



BUDGET SUBMISSION 2024-25

# Future proofing Tasmania's Neighbourhood House Network

December 2023



Neighbourhood  
Houses  
Tasmania

## Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional and original owners of the land on which we work and meet, the palawa/pakana of lutruwita/Tasmania.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge that this land remains unceded.



## The Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Network

Neighbourhood Houses are places where people come together and find support, belonging and purpose and work with their local community to make a real difference in people's lives. Houses are run by the community, for the community and offer a wide range of programs and activities for local people. There are 34<sup>1</sup> state-funded Neighbourhood Houses located around Tasmania.



- |                  |                   |                      |                       |                    |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Phoenix        | 9 St Helens       | 17 Zeehan            | 24 Warrane Mornington | 30 Clarendon Vale  |
| 2 Burnie         | 10 Fingal Valley  | 18 Derwent Valley    | 25 Midway Point       | 31 Okines          |
| 3 Ulverstone     | 11 Starting Point | 19 Bridgewater (JRS) | 26 Dowsing Point      | 32 Dunalley Tasman |
| 4 Devonport      | 12 Newnham (NSCC) | 20 Gagebrook (JRS)   | 27 Karadi             | 33 Kingston        |
| 5 East Devonport | 13 Mowbray (NSCC) | 21 Risdon Vale       | 28 Goodwood           | 34 West Winds      |
| 6 Beaconsfield   | 14 Tresca         | 22 Bucaan            | 29 Rokeby             | 35 Geeveston       |
| 7 George Town    | 15 Deloraine      | 23 West Moonah       |                       |                    |
| 8 Dorset         | 16 Rosebery       |                      |                       |                    |

This submission has been prepared by Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania on behalf of its Members.

<sup>1</sup> Plus the Dowsing Point Neighbourhood House which is supported by the Commonwealth Department of Defense.

# Supporting Tasmania's Neighbourhood House Network

As the sector's peak body, NHT exists to support the Network to:

- provide policy and advocacy support,
- connect members with each other,
- share information and strategic opportunities
- embed safe, transparent and well managed processes and frameworks.

We represent a Network connecting communities, building resilience and delivering positive local outcomes.

Tasmania's 34-strong Neighbourhood House Network connects people in communities and transforms lives across the state. The Houses are also provide a welcoming open door for people negotiating the heavy social and economic pressures impacting our communities. We provide places where people feel safe and are respected when they are seeking support and connection.

In NHT's Budget Submission 1 – **Connecting communities, building resilience and delivering positive local outcomes**, we are seeking additional resources so that the Neighbourhood House Network can continue to build local capability and make a difference to the lives of thousands of Tasmanians each year.



*Neighbourhood Houses play an irreplaceable role in our communities and are the constant for many people in a world where not much else is reliable, stable, and consistent."*

— DPAC, REVIEW OF THE GOVERNANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES TASMANIA, NOVEMBER 2022. P1



This submission is about **Future proofing** the Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania (NHT) Network to effectively operate and respond to important priorities such as the Commission of Inquiry and the rising costs of living. Strong foundations will enable the Network to access diverse funding sources, foster good governance and build on community partnerships into the future. It complements the **Connecting communities** submission.



# Future proofing the Network

In 2022, the NHT Board and state government undertook a comprehensive review which delivered recommendations to find the right framework and culture for NHT while balancing the Network’s grassroots community-level work with appropriate skills, knowledge and governance at the Board level.

The Change Manager and NHT have implemented the Review’s ‘transitional phase’ recommendations<sup>1</sup> and the Network is poised to take the steps necessary towards its ‘future state’.

As of November 2023, NHT is building a solid foundation supported with strong buy-in and positive engagement from Network members. A new Constitution, a new Board, and a new CEO are in place.

The next stage is to fulfil the ‘future state’ as outlined in the Review Recommendations. While NHT is working hard within current resources to begin to address these essential tasks, key aspects of Phase 2 activities require additional resources:

- 1 Embed the recommendations of the NHT Independent Review
- 2 Embed Child and Youth Safe Organisation Framework
- 3 Introduce and embed business development and shared services

Task	Years 1–3 (2024–25, 2025–26 and 2026–27)	Subsequent years
1 Embed the recommendations of the NHT Independent review	\$121,000 /year	\$121,000 /year
2 Embed Child and Youth Safe Organisation Framework	\$179,000 /year	-
3 Introduce and embed business development support, partnerships and shared services	\$119,000 /year	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$419,000 /year + CPI/WPI</b>	<b>\$121,000 /year + CPI/WPI</b>

Detailed explanations of these requests are on the following pages.

