NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES
&
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BUILDING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

A Practical Guide to Creating and Sustaining Partnerships
Acknowledgements

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this kit is to provide a practical framework, which encourages and assists Neighbourhood Houses, Living & Learning Centres and Community Centres (referred to in this guide as Neighbourhood Houses) and local government (referred to in this guide as local government and councils) to work more closely together in a partnership arrangement. The document explores processes and procedures to consider when developing partnerships and identifies some of the barriers that can impede successful partnerships and some of the opportunities for creating ongoing successful partnerships.

Building strong communities is a Victorian Government priority that seeks to develop cohesive and sustainable communities. It involves whole of government strategies to improve the ability of communities to manage their own affairs, build on their strengths and engage in partnerships with government and other sectors that result in shared social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits.

Neighbourhood Houses, in actively promoting and undertaking community building as a primary goal, have an important role in local communities. They contribute to the social well being of individuals and communities and the broad policy objectives of building capable communities. Neighbourhood Houses are a core universal service central to supporting all members of the community, particularly those who are isolated or vulnerable.

As the sphere of government at the local level, councils exert significant influence on local economies and communities. Local government has joint governance responsibility with state government to integrate planning for local communities and maximise co-ordination and integration of service delivery and community strengthening initiatives. (DHS, NHCP Guidelines, 2002).

Opportunities to create and support responsive, innovative and sustainable partnerships between Neighbourhood Houses and local government will lead to strong, more capable communities. This document forms part of a suite of resources developed by the Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres (ANHLC) to support Neighbourhood Houses.

1.1 Aims of the kit

The aims of the resource kit are to:

- Enhance the capacity of local government and Neighbourhood Houses to engage in ongoing partnerships.
- Identify ways in which partnership opportunities between local government and Neighbourhood Houses can be strengthened.
- Identify examples of barriers and opportunities for creating ongoing successful partnerships.
- Record and promote successful examples of well-established local government partnership arrangements with Neighbourhood Houses.
- Support the local government sector and the Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre sector to understand and engage in successful partnerships.
- To provide best practice examples of supporting documentation, including policies, funding and service agreements via ANHLC.

1.2 Background

In 2001 the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and ANHLC established a joint working group to progress the relationship between councils and Neighbourhood Houses in community strengthening.
As a first step information was gathered from councils on the current working relationships and arrangements between councils and Neighbourhood Houses. The data received was analysed and summarised into a report titled ‘Council Involvement in the Neighbourhood House Program’. The working group aimed to use the report findings in the development of the Neighbourhood House Program and assist councils and Neighbourhood Houses with good model agreements and practice in these areas.

One of the key outcomes of the study was:

The development of a Resource Kit for councils directly related to planning in conjunction with local Neighbourhood Houses. The Kit should be targeted to both councillors and staff and have an educative focus. It should include:

- An outline of the relationship between local government, Neighbourhood Houses and community capacity building and development.
- Good practice examples, which can be adapted at the local level.
- A guide to ways in which councils can support the development of closer working relations, planning and service development between themselves and the independent committees of management of Neighbourhood Houses in their municipality.
- A guide to ways in which local networking between Neighbourhood Houses can be supported by councils.
- Sample policy and procedural documents and strategies, outlining the range of possible roles and responsibilities of individual Neighbourhood Houses, networks and local government. (MAV/ANHLC, 2001)
2 Policy background for strengthening communities

The NH&LC Sector meet many of the recent policy objectives at Local, State and Federal levels which has prioritised community strengthening and community capacity building as a means of addressing a range of social issues.

In Victoria, the State Government has established the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC) to provide an integrated planning approach to community capacity building. The management and administration of funding to the NH&LC sector has been transferred, as of July 2005, from the Department of Human Services (DHS) to the DVC within the local government division. The move recognises the key role Neighbourhood Houses play in their local community and how they meet many of the policy objectives of all spheres of government.

A Fairer Victoria, the Victorian Governments Social Policy Action Plan, has Building Stronger Communities as Strategy 12 and states that “Strong communities that are active, confident and resilient have high levels of interaction and support, effective local leadership, are proud of their identity and experience less disadvantage. Building such communities is vital to tackling the problem associated with disadvantage.” The government has identified working with Neighbourhood Houses as one way to achieve this objective.

As outlined by Humpage (2005), government policies relating to community strengthening have aimed to:

- Build local knowledge and skills through education and training, with a particular emphasis on lifelong learning;
- Improve social participation, especially by encouraging volunteer participation;
- Increase civic engagement, by encouraging individuals and communities to involve themselves in decision-making processes;
- Develop and strengthen partnerships and networks between different government departments and levels of government, as well as between communities, business, government and philanthropic agencies.” (Humpage, 2005)

The goal is to build better, stronger communities by developing their social, economic and environmental capacity so that communities can proactively address any issues that emerge. Humpage also says “Given these apparent benefits, governments have been keen to ensure that their policies harness or strengthen social capital within communities.” Some of the policies that are relevant to the NH&LC sector include the Federal Government’s, Strengthening Families and Communities Strategy, the National Agenda for Early Childhood and Volunteering Programs.

Many local governments have also identified community strengthening as a key objective within their corporate plans and take an integrated planning approach to support this objective.

Within this Government policy context, the traditional method of service delivery by the NH&LC sector which uses community development principles to work with and foster a sense of connectedness with individuals and groups within the community - effectively delivers on Government policy at all levels.
3 What is a partnership?

