

Our stories

STORIES FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES AROUND TASMANIA

Everybody is worth something and sometimes a small nudge is all that is needed to change the lives of individuals and groups.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to all of the 35 Neighbourhood Houses, their volunteers, committees, and staff, across Tasmania for the hard work being done in and with their communities. This booklet is a showcase of just some of the many great stories that reveal how Neighbourhood Houses are making a difference across the State. It has been a privilege for the Neighbourhood House Team to compile and present this showcase, and we sincerely thank you all.

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania acknowledges the support from the Tasmanian Government through the Department of Health and Human Services.



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Front cover: Quote from Blackie, Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre, Ready Set Go Coordinator. Photo from Hilltop Fresh Produce project, Burnie Community House.

Our stories

STORIES FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES AROUND TASMANIA

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Dutch Cream potatoes from a local supplier at Hilltop Fresh Produce, Burnie Community House.

Stories of Us: Showcasing Success in Tasmanian Communities

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania (NHT) is the Peak Body for Tasmania's 35 Neighbourhood Houses.

Saying that NHT is proud to produce this booklet of stories about the achievements of Houses is an understatement. At NHT, we are always overwhelmed, inspired and in awe of the changes in people's lives and communities that the Houses constantly achieve. They back-up year after year, pulling in resources from wherever they can, staying in tune with their communities, responding to their needs, alert for great ideas coming from people and constantly supporting people to do things that make their community a better, safer, more enriching place to be.

The Houses are the warm and generous heart of their communities. Neighbourhood Houses help to create networks to support individuals and families. They provide a place for people to go and feel part of a community, where everyone is welcomed and where people can learn new skills, be a part of a group, meet new friends, volunteer, and give back to their community.

What happens in a Neighbourhood House?

Neighbourhood Houses are not about "service delivery". They are "run by the community for the community". They work from a community development framework which essentially is about people coming together, uniting around a concern or an opportunity in their local community, and working together to act. In short, it is local people working together to address the needs of their community.

What do Houses do?

Across the State, Houses work with their communities to create community gardens, community/men's sheds, food relief programs, literacy and numeracy support programs, community lunches, and events. They are also agents for No Interest Loans Scheme, playgroups, parent support groups...and so much more. These are all the things that bring people in the door and then they are pathways to so much more.

The Houses
are run by the
community for
the community.

How many people use Neighbourhood Houses?*

On average **233 people** use each House each week. **7922 people** across Tasmania

113 people participate in programmed activities at each House per week. **3842** across Tasmania

16 people volunteer at each House in a week, or **554 volunteers** across Tasmania, contributing **2,245 volunteer hours** per week

340 participants/ students across Tasmania were assisted with transition to further education in the last year

102 volunteers were assisted with transitioning to further education in the previous year across Tasmania

170 participants/ students were assisted with transition to paid work across Tasmania

50 volunteers were assisted with transition to paid work in the last year across Tasmania

*From Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association survey 2012. Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association is the National Peak Body for Neighbourhood Houses.

ON AVERAGE IN 2012

7,922

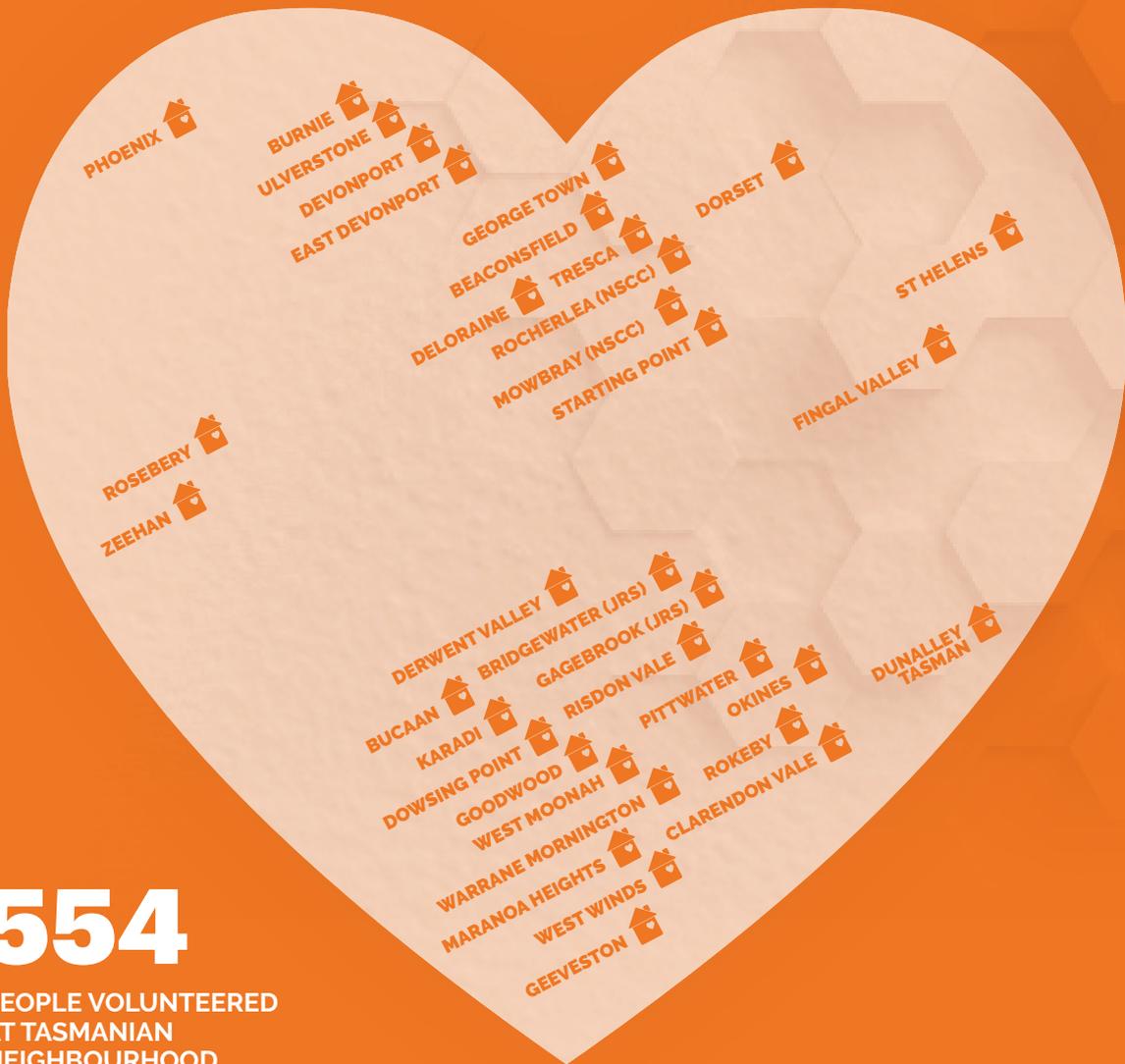
PEOPLE ACCESSED
TASMANIAN
NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSES EACH WEEK

