal initiative is only the third in Australia under the One City One Site pilot project – following closely on the heels of projects still underway in Ballarat and Bathurst.

The development and testing of this model is believed to be a world first, creating a logical geographic portal structure supporting communities by providing a valuable asset, which can be used to create strong social, cultural and economic benefits.

More information about the One City One Site project is available online at <http://www.auda.org.au/nrg/ocos/>.

## Developing a government/non-government partnership

NSW community groups should grasp the opportunity to have their say on efforts to develop a partnership agreement between the NSW government and non-government sectors.

Members of the public have been invited to provide feedback on a Western Sydney Community Forum discussion paper entitled *Government/Non-government Partnerships: Towards deliberative democracy in policy making?*

The forum has been involved in the development process of the partnership agreement and the paper draws together Australian and international literature on consultation in policy development.

The paper also considers the broader context of the partnerships between government and non-government organisations, the question of why consultation should take place, barriers to good consultation and discussion about what is good practice in consultation.

It aims to generate debate about “the need for a consultation protocol” linked to the NSW government’s proposed partnership agreement, as well as contributing to the development of best practice principles in relation to consultation.

Members of the public are invited to read the discussion paper before either joining an online discussion at the [communitybuilders.nsw](http://communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au) website, or by completing a short questionnaire.

Copies of the discussion paper and links to the online forum and questionnaire are at [www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/builder/participation/tdd.html](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/builder/participation/tdd.html) or contact Margot Rawsthorne on (02) 9897 2677, email [research@wscf.org.au](mailto:research@wscf.org.au).

## Don't forget the \$10 Gift Vouchers

One more reminder for new members about the \$10 gift voucher offer for our range of books.

These publications are designed to provide practical, accessible, easy-to-follow advice to assist in many areas of managing a community organisation, such as improving the role of the Board, finding funding and operating ethically. The new titles include:

- **Finding the Simple Secrets of Successful Community Groups** – over 400 tips on running a more effective community group and school.
- **Transforming Community Committees and Boards** – From hell to heaven.
- **Surviving and Thriving as a Safe, Effective Board Member** – The essential facts you need to know before, during and after joining a community Board.
- **How to Slash your Insurance Claims** – The essential steps to identifying and managing risk.
- **Finding the Best People** – The essential steps to recruiting a great Chief Executive / Coordinator for your community group.
- **Ethical Solutions** – Essential guide to implementing an ethics program in your community group.
- **The Fifty Best Grants** – Winning more money for your community group and school (separate versions for each state/territory).

- **The Fifty Best Scholarships and Awards** - Targeting your personal and workplace training and development opportunities.

To find out more about the books you can click on [www.ourcommunity.com.au/newbooks](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/newbooks) or you can order by clicking on the \$10 gift voucher at [www.ourcommunity.com.au/giftvoucher](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/giftvoucher).

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## 12. Fast Forward

If you found this newsletter helpful, please feel free to send it onto your friends and fellow community groups in your area. We would also like your input into this newsletter.

If you have any thoughts or any issues you would like addressed we would appreciate hearing from you. You can send your comments to [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au) or call (03) 9320 6813.

We now have button logos for those groups who want to set up links to [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) from their own websites. You can find them in the media centre. Just visit [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/article/view\\_image\\_list.do](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/article/view_image_list.do) and right click your mouse on the image you want and then click on SAVE to your own computer. If you have any problems just contact [brianw@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:brianw@ourcommunity.com.au) or call (03) 9320 6813.

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