The Victorian Local Governance Association and the Stegley Foundation produced a handbook entitled ‘Building Partnerships between councils and their Communities’. Within the handbook the authors suggest that a partnership have a definite goal, a specific endpoint. Where councillors and community representatives sit together on some form of ongoing committee you might have power or information sharing, but the specificity that calls forth a partnership is lacking. (Wettenhall and Alexander, 2001)

“In an ideal world, the objective of a partnership should be to create an initiative where partners work together to achieve a commonly agreed set of goals and objectives and in doing so deliver more than the sum of its individual components.” (Wilson and Charlton, 1997)

For the purpose of this resource kit we are therefore defining partnerships as the process by which local government and Neighbourhood Houses combine their capacities and resources to achieve a goal that would be difficult if not impossible, to achieve by either organisation acting on their own behalf.

3.1 Developing partnerships

Within the local government and NH&LC sector there is currently a range of partnerships operating at different levels. Some areas have well-established partnerships while others are at a fledgling stage, or non-existent.

Partnerships can evolve in different ways. This depends on how the respective partnering organisations are set up and the way people involved see their roles. A lot depends on the organisations’ relative size, prominence and previous relationships. The quality of individual relationships of key staff/people within the organisations is also crucial.

Partnerships can lead to long term strategies that address the diverse and changing needs of communities. Collaborative ventures work best when the partners focus on their respective strengths and work together to explore a range of other opportunities that benefit both.

Different types of partnerships can be useful:

- Cooperative/joint arrangements where both parties work together on a project, sharing the work in a mutually agreed manner.
- Coordinating arrangements where one partner co-ordinates the project and links with a number of bodies/organisations to offer the program/outcomes.
- Linking arrangements where one partner takes on the entire task of delivering the program/outcomes and draws on the other partner(s) to help make it work effectively.

Benefits of Partnerships

There are many benefits that can be derived from local government and Neighbourhood Houses working in partnership, some examples include:

- Increased capacity to link into, and provide for, your local community.
- Increased awareness of the diversity within a community.
- Promotion of the benefits of both partners’ service provision within the community.
- Gaining access to additional services that might not otherwise be able to be offered.
- Gaining access to information and skills.
- Increased opportunities for community development and strengthening.
- Improved levels of service delivery.
• Increased self-confidence and self worth for the Neighbourhood House as an organisation.
• Joint problem solving.

**Opportunities and Barriers for Successful Partnerships**

A review of the "Relationships between Mitchell Shire Council and Neighbourhood Houses within Mitchell Shire" report provides the following examples of factors influencing successful relationships and barriers to successful relationships.

**Opportunities**
• Council acknowledging autonomy of Neighbourhood Houses.
• Clear understanding by both organisations of the separate roles and responsibilities.
• Neighbourhood Houses having a clear understanding of council policies, processes, procedures and staff responsibilities.
• Clear understanding of resources available.
• Regular formal meetings.
• Establishment of a network.
• Provision of funding by council in recognition of the community development role.
• Establishment of mutually agreed Service Agreements identifying strategies and performance measures.
• Identification of a council liaison person.
• Regular visits by council staff to the Neighbourhood Houses.
• Opportunities for shared use of facilities.
• Ensuring Neighbourhood Houses are regularly consulted and represented on any facility or program development groups.

**Barriers**
• Ability and skill level of Neighbourhood House staff to work with local government organisation.
• Ability and skill level of council staff to work with community based organisation governed by voluntary Committee of Management.
• Travel and transport difficulties.
• Expectation of Neighbourhood Houses in relation to council's available resources.
• Lack of understanding by council staff of the role of Neighbourhood Houses.
• Lack of understanding by both organisation about the separate roles and responsibilities.
• Neighbourhood Houses do not have a clear understanding of council policies, processes, procedures and staff responsibilities.

**Elements for Successful Partnering**

There are a number of elements that are critical to creating and supporting ongoing successful partnerships. Some of the elements of success include:

• Clear documentation detailing the roles and responsibility of the local government authority and the Neighbourhood House.
• Clear and achievable expectations of both the local government authority and the Neighbourhood House.
• Mutual respect and trust by the local government authority and the Neighbourhood House.
• Consultation regarding any proposed changes.
• Agreed process for evaluation and quality control. (Nunn & Rawson, 2003)
Case study - Rural Shire of Moira

The Shire of Moira, in northern Victoria is situated on the Murray River and encompasses the four major towns of Cobram, Nathalia, Numurkah and Yarrawonga as well as 18 smaller towns.

The Shire has a positive relationship with the four Neighbourhood Houses that has its beginning following the amalgamation of councils in 1996. With the formation of the Shire of Moira, there was recognition that each of the four Neighbourhood Houses within the Shire received different levels of funding with some receiving no financial support at all. There was a desire to fund each Neighbourhood House equitably which was achieved in 1999/2000 when all Neighbourhood Houses received top up funding to 21.15 hours per week.

Through the discussions and negotiations, strong connections were made between council officers and Neighbourhood House coordinators. Each Neighbourhood House now has a 3 year Service Agreement with council which specifies performance indicators that need to be met by each Neighbourhood House. A six monthly report is required for accountability.

Key aspects of the partnership include:

- Direct access to the Manager of Community Services who is the key liaison person within council.
- Quarterly meetings with the council which are based around the performance indicators and information sharing.
- An annual meeting with all councillors where each Neighbourhood House is provided with the opportunity to address the councillors for 10 minutes about the needs, social issues programs and services at their Neighbourhood Houses.
- In kind support from council to assist when required. Examples include support to new committees.
4 About the Neighbourhood House Sector

4.1 The Neighbourhood House Sector

Individual Neighbourhood Houses are part of a broader sector, which is made up of three integrated components.

- **The Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres (ANHLC)** is the peak body that represents, supports, co-ordinates and advocates for the sector. It also provides information, resources, advice and training to Neighbourhood Houses. The ANHLC is managed by a Board elected by the full membership of Houses and Networks.

- **Neighbourhood House Networks**, which exist at the community, regional and municipal levels. The networks support and resource Neighbourhood Houses individually and as collective groups. The networks feed issues, needs and developments through to the ANHLC and work collaboratively with the ANHLC on sector-based issues and needs.