3,842

PEOPLE PARTICIPATED
IN TASMANIAN
NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSE PROGRAMS EACH
WEEK

170

PARTICIPANTS/
STUDENTS WERE
ASSISTED WITH
TRANSITION TO
PAID WORK



554

PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED
AT TASMANIAN
NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSES EACH WEEK

THEY CONTRIBUTED

2,245

HOURS PER WEEK

... **50**

WERE ASSISTED
WITH TRANSITION
TO PAID WORK

AND **102**

WERE ASSISTED
WITH TRANSITION TO
FURTHER EDUCATION



Volunteers at Bucaan Community Garden.

Why do we need to tell these stories?

Behind the ordinary bricks and mortar facades of Neighbourhood Houses really extraordinary things are happening. What is amazing is the great impact that the Houses have, and what happens is not "tricky" or expensive and may not even seem remarkable in and of itself – it is acceptance, welcome, inclusion, a smiling face, someone to talk to, getting involved at the person's own pace – *not* having to answer a lot of questions or fill out a referral form – and being able to contribute in small or big ways.

This results – over time – in confidence, a sense of belonging, a safe place that is just there, friendships, hope, pathways and ultimately the community benefits and grows from all of these very subtle, perhaps very ordinary occurrences that allow people, as Peter* puts it, the "chance to become who they were before".

Out of their volunteering at Neighbourhood Houses, community members constantly talk about how the House has helped build their confidence, connect/reconnect them with their community and learn new skills. This has been the starting point for so many people from low income and isolated communities to progress onto training and employment.

These stories are moving, amazing and real.

This booklet adds to the 2015 collection of stories about the people, the work and the communities of Neighbourhood Houses called *It's a Starting Point* (you can see it on the NHT website). Often NHT and Houses feel that our place-based community development model is regarded as unsophisticated and unprofessional...well these stories show that the difference that can be made by communities for community is profound, real and sustainable.

A service delivery model will never achieve what Houses can and do!

Go to:
nht.org.au
for more about the
Neighbourhood
House Network in
Tasmania.

**Peter is a participant at a Neighbourhood House whose story is part of It's a Starting Point and is summarised here in this booklet.*

 *I became involved with the project because I wanted to make new friends, which I have.*

Reginal Green



Participants of the Bucaan Community Garden project.

 We learnt that a great idea, community spirit, partnership and drive can achieve almost anything.

Mary-anne Evans, Bucaan,
Community House Coordinator

Peter's Story

A FOUR-YEAR JOURNEY

Having "had depression pretty bad", Peter was quite isolated at home, "scared shitless" about interacting with people – his life had become focussed on his veggie garden and contact with one neighbour. This neighbour told him about the Neighbourhood House at Ravenswood, near where he lived. Peter had not known it was there, but someone from the House came to his place to pick up extra veggies that Peter had grown. Peter started going to the House for short visits to start with, before panicking and heading home. Over a long time, Peter found that he felt comfortable enough to gradually get involved, and he hasn't looked back!

Right from the start, the people at the House made Peter feel welcome. This helped him to mingle with other people – he started volunteering to do "little bits and pieces" for the House, and he was soon invited to become a member of the Board of Management of the House. Peter then took on official roles on the Board, reviewed and rewrote the House's constitution, became head gardener at the Pioneer Parade community garden, completed a Cert 2 in Community Services, started teaching others about the value of fresh fruit and vegetables, and has been a key player in the expansion of the garden!

Peter says that the Neighbourhood House was a place where "all you've got to do is come through that door and help will be offered".

Having somewhere to go where someone just asked how he was going – without pushing anything on him – was like "walking inside to your family". Now Peter is paying it forward by offering a friendly greeting to others who may be where he was all that time ago. Having lived through a tough time, Peter has a deep understanding of how to reach out to people who might just need someone to listen to them. He gets it that "a kind person, who's been through the mill can give someone a chance to get close to what they used to be before they got depression or anxiety or whatever..."

With the support of the Neighbourhood House, Peter has been able to reclaim his life, and then be big enough to help others to do the same, while giving back to the House along the way. It doesn't get much better than that.

 All you've got to do is come through that door and help will be offered.

Peter Richards



🏠 Things wouldn't happen in the Neighbourhood House if it wasn't for the volunteers, and that's 100% true.

Ravenswood Neighbourhood House, *It's a Starting Point 2015*

A Neighbourhood House is. . .

🏠 The hub of our community. It is a central meeting place for contact and a chat. The House is somewhere to join in. It is that central meeting place that is the doorway to friendships, information, support and fun.

🏠 A place where ideas are acted on. It is a place of learning, a hot bed of community action and activity. The House is a place to participate in community life.