<sup>1</sup> DPAC, Review of the Governance of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania, November 2022. p. 7.

NHT is ready to build stronger cultures, structures, systems, processes and operational efficiencies to future-proof Tasmania's Neighbourhood House Network.



*In a period so challenging, globally and locally, there is nothing more important right now than ensuring people in Tasmania living on low incomes have a strong united voice to government and know that someone has their back."*

— DPAC, REVIEW OF THE GOVERNANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES TASMANIA, NOVEMBER 2022. P 2

## 1 Embed the recommendations of the NHT Independent Review

**\$121,000 per year recurrent**

Phase 2 of fulfilling the Review Recommendations requires NHT, led by the new Board and CEO to embed a Code of Conduct, and constitutional changes, as well as structural, procedural and cultural changes. A new Strategic Plan and Strategic Framework for the Network are scheduled from 2024 and will be key to power the sector into a strong 'future state'.

Key activities

- Implementing a program of management and leadership training across the Network
- Supporting governance and fiduciary responsibilities.
- Consolidate the agreed core role of NHT as the Peak.
- Strengthening statewide and regional Network.
- Building capacity and measuring impact.



## 2 Embed Child and Youth Safe Organisation Framework

**\$179,000 per year for 3 years**

Under the legislation, Neighbourhood Houses must comply with the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework, which details what organisations must do to protect the wellbeing and safety of children they come into contact with. In complying with the Standards, Neighbourhood Houses must also provide an environment that ensures the right to cultural safety of children and young people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is respected.

Neighbourhood Houses are focussed on embedding the standards and quality management processes, in line with the Government's actions in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommendations. We are committed to making the children and young people we care for are safe by ensuring our systems stronger. We are also committed to embedding a culture where child safety is everybody's responsibility.

### Key activities

- Development of a full suite of best practice policies and procedures including training and skills development in the key areas of Aboriginal cultural competence, compliance, risk management, volunteer management.
- Network-wide compliance with the changes to the Fair Work Act.
- Support, coaching and mentoring for each House.

Part of this work is underway within core funds, however additional investment is required to ensure the Standards are fully adopted in each House.

## 3 Introduce and embed business development support, partnerships and shared services

**\$119,000 per year for 3 years**

Coordinate and leverage the collective power of the full NHT member Network.

### Key activities

- Improve access to resources across the Network and alleviate the burden of expecting each House coordinator to manage all aspects of specialised business skill areas.
- Facilitate opportunities to maximise buying power for the Network to provide efficiencies and economies of scale across shared operational and business systems such as human resources, information and communication technology, cyber security, insurance and finance functions.
- Identify and develop enterprise opportunities and partnerships with potential private and philanthropic funding sources. This will diversify Network funding and develop meaningful partnerships for the benefit of local people, NHT members and Tasmanian communities.



***We already have examples of Houses stepping up into revenue generating opportunities. With Government funding becoming tighter, we need to diversify our funding sources. We can start to ask ... how can we use the infrastructure in our sector to take up genuine business opportunities?"***

**— CHAIR OF A NORTHERN TASMANIAN HOUSE**

# Conclusion

**Significant investment has already been made into the Independent Review of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania. It is now time to take the next step in future proofing NHT and the Network.**

The NHT Board and staff, member Network, Change Manager, and State Government have all worked positively and collaboratively to achieve significant progress.

We are now in a position to mature the Network's procedural, operational and structural frameworks to build our 'future state'. Further investment as outlined in this submission will embed a culture of accountability, transparency and communication that will be more effective in building and serving Tasmanian communities, and keep the Network healthy, dynamic and sustainable into the future.





## Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania

### Our Vision

Thriving Tasmanian Communities

### Our Mission

To support and grow our member Network as leaders in place-based community development.

**NHT is the peak body representing  
Tasmania's 34-strong Network  
of Neighbourhood Houses.**



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