- **Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres (NH&LC)** are community owned and managed organisations that provide or host a range of programs and activities for their local community. (Humpage, Building Victorian Communities: Outcomes of the Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre Sector, 2005)

4.2 What are Neighbourhood Houses?

Neighbourhood Houses were established in the 1970’s and grew from local community need. As described in the state government’s Neighbourhood Houses Coordination Program Guidelines 2002, Neighbourhood Houses are organisations that provide a variety of program, activities and services for their local community. They are places where members of the community can get support and resources that they may need, access adult educational opportunities and can participate in the operation and management of the house. (Humpage, Building Victorian Communities: Outcomes of the Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre Sector, 2005)

Neighbourhood Houses offer support and information to individuals, families and groups within the community, particularly those who have additional needs, are disadvantaged or isolated. They usually focus on prevention and skill development rather than health or crisis intervention.

The activities provided by Neighbourhood Houses are a mixture of individual or family support or strengthening services, social and skills development, adult education/learning, information and referral services, and community organisation activities. Through these activities, Neighbourhood Houses provide opportunities for recreation, learning, sharing, participation and empowerment.

Neighbourhood Houses are community owned generalist services, which are unequalled in their ability to provide a continuity of service to people through their changing life stages. The activities and programs provided have developed in relation to the needs of the neighbourhood, other community local infrastructures and resource constraints. (ANHLC, The Neighbourhood House & Learning Centre Sector Framework, 2003)

There are over 350 Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria.

4.3 How is a Neighbourhood House managed?

Neighbourhood Houses are legally constituted, not for profit, community based organisations. They are community managed by a voluntary Committee of Management, collective or board comprising elected members who participate in activities at the Neighbourhood House or interested people from the local community. The Committee of Management is responsible for the financial viability of the organisation, the broad strategic direction and for the endorsement of policy. It is also
responsible for ensuring compliance with all legislative and statutory requirements and is responsible for the employment of staff.

There is usually a paid co-ordinator or manager employed by the Committee of Management who has operational responsibility for the day-to-day running of the Neighbourhood House within the strategic and policy context set by the Committee of Management. Often volunteers also play a significant role in ensuring the viability of a Neighbourhood House and fulfil a range of functions. (ANHLC, The Neighbourhood House & Learning Centre Sector Framework, 2003)

4.4 What are the services and activities provided by Neighbourhood Houses?

The range of activities and services provided reflect the individual needs and desires of the local community.

Most Neighbourhood Houses provide some or all of the following:

- A provider of safe and welcoming places, spaces and opportunities that are open to all members of the community.
- A place for people to form friendships and support networks.
- A provider of community information and a referral service to other community service agencies.
- A provider of affordable childcare and family support programs.
- A provider of art, craft, recreation, health and wellbeing programs.
- A provider of adult learning and skill development.
- An advocate for community issues and for the more isolated and disadvantaged within the community.

4.5 Neighbourhood House Networks

There are 16 regional Neighbourhood House Networks (Networks). They are managed by volunteer committees or advisory groups drawn from local NH&LC sector representatives and their membership is composed of local Neighbourhood Houses.

The Networks receive funding from DVC and in some cases from local government and a variety of other sources. Membership numbers, geographical size and number of hours funded vary widely. Networks are funded from 10 to 36 staff hours or the equivalent per week and have a membership of 7 to 65 Neighbourhood Houses.

Most Networks employ a Networker to facilitate their activities. Some Networks utilise their funding to provide travel allocations for member House staff and committees to ensure that they meet and access professional development opportunities on a regular basis.

The Networkers and Network representatives meet at ANHLC every six weeks to discuss relevant sector issues and to brief ANHLC on important developments from the field.

The function of all the Networks includes:

- To support and resource members.
- Advocacy and lobbying on behalf of the membership.
- Promotion of local Neighbourhood Houses.
- To strengthen local networking for members.
- To provide training and professional development opportunities for members.

Source: The 16 Regional Neighbourhood House Networks: Role, Operations and Outcomes, ANHLC, a work in progress.
Case study – Municipal Community Centre Coordinators Network

There are ten Neighbourhood Houses in Hobsons Bay. Each Neighbour House is managed by a community-based Committee of Management and each Neighbourhood House employs a Manager or Coordinator, ranging from 15 – 40 hours per week.

The Neighbourhood House managers/coordinators formed a local network some years ago and in that time a strong tradition of mutual support, information sharing and collaboration has evolved. The network meets every two months and rotates venues, chairing and minute taking.

The network provides an opportunity for peer support, de-briefing, discussing ideas, information sharing, joint problem solving and for developing joint projects and promotion activities such as combined brochures and shared information tables at local festivals.

The network is a wonderful local resource for the managers/coordinators and a very powerful lobby group. It has also helped to reduce the sense of isolation particularly for the smaller Neighbourhood Houses with sole workers. The network provides alternative source of support, advice and information for new workers and on issues such as developing new policies.

The Role of the Regional Neighbourhood House Networks

The roles and relationships diagram on the following page highlights two different sets of networks that are both crucial components of the NH&LC sector. Sitting in the bottom half of the diagram (Sector) are the Regional Neighbourhood House Networks, which are funded as part of the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) by DVC. The regional NH Networks link Neighbourhood Houses and local communities to other Neighbourhood Houses and communities at a regional level, to the peak body, and to Local and State Governments.

The NH Networks provide management and operational support, as well as resources, to their member Neighbourhood Houses. In addition, they provide direct support to Committees of Management, staff and volunteers. Networks also play a strategic consultative role at a municipal and state government level.

As a result of their extensive knowledge of Neighbourhood Houses in their regions, the NH Networks are able to come together with the peak body to work collaboratively on developmental strategies for the whole sector at a state level. The Networks often plays a crucial role with local government, facilitating connections and activities on a municipal wide level.