🏠 A safe place with people that care. Houses help families who need support, and provide a place for kids. The House is our Community's glue.

Identity consultation feedback, 2008

🏠 I think that the House filled a lot of gaps in the community. So seeing your community health and wellbeing improve is just a wonderful bonus through filling all of those gaps.

Phoenix Community House, *It's a Starting Point 2015*



🏠 All of a sudden I'm back in my community and contributing. But no one badgered me about my story; no one treated me as a service recipient. They just let me come and be, and talk as much or as little as I like.

Community Garden volunteer 2015

Dunalley Tasman Food Co-op

DUNALLEY TASMAN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

PROJECT PARTNER: OKINES COMMUNITY HOUSE



After discovering there was a need in the Dunalley region for healthy and affordable local food options, we partnered with Okines to develop a Co-op. The aim of the project was to deliver good quality food as well as educate families about healthier options and provide opportunities for people to engage with their community by volunteering.

The Co-op provides people with a local shopping option, reducing the amount of time they need to travel to larger supermarket chains. The food is also high quality and healthy, with minimal added chemicals and reduced packaging (people bring their own containers).

The Co-op allows us to educate people face-to-face about the different uses for food, expose them to foods they might not have experienced before, and help them understand the importance of nutrition and how to cook new foods so that they may enjoy them as part of their regular diet.

People are also able to volunteer at the Co-op. The enterprise remains community-driven, and as well as social inclusion provides people with opportunities to gain experience in customer service, general social interactions, handling of goods, pricing, labelling, signage, and money handling.

As the Co-op has grown we have gained feedback from the community as to what they want to see sold and how we can better meet their needs.

Our Co-op has become a focus point which people from all walks of life contribute to and enjoy. We have seen many community members discover something new, and people swap experiences and recipes.

We think that this is a clear demonstration of how people will get involved and take ownership of a project if they are allowed – and encouraged – to direct the difference they will make in their community.

 You should never underestimate a community, and how people in a community will always surprise you with their renewed energy and commitment to community projects.

Adele Skeggs, Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House



Community4Community

EAST DEVONPORT COMMUNITY HOUSE

PROJECT PARTNERS: EAST DEVONPORT CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE, PRIMARY HEALTH TASMANIA

We identified and recruited community leaders, or 'champions,' in East Devonport in order to reach disadvantaged and disengaged families – and in doing so improve access to health and wellbeing services and programs for children under 12 and their families.

 People given time to develop and learn new skills at their own pace in an environment where they have ownership and control will flourish.

Tracey Carter, East Devonport Community House Coordinator

East Devonport is an important region to focus on, as it has a Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas count of 803, and 36.9% of households receive less than \$516 per week. Gambling is the highest here in the whole State of Tasmania. 27.06% of 20-24 year olds are unemployed (Census 2011) – over 11% have no transport and 18% of the community live in government housing. 91.9% of people in our community do not eat an adequate amount of vegetables each day to ensure reasonable health (TML).

Additionally, those who need the help, support and services that the House can provide the most, those who are really struggling, are often the most difficult for the House to engage with.

Over the course of two years we trained 11 community leaders.

They learnt what the Community House provided, attended workshops with service providers, and took emergency hampers to struggling families.

They shared their knowledge with their networks in person, on Facebook, at the football, whilst waiting for their children to finish school and during their private life.

The Leaders become a trusted source of information, letting people know that engagement with the House is made as easy as possible – no forms to fill in, no waiting lists; the doors are open.

The Leaders became increasingly aware of the needs of long-term residents as well as newcomers to the area. They introduced new people to the Community House, referred people directly to service providers and gave support.

What we did not expect was the impact on the personal journeys of the Community Leaders - it took them to newfound confidence, barriers were overcome, many found paid employment or started long term study and some are seeking home ownership.

In additions to this, one third of attendees to Community House events now are those people who were initially hardest to reach – they are now and remain engaged.



Community Meal, July 2015

Ready Set Go-Learner Driver Mentoring

CLARENDON VALE, ROKEBY, WARRANE MORNINGTON, AND RISDON VALE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

PROJECT PARTNERS: CLARENCE CITY COUNCIL, CLARENCE PLAINS YOUTH CENTRE



This project began in 2006 when we identified a need for improved transport facilities within the City of Clarence. Families and individuals had a common problem with transport to and from schooling, shopping, medical appointments, employment interviews, and their everyday work places. There was no clear solution in sight.

It was apparent that not having a drivers license meant that a person's chances of employment were low. Long delays were being experienced between the availability of public transport and set appointment times. The use of taxis as transport was an expensive option and not viable for most residents.

In addition, the cost of driving lessons and the number of lessons required was prohibitive.

Constant requests for assistance with transport by local Neighbourhood Houses highlighted this problem.

Through consultation with the Clarence City Council, Clarence Plains Youth Centre, the four Neighbourhood Houses throughout the city and other interested parties, a plan was formulated to assist less privileged community members to gain their Provisional Licenses at minimal cost. A working group was formed, funding sought and gained, volunteer mentor drivers recruited, and a vehicle purchased.

The program was initially run from Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre, and then transferred to Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre.

49 participants have since gained their licenses and experienced substantial lifestyle changes – often in the areas of education and employment.

We've also found that it is not just the individuals who benefit, but in most cases their families also gain independence, and take an increased part in community functions as a family group.

 No-one is worth nothing. Everybody is worth something and sometimes a small nudge in the right direction is all that is needed to change the lives of individuals and groups.

Blackie, Ready Set Go Coordinator



No licence = no job independence.



Day Centre Lunch

BUCAAN COMMUNITY HOUSE

PROJECT PARTNER: HACC

Over twenty years ago the community recognised a need for social activities for socially isolated senior members of the community.

We successfully applied for HACC funding to deliver services that meet the needs of the under and over 65 year olds. These services include a day centre, meals, transport, home maintenance, and domestic assistance.