The top right part of the diagram (Community) highlights that other community and municipal networks, which are not funded by DVC, are also an important component of the sector’s work. This is because they enable the NH&LC sector to be integrated into broader community development strategies. Most Neighbourhood Houses are involved in networks within their particular communities or areas. For instance, until January 2005, some have been involved in the Adult and Community Education (ACE) Clusters initiative funded by Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE). These Clusters brought together ACE providers for coordination and resourcing purposes.

Case study – Network West and Moonee Valley Council

The Networker and community representatives from Neighbourhood Houses in Moonee Valley met with the Mayor and presented information regarding local community outcomes from Neighbourhood House activities. The aim of the presentation was to encourage council to increase funding to Neighbourhood Houses and to negotiate for a more significant role in council’s consultation / planning process.

Prior to the meeting the Networker collaborated with the local government Communities Officer, Community Partnerships & Planning, to adapt an existing sector resource to produce a clear and engaging summary of the local Neighbourhood House outcomes for Moonee Valley residents.

The meeting was very positive. Participants felt that they left the local government with a raised awareness of the role played in the local community by the Moonee Valley Neighbourhood Houses and further meetings were arranged. As a result of the presentation, Moonee Valley council allocated a once off grant of $2,000 per Neighbourhood House and made a commitment to work collaboratively with Network West to establish future funding criteria and strategies for joint projects and activities.
4.6 Community development framework

The NH&LC sector works within a community development framework. The following principles are consistent across the NH&LC sector and are used to ensure Neighbourhood Houses actively work to assist disadvantaged groups within the community, build social connections and assist communities to meet their own needs. The key principles are:

- Community Ownership
- Community Participation
- Access and Equity
- Inclusion
- Advocacy
- Social Action.
- Empowerment
- Life Long Learning
- Networking
- Self Help

4.7 Neighbourhood House framework

The following diagram represents the framework under which Neighbourhood Houses operate.

**Governance**
Responsibility of Committee of Management, Collective or Board comprised of elected members

**Function**
- Accountable to the membership base
- Monitor organisational performance
- Develop strategic and policy framework
- Ensure financial viability
- Ensure compliance with all legislative, statutory and contractual responsibilities

**Management**
Undertaken by Co-ordinator/Manager

**Role**
- Accountable to the governing body
- Advise and inform the governing body
- Implement strategic and policy framework
- Manage resources and operations and delivery

**Operations**
Performed by Co-ordinator/Manager, staff, tutors and volunteers

**Duties**
- Program planning - needs analysis, research, promotion and evaluation
- Financial Management/Bookkeeping – financial systems, budgeting, financial reporting and assets management
- Human Resources – recruitment, training, supervision and performance reviews
- Administration – reception, office management, statistical data collection

**Delivery**
Staff, tutors and volunteers provide of a wide range of programs, activities, services and projects which build community and provide life long learning.

Examples of these include:

- **Adult Community Education**
  - Computers & Internet access
  - Return to work/study skills
  - ESL, Literacy, Numeracy
  - General Education
  - English classes
  - Creative writing
  - Training

- **Health & Well-Being activities**
  - Drop In, Support Groups
  - Community meals
  - Social Interaction
  - Partnerships
  - Life skills
  - Networking
  - Open days, Festivals
  - CALD support groups
  - Community meetings & Forums
  - Men’s sheds, Women’s groups

- **Recreation**
  - Activities
  - Cooking classes
  - Art & Craft
  - Gardening
  - Yoga, Tai-Chi
  - Walking groups

- **Child Care**
  - Playgroup
  - Family support
  - Homework clubs
  - Youth Programs
  - Children’s Activities
  - After School programs

- **Information & referral**
  - Disability programs
  - Emergency Relief
  - Home & Community Care
  - Financial Counselling
  - Self help groups
  - Advocacy

Source: The Neighbourhood House & Learning Centre Sector Framework, ANHLC, 2003
4.8 **How are Neighbourhood Houses funded?**

The sector receives a range of funding from Local and State Government as well as philanthropic trusts. Each Neighbourhood House also relies on fees paid by users of the service as well as participant and volunteer contributions.

**Local Government**

The level of support provided by local government varies from council to council. Some councils provide operational funding, which may be recurrent or via a grant program. Many councils provide council owned buildings for the Neighbourhood Houses to operate from. In kind support is also provided through staff support and advice, promotion and community information, planning information, co-ordination of Neighbourhood Houses within the municipality and with other community services as well as support for funding applications. Some councils also directly support their regional Networks e.g. City of Greater Geelong supports the Barwon network.

Of those councils that do support Neighbourhood Houses this is often via a grant with accountability requirements documented through a funding and service agreement which specifies reporting obligations and the community outcomes required. Examples of funding and service agreements are available via ANHLC. **Appendix 1** provides some questions and issues to be considered when preparing a service agreement.

A survey conducted by the Municipal Association of Victoria and ANHLC (MAV and ANHLC, 2001) indicated that metropolitan councils generally provided greater and more secure direct financial support to Neighbourhood Houses, with shires tending to provide smaller and less secure funding. In all types of council’s, however, there was a wide range of funding, including no funding at all.

**Department for Victorian Communities**

In 1986 the Victorian Government established the Neighbourhood House Scheme, now known as the Neighbourhood House Co-ordination Program. This program provides secure, recurrent funding for the coordination and management of Neighbourhood Houses and is delivered through eight regional divisions. The program aims to:

- Encourage communities to develop responses and solutions to their issues and problems.
- Reduce the isolation of individuals and groups within communities.
- Address social inequalities by increasing life opportunities for people who are disadvantaged, and encouraging the development of self-help and mutual support activities’ social interaction and participation.
- Provide skill development opportunities for people to improve their capacity for independence, social interaction and income generation.
- Contribute to the development of effective family functioning within the community and provision of support to families and individuals in crisis, or facing relationship difficulties. (DHS, NHCP Guidelines, 2002)

Under this scheme funds are allocated on the basis of hours of coordination to be provided and Neighbourhood Houses must aim to provide at least twice as many hours of activities as the NHCP provided co-ordination funding. (DHS, 2003)

In 2005 this program shifted from the Department of Human Services to the Department for Victorian Communities.