The community members in question are often totally disconnected from supports and do not have any social contact between attendances at the House. The lunch program helps them maintain their health and well-being, and their capacity to remain independent.

We continue to run the Day Centre Lunch.

🏠 For me, it's the friendships. I live on my own and having this social experience has been a comfort to me. I look forward to every Friday.

Barbara Reid

🏠 After my husband passed away I needed to become involved with other people besides my family. I go to lunches each Friday and on the fortnightly bus trips, which are always very enjoyable and lots of laughs. After attending activities at the House I realised that there were so many other folk feeling the same as me.

Barbara Jones

Barb Jones with Easter Bunny and Annette Smith (deceased).



Pat Meaghan, Barbara Reid, Margaret Adderton, Robyn Pitt and Flo Hunt.



L2P-Learner Driver Mentoring

NORTHERN SUBURBS COMMUNITY CENTRE (ROCHERLEA AND MOWBRAY)

The aim of L2P is to assist young people aged between 16-30 living in the northern suburbs of Launceston to gain 50 driving hours to obtain their provisional license.

In partnership with community organisations, local and State government, we provide a free and easily accessible service based within the community.

As with most community service organisations, our valued volunteers are the backbone of all that we offer. Being able to recruit, train and support Volunteer Mentor Drivers is a key to the success of this program.

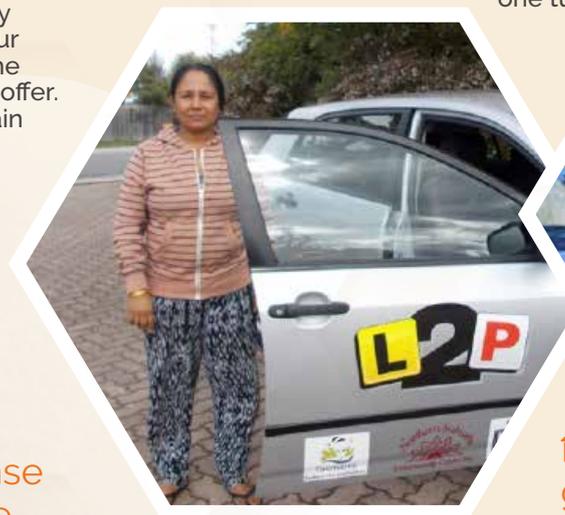
🏠 The biggest change we have seen through the L2P Program is a sense of independence for individuals and families with the transport barrier being removed.

Richard Ford-King, Community Centre Coordinator

Whilst the primary target group was young disadvantaged people who do not have the necessary support structure (parents, carers, affordability, access to a car) the program goal has taken a whole of community approach to addressing the needs of local communities in the northern Launceston region.

In a broader sense, the L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program provides a positive tool to assist disadvantaged communities break the cycle of economic and social disadvantage.

We have been able to offer further support to Learner Driver Mentees through the Everyday Literacy Program at the Centre and assist with Driver Theory and one-on-one tutoring.



Krishna Rimal.



🏠 I needed to get my license to support my family ... I got my P license and I was so happy and grateful ...

Robert Rai

🏠 It gave me and my family independence and assisted me to gain employment.

Cerig Fox



Diane's Story

A STARTING POINT

Diane is a full time volunteer at the Maranoa Heights Community Centre (the House) and has previously been on the Board of Management. Diane does woodworking, provides help to people needing help though the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) and by managing the Food Program. She also attends conferences and has a busy life away from the House as well.

But life for Diane was not always like this. Diane tells her story of not so long ago, living with depression, being isolated at home, of frequent hospitalisations, and being scared to meet with people.

Then, Diane found her local House for the first time, and made a brief, brave visit there. What Diane found was a welcoming atmosphere, no-fuss encouragement and friendly people. Slowly and as her confidence and trust built up, Diane found herself able to come back to the House more often, do more things, face some fears, and then find it in herself to help others.

For Diane, the people at the House didn't care about her issues and failings, didn't care if she was having a "bad day", they welcomed her and she felt accepted. Diane now feels she is part of her community and is able to help others on a similar journey.

The Neighbourhood House was Diane's starting point to move from isolation to connectedness, a welcoming place to re-discover strengths, develop skills, expand horizons, help others and form friendships.

🏠 I think that is the thing I have noticed the most about the Community Centre, is the everyday people that come through the door, their stories, the changes and the little bits we can do here to help people, not just the physical things but the talking, sitting down and having a chat with someone, it might be the only chat they get for the week, you know what I mean?

We might forget that sometimes, everyone has a story and they need someone to listen to it.

Diane Bowerman

It's Not Okay

DEVONPORT COMMUNITY HOUSE AND ULVERSTONE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

PROJECT PARTNER: SOROPTIMIST'S DEVONPORT

People affected by domestic violence in our region expressed a need to know that they weren't alone in their predicament. It was apparent that various forms of domestic violence were not immediately recognised and victims did not know what to do, nor where to go for help.

Following consultation our House became passionate about creating an awareness booklet to help with this issue.

The community identified the need for the booklet to be small, discreet and easily understood with limited wording, using pictures or cartoon figures to illustrate domestic violence and run with the common message – *It's Not Ok*. Some major signs of domestic violence were chosen to be highlighted with wording straight to the point. Age and gender was taken into consideration within the booklet, with statistics provided showing the effect of domestic violence within the community. Every

referral service provider was contacted to ensure availability with more than just an answering machine.

Information and referral is an important part of our service, and the booklet provided an opportunity for those with low literacy levels to access information in an understandable way.

As part of this project we found that responses to family violence focus mainly on females, where one in three people victimised by family violence are male.

Illustrating violence in its various forms through cartoon format and giving people an opportunity to have their say in written form was very important.