**Adult Community Further Education**

Many Neighbourhood Houses are providers of adult education and are funded to do this by ACFE which is part of the State Government Department of Education. ACFE provides non-recurrent funding through eight regional councils across Victoria. The
ACFE Board provides funding for education and training opportunities and personal development programs within the ACE sector.

Approximately 244 of the community based adult education organisations eligible to deliver programs on behalf of ACE are also funded as Neighbourhood Houses by the Department for Victorian Communities. (Humpage, 2005)

Funding provided by ACFE provides opportunities in the following areas:

- Courses to help people get work, change jobs or return to work
- Computer and internet courses.
- Professional development courses in areas such as finance or IT.
- Courses to improve a person’s literacy and numeracy.
- English as a second language.
- The VCE or another General Education program.
- General interest courses such as history, languages, art, music, cooking, health and personal development. (ACFE Website, 2005)

The majority of funding to Neighbourhood Houses from ACFE is for program delivery and includes tutor costs, materials etc. Some other funding programs are available within ACFE and can include capital funding.

4.9 Benefits of Neighbourhood Houses to individuals and the broader community

The range of services provided and the commitment to community development principles results in many benefits both for the individual and the broader community.

As stated in the City of Yarra’s Neighbourhood House Review 2003, community development activities enable Neighbourhood Houses to contribute to the strengthening of their local community in the following ways:

- Building community cohesion.
- Providing opportunities for civic engagement.
- Through the development of local solutions to local issues.
- Support to other local self-help community groups.
- Supporting diversity.
- Through the development of collaborative programs and activities to address emerging community needs.
- Enhancing the self-reliance of individuals and community groups.
- Acting as focal point (meeting place) for the local community.

All activities and services are designed and developed as a direct response to local needs via a community development process that encourages and nurtures the active involvement of the community in all aspects of the program.

At a broader level, the community building policy directions articulated by Governments at the Local, State and Federal levels are contributed to by the NH&LC sector by:

- Building knowledge and skills, providing pathways into further education and employment through its core ACE programs and its direct and indirect promotion of lifelong learning via a range of activities.
- Improving social participation, offering a variety of opportunities in which citizens can participate in the community, including voluntary work.
- Increasing civic engagement, improving citizen knowledge of, and participation in, democracy at all levels.
• Developing partnerships and linkages across communities, connecting individuals and groups with governments, business and philanthropic institutions through programs and activities. (Humpage, 2005)

Humpage also reported that the NH&LC sector activities contribute to community building outcomes at two levels as illustrated in the table below.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES</th>
<th>COMMUNITY OUTCOMES</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Social Wellbeing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emotional wellbeing;</td>
<td>• Building and sharing community resources;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Physical wellbeing.</td>
<td>• Community interaction;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Capital</strong></td>
<td>• Organisational synergies, connections and partnerships;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Literacy and language;</td>
<td>• Community activism;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New knowledge and skills;</td>
<td>• Empowerment and inclusion;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lifelong learning;</td>
<td>• Social cohesion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Command over goods and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Capital</strong></td>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social connections and</td>
<td>• Employment advocacy, referral and placement;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>networks;</td>
<td>• Innovation and business development;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social participation;</td>
<td>• Savings in health costs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Active citizenship.</td>
<td>• Savings in social and economic support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td><strong>Environmental</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pathways into further</td>
<td>• Environmental sustainability;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education;</td>
<td>• Savings in environmental costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pathways into employment;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-sufficiency;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Income generation.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Building Victorian Communities: Outcomes of the Neighbourhood House & Learning Centre Sector, Humpage 2005

4.10 Neighbourhood Houses & Regional NH Networks

Neighbourhood Houses and their regional Neighbourhood House Networks (NH Networks) are uniquely placed to assist councils achieve many corporate objectives. Councils often have broad objectives such as ‘to strengthen local communities’ and ‘to respond to community needs’. These are usually consistent with the objectives of the Neighbourhood Houses. Because of their proximity to the local community, Neighbourhood Houses are able to articulate and be in touch with local issues and needs and are in a position to respond to those needs quickly. They are a great source of information for council officers around particular local issues.

Through formal agreements with Neighbourhood Houses and/or the regional NH Networks such as funding and service agreements, councils have the opportunity to specify particular community outcomes to be provided by Neighbourhood Houses for funding provided. These outcomes can be informed by corporate objectives and the delivery negotiated with individual Neighbourhood Houses. The articulation of corporate objectives through service agreements can be one way of achieving positive community outcomes.

Consultation with the community is a critical component of local government. Neighbourhood Houses and the regional networks provide not only potential meeting places, but also ready-made target groups for direct consultation about particular issues.
The involvement of Neighbourhood House and regional NH Network staff or committee of management members on consultative committees and planning groups is also an effective way of ensuring plans are informed by those who are in touch with the community at the ground level.

The inclusion of participation data and other information provided through reporting supplied by Neighbourhood Houses can be used to inform council of service levels and issues within the local community.

Specific objectives such as those in the community health plan can also be met through this sector. Working with a regional Neighbourhood House network is particularly effective as it provides contact with a group of local Neighbourhood Houses through one representative community organisation.

### Case study – City of Whitehorse Neighbourhood Houses and Centres

In 2004, Whitehorse City Council worked with the nine Neighbourhood Houses in Whitehorse to deliver on the municipal health plan’s goal of “activating the community.”