Since the booklet launch we have had a number of people present at both Houses with family violence issues. Staff have been able to provide referrals and hand out the booklet for reference. The booklet has provided the opportunity for discussion and the perception that Neighbourhood Houses can provide a safe place to come and chat about domestic violence.

Empowering community encourages people to talk, including perpetrators, victims and children allowing empathy and understanding to flow. Neighbourhood Houses bring along the wider community in helping all to understand this issue through promoting and distributing the booklet.

 The community contributed with heartfelt quotes from their own experiences.

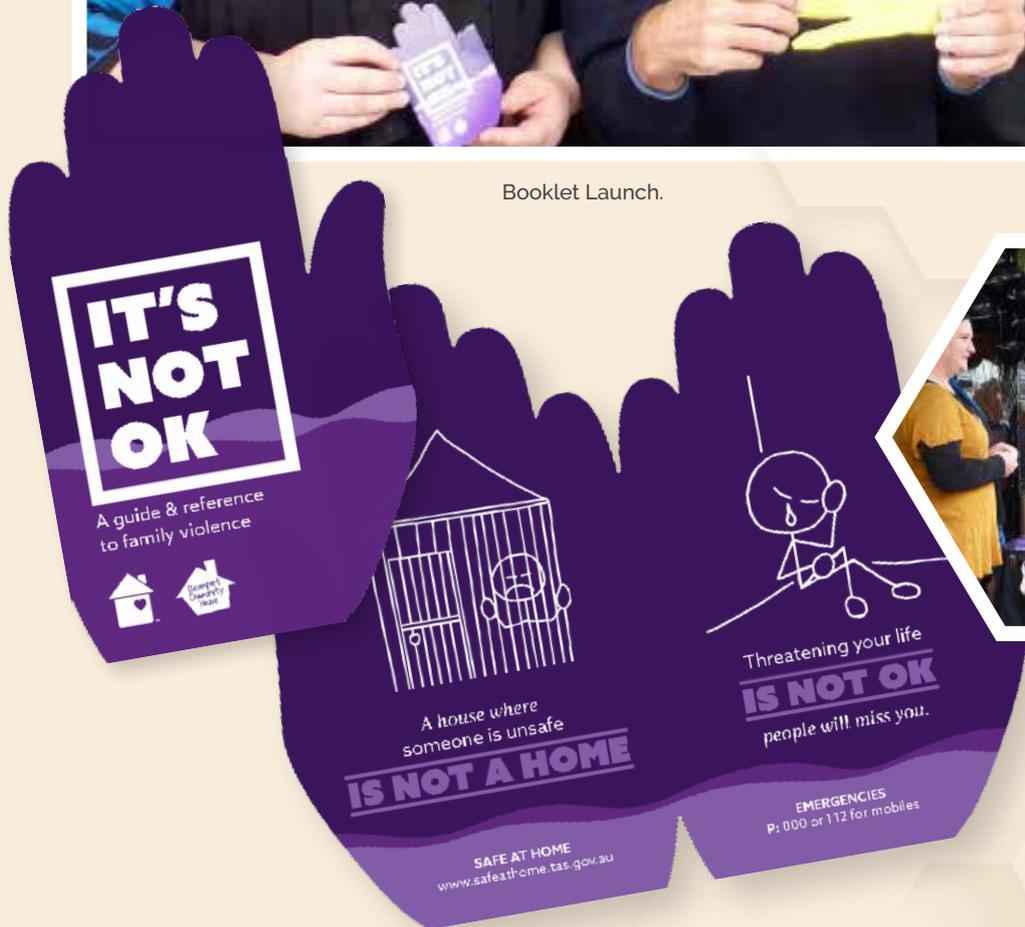
Katrina Rose (pictured right),
Devonport Community House



Katrina Rose and Simon Douglas, Ulverstone Neighbourhood House Coordinator.



Booklet Launch.



Hilltop Fresh Produce

BURNIE COMMUNITY HOUSE



Hilltop Fresh Produce Project aims to address food insecurity and underemployment in Shorewell Park, Burnie – one of the most disadvantaged communities in Australia.

With the community we have designed and developed a sustainable community food hub, which is working to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents by increasing access to good quality, fair priced fresh produce. Through the four arms of the project we offer multi faceted accredited skills training and pathways to employment. In partnership with Tas TAFE we have developed a learning framework offering accredited training in Production Horticulture, Hospitality, Retail and Food Operations.

 The evolution of whole families moving from saying 'We don't do veggies' to now enthusiastically embracing healthy fresh produce has been thought-provoking.

Linda Jackson,
Burnie Community House

Jobseekers and volunteers are working tirelessly in the commercial market garden at Tas Tafe's Freer Farm which continues to supply the community store with seasonal vegetables. To date, over twenty plus varieties of veggies have found a place on the shelves; and this continues to grow, especially now with the addition of our new hot houses.

Hilltop Community Store & Cafe customer base and sales are on the increase since opening in April 2015, offering local and Tasmanian produce as well as tasty nutritious food products and meals; with nearly all food items coming from our own catering business. We are fast becoming a social inclusion hub cutting across the generations offering a warm and inviting place to spend time with friends, family, other customers and of course the team.

Our business Hilltop Catering, can now proudly boast regular customers from local businesses, community organisations and clubs within the Burnie environs. This year we were delighted to be awarded the contract to run the Burnie Primary School Canteen, which allows us the opportunity to work with the Tasmania Canteen Association to deliver the very best food options to the school and develop our food hub model across the region.

Another great outcome from running the canteen is that it has created a full-time permanent position for one of our jobseekers and a venue for learning for a small team of suitable volunteers.

Since November 2014 through to December 2015, we have seen 32 of 55 of our volunteers and jobseekers gain fulltime, part time or casual work; with more keen to take a valuable place in the workforce as opportunities arise from within the project.