Jointly Whitehorse Council and the nine Neighbourhood Houses applied for a VicHealth Active Participation Grant to conduct the “Walking in Whitehorse” program.

Whilst the concept for the program came from council, the positive relationship and partnerships built over time with the Neighbourhood Houses, meant that officers were able to seek the co-operation of the Neighbourhood Houses in delivering a program that met both council’s objectives and those of the Neighbourhood Houses.

The funding provided a project officer who co-ordinated a monthly walk from each of the nine Neighbourhood Houses across the municipality which meant residents had nine opportunities every month to participate in an organised and led walk.

### Case study – Barwon Network and the City of Greater Geelong

In 2004 Barwon Network worked closely with the City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) to ensure the City’s support of the Neighbourhood House state conference held in Geelong provided maximum benefits for local Neighbourhood Houses and all conference delegates.

CoGG provided in kind support such as meeting rooms, transport and hospitality to the conference. They also provided a one off grant to all Neighbourhood Houses in the Network to cover the cost of attendance at the conference.

CoGG announced at the conference that local Neighbourhood Houses were to be granted annual funding of $7,500 each, and the Network was to receive $4,000. This recurrent funding is to support the work Neighbourhood Houses and the Network already do. The Network worked with CoGG to develop a simple reporting format for this funding.
5 About Local Government

Local Government is the closest sphere of government to the people in the Australian Federal system. It is established by an Act of Parliament, which specifies local government powers, duties and functions. As the sphere of government at the local level, councils exert significant influence on local economies and communities.

All councils consist of an elected arm – democratically elected councillors and an operational arm – council employees. The operational or administrative arm is responsible for implementing council decisions. The elected councillors appoint the Chief Executive Officer, decide on the council policies and monitor council operations.

5.1 Responsibilities and functions

Local Government has responsibility for implementing many diverse programs, policies and regulations set by the Commonwealth and State Governments. However, councils have powers to establish their own regulations called local laws and can provide a range of discretionary services in response to local community need. While there are some common services across local government there is also a degree of diversity.

Councils are area based, representative governments with a legislative and electoral mandate to manage local issues and to ascertain and plan for the community’s needs.

A Local Government Charter in the Local Government Act 1989 describes the purpose, objectives and functions of Local Government in Victoria:

‘The purpose of local government is to provide a system under which councils perform the functions and exercise the powers conferred by or under this act and any other act for the peace, order and good government of their municipal district’

In broad terms councils:

- Express community identity and establish community goals.
- Undertake physical, social and economic planning.
- Provide either directly, or via contract management, a range of services.
- Have substantial resources and expertise.
- Have political, management and decision making structures.
- Offer residents many different ways to participate in decision-making.

5.2 Local Government funding sources

Local government receives funding and revenue from several major sources including:

- Rates on property.
- Fees, fines and charges.
- Borrowings, asset sales, donations, contributions, reimbursements and interest earned.
- Specific purpose grants from State and Commonwealth Governments, for funding specific projects or programs.
- General purpose grants from State and Commonwealth Governments that are not tied to a specific purpose.

State and Commonwealth Government grants are typically derived from a sharing of taxation revenue.
5.3 Local Government and Neighbourhood Houses

In Victoria local government plays an extensive role in funding, planning, coordinating and providing community support services, including Neighbourhood Houses.

Many Victorian council’s are strong supporters of Neighbourhood Houses and have assisted Neighbourhood Houses through their formative stages over the past 25 years in the areas of infrastructure provision and maintenance, operating grants, training and support and ongoing financial support.

The Neighbourhood Houses’ community development role and ability to respond to community need and initiatives are closely aligned with the role of local government in responding to their communities’ needs.

Many councils recognise the role Neighbourhood Houses play in:

• Facilitating citizens’ participation in community life.
• Taking social action to improve quality of life and well-being.
• Facilitating the capacity of community members to support each other.

Neighbourhood Houses are able to provide direct input to the advocacy and lobbying role of local government on behalf of their municipalities.

The interactive relationship between councils and Neighbourhood Houses is therefore an ongoing partnership which aims to achieve a coordinated response to community need.

5.4 Services provided

Local governments have a deep knowledge of their communities, extensive networks and the political authority, which enables them to be effective advocates. They are able to be more responsive, relevant and proactive on behalf of their communities than other levels of government.

Council services can be grouped in to the following broad categories:

• General public services.
• Health, welfare and community services.
• Planning and building services.
• Land and management services.
• Environment services.
• Infrastructure and asset management services.

The table on the following page provides a summary of services provide by local government and opportunities that may be relevant to the operations and partnership between local government and Neighbourhood Houses with the following diagram representing the framework under which local government operates.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Partnership opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| General Public Services    | • Emergency Protection  
• Tourism  
• Commerce & Industry  
• Community Information  | • Assistance with development of emergency evacuation plans for Centre.  
• Inclusion of Neighbourhood House programs and services in council publication i.e. directory, news sheets website.  
• Provides details of local business. |
| Health, Welfare and Community Services | • Aged Care Programs  
• Maternal & Child Health Services  
• Family & Children's Services  
• Youth Services  
• Cultural Development  
• Public Libraries  
• Leisure & Recreation Services  
• Housing/Public Health  
• Employment  
• Migrant & Indigenous | • Area usually with responsibility for liaison/management of Neighbourhood Houses.  
• Strategic development and planning including the co-operative identification of community need and demand as a means of guiding future service delivery model.  
• Greater understanding of opportunities for recurrent funding and one off grants to Neighbourhood Houses.  
• Co-operative development and management of service and occupancy agreements.  
• Creation of liaison position enabling strong links to be created between councils and Neighbourhood Houses.  
• Collaborative provision of programs and services.  
• Joint promotion of programs and services. |
| Planning                   | • Statutory Planning                                                   | • Provision of demographic information to ensure clear understanding of target markets.  
• Work collaboratively in the planning application for any capital works development or redevelopment.  
• Work collaboratively on developing key social and planning policies. |
| Environment and Land Use Management | • Waste Management  
• Catchment Management  
• Storm Water Management  
• Native Vegetation Management  
• Salinity & Water Quality  
• Water Re Use & Weed Management  
• Sustainability  
• Green Purchasing Programs  
• Rural Land Use Management  
• Native Title/Indigenous Cultural Heritage | • Co-operative liaison in relation to the Neighbourhood Houses daily operations i.e. waste removal, recycling etc.  
• Community education.  
• Role model for environmentally sustainable practices. |
| Infrastructure and Asset Management | • Asset Maintenance & Development  
• Road/footpath Construction & Maintenance  
• Traffic & Parking Management  
• Community Safety Measures  
• Public Space Maintenance | • Recurrent maintenance of the centre, surrounding grounds and car parks.  
• Cooperative development of capital works and future redevelopment priorities plans and budgets. |
Case study – New/Emerging partnerships