We continue to promote the value of healthy cooking, eating, smart shopping, budgeting and simple exercise using structured programs such as the Foodcents Journey, Garden to Plate and Community Kitchens as well as bringing in food experts to directly work with the community in various ways. We also operate a free community run Fresh Produce Shed from the House five days a week. In partnership with City Mission Kitchen we offer from the House free take-home or eat in meals each week. BCH provide Kommunity Kids Shorewell Park with a range of healthy nutritious food options such as hearty veggie soups, fruit yogurt cups and veggie sticks and dips to name a few. Our focus is to support the community create positive futures for themselves.





🏠 I thought it was time to do something for myself, support others, and I enjoy being at the Community House...I've never been employed so this is my first job. Twelve months have gone and I've enjoyed every moment. I have enjoyed working with others...I've made new friends.

Melissa Mason



Sustainable Living

ROSEBERY COMMUNITY HOUSE

PROJECT PARTNER: TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FUND



This project is important to us because our towns are declining in numbers, shops are closing and the produce we get from the local supermarket isn't always that fresh. There is no transport in the town to be able to go to other places.

We wanted to create a place where community members could come together and use the garden, connect socially with each other and of course obtain fresh, healthy produce.

 We knew the community wanted the garden and when all the equipment and supplies arrived we didn't expect the amount of volunteers we got! Over 20 volunteers adults and children showed up to help us make our vision a reality, and we still have regular volunteers who help maintain the garden.

Bronwyn Chandler, Rosebery Community House Coordinator

We have been up and running for a couple of months and have successfully provided the community with access to fresh produce. We have been teaching people how easy it can be to grow your own food and giving out recipes that contain products from our garden for the people to cook at home, as well as running eat-well-for-less cooking lessons.

We feel that we have also created a stronger bond between the Community House and the community – the garden has created a positive attitude within the town and is giving people a reason to get active and involved in their community.

Tourists to the area love the garden, asking questions, giving donations and buying some of the produce.

All this has been made possible from one little idea!

 I enjoy gardening and wanted to help in the community. The most important thing I took away from this project was interacting with the tourists who enjoy the garden too.

Margaret Powell



Employment of Family Support Worker

WEST MOONAH COMMUNITY HOUSE



Over recent years we have identified the need to employ a Family Support Worker because people were expressing support and counselling needs that existing staff weren't qualified or available to provide.

Many in the community regard the West Moonah Community House as their "safe haven". They prefer to engage in services within this trusted network instead of being referred to external providers where long waiting lists, transport issues, and prohibitive costs often apply.

 I feel more supported in identifying and achieving my life goals. I enjoy a more collaborative, less fractious relationship with my ex-husband, am better equipped to parent my children, and employ more assertive, less aggressive communication skills at work.

Name withheld

For the West Moonah Community House to provide the most appropriate and relevant services to the community, it was important to respond to as wide a scope of identified needs as possible, including a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse appropriate service.

In order to set up counselling and support services we organised a major fundraiser. We hosted a Wellness Gala Dinner in 2015 which raised over \$10,000 in profit. Those funds were then used to employ a Family Support Worker for one day per week for an initial period of 12 months, commencing in February 2016.

The West Moonah community immediately engaged in our new services – ongoing counselling sessions as well as monthly workshops that focus on preventative health and wellbeing.

Many clients have recommended the quality, professional service to others, reflecting their further trust, engagement, and embrace of Family Support Worker services at the West Moonah Community House.



Rose Jones, the new Family Support Worker.



Ant's Story

HOW BUILDING BIKES CAN BUILD LIVES

Fixing bikes, yeah...so how does fixing bikes bring kids from disengagement with school, angry behaviour or lack of confidence to a point where they see themselves as contributing, connected and skilled people, able to solve problems and plan for a future?

Anthony Edler has worked with young people for many years, and he recognises that finding a way to get them interested in something is just the starting point for so much more.

Ant has built more than bikes with these kids and for his community. He has built self-esteem and self-confidence, and has enabled young people to be proud of what they can do. And young people who have succeeded at something can then go on to succeeding at other things; they are equipped and ready to do that.

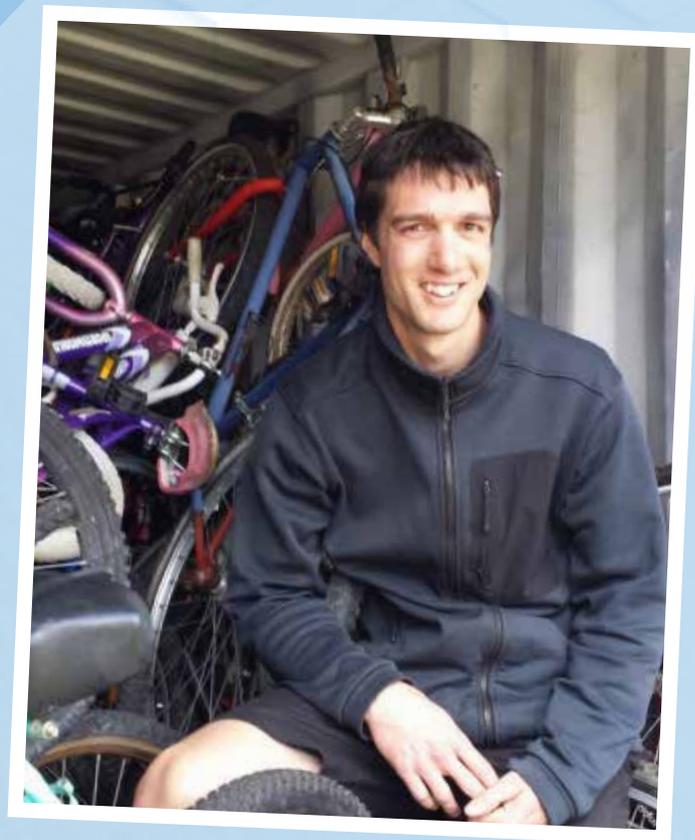
Ant has also built strong partnerships for the Project and for his community that make things better for everyone. Ant works with local Council, community organisations like Anglicare and the Migrant Resource Centre, volunteers, mentors, schools and of course, the pivotal point which is the Neighbourhood House, at Risdon Vale.