The seven Neighbourhood Houses based in the City of Banyule are currently working hard to strengthen their partnership with council.

Whilst six of the seven Neighbourhood Houses are located in council owned buildings none of the Neighbourhood Houses have received any ongoing financial support from council. Progress has been made towards finalising lease agreements.

The Neighbourhood Houses have a positive relationship with the nominated council officer who has a good understanding of what Neighbourhood Houses do. There are quarterly meetings with council officers to exchange information and provide mutual support.

As a cluster group, the Neighbourhood Houses have a desire to strengthen the partnership arrangements with council and to that end recently had the opportunity to present to all of the senior staff at council in order to raise awareness about each Neighbourhood House and the services provided. At the presentation the Neighbourhood Houses presented three ways that council could assist them.

- Resource the development of joint promotional material.
- Look at ways Banyule Council can support the sector in their negotiations with State Government for realistic funding.
- Investigate and develop a model for partnership between Banyule Council and the Neighbourhood Houses.

As a first step this was very positive with the Chief Executive Officer inviting the Neighbourhood Houses to present to all councillors in the near future. In addition the Neighbourhood Houses have also been invited to address Customer Service staff to educate them about the role and services provided by each centre.

These Neighbourhood Houses are in the early stages of developing a strong partnership where each party recognises the benefits and support that may be provided by the other party.
5.5 Local Government framework

The following diagram represents the framework under which local government operate.

Source: Adapted from The Neighbourhood House & Learning Centre Sector Framework, ANHLC, 2003
6 How to create a successful partnership

The following two key objectives are identified as critical in creating a successful partnership between local government and Neighbourhood Houses.

- **Council is committed to the services provided by Neighbourhood Houses and acknowledges the important role they play in supporting and strengthening local communities.**
- **Neighbourhood Houses have a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of local government and are willing to work cooperatively with council to achieve mutual goals and objectives.**

6.1 Building relationships

The following provides a range of tools under key headings that could be used in creating, enhancing and supporting ongoing partnerships between local government and Neighbourhood Houses.

(i) Creating Formal Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a mutually agreed service agreement, which identifies clear outcomes.</td>
<td>• Establish a mutually agreed service agreement which identifies clear outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a memorandum of understanding detailing polices, practices and procedures relevant to the operation of Neighbourhood Houses i.e. decision making and communication.</td>
<td>• Establish a charter that details the responsibility and role of local government and Neighbourhood Houses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a charter that details the responsibility and role of local government and Neighbourhood Houses.</td>
<td>• Meet all reporting obligations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advocate on behalf of Neighbourhood Houses to state and federal governments.</td>
<td>• Advocate on behalf of the local community to local and state government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Liaison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identify council officer responsible for coordination and liaison with Neighbourhood Houses.</td>
<td>• Establish regular meeting with identified council officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish regular meeting/contact with Neighbourhood House coordinator.</td>
<td>• Become familiar with the location of council offices and related services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish an agreed agenda identifying key areas for discussion.</td>
<td>• Make a commitment to provide input to broader community planning process and networking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visit the Neighbourhood Houses on a regular basis.</td>
<td>• Provides copies of term programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a resource/information kit identifying useful contacts within the organisation i.e. maintenance.</td>
<td>• Invite councillors and council staff to AGM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attend AGM/functions as requested.</td>
<td>• Keep council informed about new programs and emerging issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Facilitate opportunities for networking between Neighbourhood Houses and other community agencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide professional advice and support for managers/coordinators.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(iii) Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Houses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advocate on behalf of Neighbourhood Houses to state and federal governments about funding and service priorities.</td>
<td>• Advocate on behalf of the local community and local government to state and federal government about local needs and priorities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(iv) Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Houses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide regular information updates on council and community activities.</td>
<td>• Provide regular information updates on Neighbourhood House programs and activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Invite Neighbourhood Houses to promote activities in council publications i.e. community directory, news sheets, websites.</td>
<td>• Provide an area within the Neighbourhood House for the display of council information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide access to updated demographic and other planning data.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(v) Funding</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Houses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide information on both local government and external funding opportunities.</td>
<td>• Recognise the competing pressures on council’s limited financial resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide support in the preparation of funding applications.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide letters of support for funding applications to external organisations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(vi) Program and service development</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Houses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure Neighbourhood Houses are regularly consulted and represented on any facility or program development groups.</td>
<td>• Establish opportunities to assist council in meeting the community development objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Invite Neighbourhood House managers/coordinators to be part of community planning and policy development.</td>
<td>• Actively participate in council promotions and events. i.e. community festivals and information displays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(vii) Councillor Relations</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Houses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ensure information is provided to councillors about the programs and services offered by Neighbourhood Houses.</td>
<td>• Create a relationship with the ward councillor by inviting them to AGM/functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide regular information to councillors on outcomes and achievements of service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(viii) Facility and Resource Sharing</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Government</strong></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood Houses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify community resources available for use by Neighbourhood Houses.</td>
<td>• Invite council officers/councillors to make use of Neighbourhood House facilities for events/meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide access to support services such human resource management, occupational health and safety and risk management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide opportunities for staff/volunteer training and skill development.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Documentation

To assist with creating successful partnerships Neighbourhood Houses and local governments are encouraged to collaboratively establish a Memorandum of Understanding and a Service Agreement to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each partner and guide the ongoing relationship and service provision. Examples of these and related policy documents are available from ANHLC.

Appendix 1 of this document highlights some questions and issues that should be considered when establishing both the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Agreement.

Definitions

A Memorandum of Understanding is defined as a:

Document which details the mutually agreed objectives and community development outcomes of the services to be provided by both parties.

Service Agreement is defined as a:

Document which details the formal financial, reporting and accountability requirements of the partnership including the agreed measurable outcomes and funding arrangements for the operation of the service.

Case study – Shire of Yarra Ranges

Prior to 2002 council officers described the relationship with the 12 Neighbourhood Houses located within the Shire of Yarra Ranges as “fluctuating, but poor”.

The officer with key responsibility for Neighbourhood Houses took up the challenge to improve the relationship and address many of the grievances expressed by the Neighbourhood Houses and to address the existing funding inequities that had not been resolved since council amalgamations in 1996.

One of the strategies that this council used to improve and strengthen the relationship with Neighbourhood Houses was by developing a range of documentation to support and articulate council’s commitment to the sector.

A Strategy Development Working Group comprising representatives of council and the Neighbourhood Houses met over 2003 to develop a Partnership Strategy. This document had a focus on building better relationships not only between council and Neighbourhood Houses but also between each of the Neighbourhood Houses. It also aimed to examine ways to improve the use of available resources.

A Policy document was also developed which aimed to provide an integrated and coherent framework to support the shared role of council and the Yarra Ranges Neighbourhood House Group in the development of sustainable communities.

In 2003 the Neighbourhood Houses and council officers worked together to formalise consistent relationships between council and the individual Neighbourhood Houses which are expressed in a Memorandum of Understanding between council and each of the 12 Neighbourhood Houses. At the time of printing eleven of the Neighbourhood Houses have signed the document.

There is also a partnership agreement which expresses funding arrangements between council and Neighbourhood Houses and specifies outcomes in exchange for funding.

Whilst the relationship between council and the individual Neighbourhood Houses continues to fluctuate, the existence of documentation which expresses the expectations of all parties provides stability and clarity for all concerned.

The suite of documentation that has been developed in full consultation with each of the Neighbourhood Houses in the Shire of Yarra Ranges is available from ANHLC.
Appendix 1 – Practical tools

(i) Service agreement
The following provides some issues and questions for consideration when developing a service agreement

- What is the agreement for?
- The purpose of the partnership
- Identification of key stakeholders – who are the partners?
- What is the identified need?
- What are the strategies to be used?
- What are the expected outcomes?
- How will the outcomes be measured?
- What is the role and responsibility of the Neighbourhood House?
- What is the role and responsibility of the local government authority?
- What will be the meeting and communication processes?
- What are the management and staff resource requirements?
- What are the financial and accountability responsibilities?
- How will disputes be resolved?
- What will be the monitoring and review processes?
- How will risk be managed?
- What are the reporting requirements?

(ii) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
The following provides some issues and questions for consideration when developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

- Introduction
- Purpose and Scope of the MOU
- Parties to the MOU
- Context - MOU between council and Neighbourhood House group (what they are actually agreeing to?)
- Benefits
- Key Understandings
- Mutual Recognition and Respect
- Mutual Obligations and Support
- Mutual Accountability
Appendix 2 - Other useful resources

Documents
Humpage, L. *Building Victorian Communities: Outcomes of the Neighbourhood House & Learning Sector*, The Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University. Melbourne, 2005


Department of Human Services Neighbourhood House Coordination Program, Melbourne, Department of Human Services, 2002

Contacts
Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres (ANHLC)
Floor 9, Carlow House
289 Flinders Lane
MELBOURNE 3000
☎ 9654 1104
Website: [www.anhlc.asn.au](http://www.anhlc.asn.au)

Department for Victorian Communities
Level 14
1 Spring Street
MELBOURNE 3000
☎ 9208 3333
Website: [www.dvc.vic.gov.au](http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au)

Municipal Association of Victoria
Level 12
60 Collins Street
MELBOURNE 3000
☎ 9667 5555
Website: [www.mav.asn.au](http://www.mav.asn.au)

Adult and Community Further Education Board (ACFE)
Floor 3
1 Treasury Place
EAST MELBOURNE 3002
☎ 9637 2675
Website: [www.acfe.vic.gov.au](http://www.acfe.vic.gov.au)

Victorian Local Governance Association
Suite G06
60 Leicester Street
CARLTON 3053
☎ 93472233
Website: [www.vlga.org.au](http://www.vlga.org.au)

Relevant Websites
Appendix 3 - References

Adult and Community Further Education Board ACFE Website accessed on 13 July 2005 at http://www.acfe.vic.gov.au


Department of Human Services, *Neighbourhood House Coordination Program*, Melbourne, Department of Human Services, 2002


Humpage, L, *Building Victorian Communities: Outcomes of the Neighbourhood House & Learning Sector*. The Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University, Melbourne, 2005


Wettenhall, G and Alexander, K *Building Partnerships between Councils and their Communities*, Stegley Foundation & the Victorian Local Governance Association, 2000


Note: ANHLC is in the process of developing a general guide to partnerships with more detailed description and information on partnerships – their development, maintenance and benefits. This publication will be available in early 2006.
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State Government Victoria

The Department of Human Services