But there is another level to Ant's vision and his work with the local kids fixing bikes at Risdon Vale that is beyond awesome. Many of the bikes are shipped off to Africa so that people in places like Namibia can have transport – or so that their kids can have a bike to ride.

The Risdon Vale kids see the photos of their bikes in Africa and they know that they are working "in the world" to make it a better place. The impact that has on kids who might think the odds are stacked against them can be immense!

Ant has seen that impact – he talks about seeing shifts in attitudes, kids developing respect for others, and realising the value of going to school. Fixing bikes together and talking about what is happening; setting goals, developing skills, becoming ready for work, connecting socially and recreationally, and feeling a part of something bigger than yourself is how building bikes helps to build lives.

Post Script: Anthony Edler was recognised for his work with young people, mentors and volunteers at the Risdon Vale Bike Collective when he was awarded the 2016 City of Clarence Citizen of the Year in February 2016.



Community Garden

PITTWATER NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Food security and lack of appropriate nutrition has been of concern for Pittwater Neighbourhood House for some time – many children come to the House and are hungry. We give out items from Second Bite every week and often have requests for food, which sometimes we can provide, and other times are unable to.

When talking to the community it became apparent that fresh food was less and less part of their diet. In years gone by everyone had their little vegetable patch to augment their diet. However growing your own is a dying skill – many do not know how to garden.

This led us to create a Community Garden.

Once permissions to have the land we needed had been obtained from Council we formed a small steering group and started seeking funding. Veranto, playgroup and the local childcare centre were among the community groups keen to be involved.

🏠 Children often cannot even identify everyday vegetables when they are growing . . . 'Real peas come out of the freezer via the supermarket . . . not out of the dirty old garden!'

Jo Roland, Pittwater Neighbourhood House

Working bees to fence the site and to put up a shed were the first things we did.

We created a mix of privately rented beds, beds owned by community organisations and beds managed by the House to provide vegetables for our food programs and to give away to or sell as appropriate.

We also looked for ways to make above ground garden beds – to make access easy for older people or those with a disability.

🏠 I have learnt that a self-sustaining garden offers a great service to the community.

Gary Mills, volunteer President Garden Committee (pictured)



It has been great to see the joy on the face of some of our regular visitors from Veranto who grow produce for themselves.

The garden has also encouraged new people to come in to see what else we do. New volunteers are enjoying themselves in the garden, and people often come forward to donate items – a greenhouse, tanks for garden beds, bark for paths, seedlings, etc. We really believe we are growing community as well as plants and this is supporting our families who are isolated or in need.

We are now planning to start a food co-op and to enlarge the garden to allow for extra produce.

Come and Try Day

RISDON VALE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

PROJECT PARTNER: CLARENCE STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

Our community has recently been concerned about illegal and unsafe trail bikes.

Trail bike riders are regularly found on the streets of our communities on unregistered bikes, without licenses, without helmets, or with pillion passengers, and there are reports of near misses with other traffic on the road.

In response to this we organised an event at the Cambridge Moto Park to encourage safe riding habits and understanding of legal issues. We were specifically interested in educating young members of our communities.

We broadly promoted the safe places that people are able to ride a trail bike and tried to improve public awareness of the requirements of the sport.

Another focus was to break down the barriers for a small number of young people to access motocross and provide extra support to engage them in legal riding activities.

We have now developed a Trail Bike Working Group which looks at diversion, enforcement and education.

While trail bikes continue to be an issue in the area, the community now has more control and is better educated to enable us to deal with the trail bikes when they are reported on the streets. We have three local police officers in our community who are very supportive of community and also take the time to speak to riders and encourage them to connect in to other programs and activities in the community.

🏠 We had at least 87 trail bike riders at the event . . . more than half were there for the first time. They were inspired to see the calibre of riders present . . . and one boy said "this is my first ride without being chased by police". We received positive feedback from parents and kids and more Come and Try Day events will be organised in the future.

Ann Harrison, Risdon Vale Neighbourhood Centre Coordinator



Youth Fiesta

OKINES COMMUNITY HOUSE

It was very obvious to us, as we researched our targets and priorities for the year, that youth were not accessing the Okines Community House and its programs. It was also obvious that this needed to be remedied and that steps had to be taken to strengthen our interaction and relationships with young people. The Youth Fiesta idea was developed to provide an initial contact with a wide range of youth in the area and introduce them to the House and the opportunities that we offer. It was set to run as part of national Youth Week. Funding was obtained through ... and this enabled us to arrange a variety of free activities as a way of enticing as many young people to engage as possible. We had hip hop dance, tie-dyeing, screen

printing, surfboard repair and mosaic workshops; however the most popular was by far the pizza workshop. Around 100 pizzas were made on the day and provided free to young people who attended. A barista taster workshop ran throughout the day with many taking the opportunity to test their abilities on a professional coffee machine, producing numerous cups of coffee and hot chocolate for all. Also present were service providers and stalls. The entertainment ranged from skating and circus performances and musicians, with a favourite being the open mic session in the Community Garden. This allowed several local young musicians to perform in a comfortable and safe public space.

Overall, the Youth Fiesta was a huge success and attended by about 400 young people, with the overwhelming feedback being they wanted more events like this and that most of them were generally more aware of what Okines Community House could offer them.

The efforts of all were formally recognised with the award of Community Event of the Year through the Sorell Council's Australia Day Awards.



JODI LAW Foundation

BRIDGEWATER COMMUNITY CENTRE



The JODI LAW (Justice On Domestic Issues Legally Assisting Women) Foundation was established in 2014 and is committed to keeping women safe.

The project developed after community member Jodi Eaton was murdered.

There was a significant shift in attitude and tolerance in our community against violence and there was a group of women that really wanted to do something to make a difference. A working group met at our Community House every fortnight to work on strategies to create a safe space for conversation, and to set goals for the future of the group.

We became aware of the need for more education around domestic violence, in schools and in the community, to change the culture around victims and offenders. We are aware of the many levels of domestic violence in our community and that not all of it is physical violence.

This is a high priority in our community as many people have been affected and still are being affected. The group wanted to support and assist victims of family violence and highlight the importance of community conversations about abuse and neglect.

One great outcome has been the support that the group members give each other, as it is more than just talk, and has been a significant empowering tool for us. The group have discussed some of their own domestic violence history and shared the impact that it has had on themselves and their families and how they worked through it. They talked about what worked well for them and their families and were able to identify things that needed to be done differently to keep them and their families safe in the future.

Tasmanian politicians listened to our stories. Samara Debnam was invited to the Tasmanian Government Family Violence Action Plan workshop, contributing ideas toward a comprehensive and effective plan aiming to develop a safer Tasmania in the future.

The group have organised community events that allow people to publicly demonstrate their support against violence in our community:

- Walk Against Violence, attended by over 50 community members
- An annual Candlelight Memorial to remember and acknowledge all victims of violence across Australia.

Samara has worked tirelessly on the project and gained many qualifications along the way that will help her continue to drive the project.

As a result of the project we have seen a change in culture and attitude towards domestic violence and a greater understanding of family violence in our community.

We think early intervention through education is key, and our goals include having safety education written into the state curriculum.

As Samara says, "It has been great for our community to stand up and have their say on family violence within our area and how we can all work together. It has allowed community members to have a voice on this very difficult topic, and bring awareness of the issue to all members of the community. We have helped empower local communities by supplying educational tools and resources free of charge across Australia."

 The community are ready for a change and we have opened up the space for having conversations around the issue in a safe environment with support provided.

Samara Debnam



🏠 The support that group members give each other is more than just talk, and has been a significant empowering tool for us. I now have many new skills and qualifications I never thought about achieving before . . . and I am thinking about doing a diploma in leadership.

Samara Debnam



Work for the Dole Playground Program

GAGEBROOK COMMUNITY CENTRE

PROJECT PARTNER: MAX EMPLOYMENT

We wanted to provide local residents with an opportunity to be able to undertake their Work for the Dole hours within their local community on local projects.

The Work for the Dole program is a very important program – participants become increasingly involved in other programs and activities happening at the Centre and in the community. They often feel an increase in self-confidence and pride in the community.

We've seen this through many volunteers who stayed on after their Work for the Dole commitment was completed and also attended on days they were not required to be here.

🏠 There has been a lot of negativity around Work for the Dole in the past and participants not turning up etc, but this project shows that if participants have the opportunity to be involved in the planning as well as the implementation of the project, they are more willing to attend and continue attending.

Cheynee Pullen, Gagebrook
Community Centre Coordinator

We employed a local resident – who is a single dad who had shown great initiative whilst on Work Experience at the Centre – to be our project manager. Ken had a wide variety of skills and knowledge that he was able to share with the Work for the Dole participants.

Ken and the participants consulted with childcare staff and parents and thoroughly researched other playground setups, as well as the safety standards that would need to be met.

They began by moving and revamping the undercover area and making a table to match the new colour scheme. They dug out, coloured and concreted a bike track, complete with 'stop' and 'give way' signs to start teaching the children road safety. Next, the workers built a bus, complete with two horns, headlights and numbers plates.

The children absolutely loved their new playground and each of the children who were at the launch got to cut their own ribbon to officially open the new space.

This would have to be one of our most favourite Work for the Dole programs. The playground has received a lot of positive feedback, not only from staff, volunteers and board members of the Jordan River Service, but also from parents of children accessing childcare.

This project has encouraged participants to be involved in something that will benefit childcare children, but has also encouraged them bring their own children to the Centre after hours and on weekends. It was fantastic to see the participants on opening day taking photos to show their friends and family what they have achieved whilst on Work for the Dole.

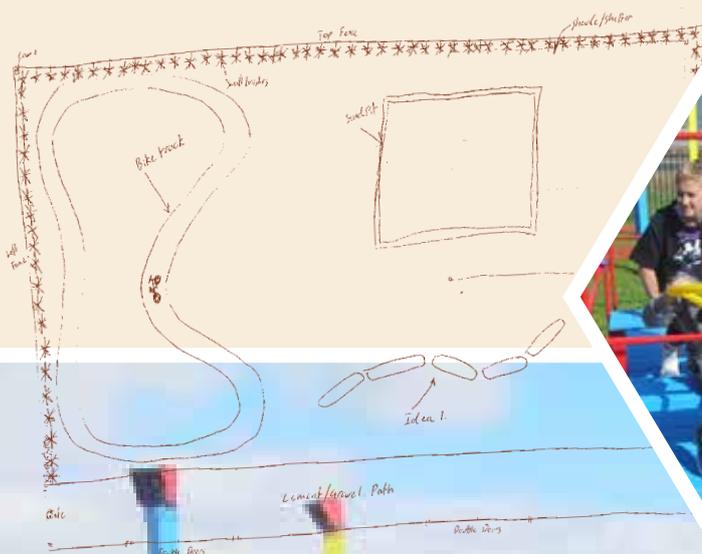


Marcus Jennings and
Kenneth Mayne

PLAN PART 3

Bike track shape and sand pit placement are just ideas

Idea 1: Bored tyres to Hep on/across



🏠 We had to do our Work for the Dole commitments but in saying that we have enjoyed participating in the playground project. It was an opportunity to be a part of something for not only our childcare children but also for the community children. We were happy to be able to give back to our community.

Marcus Jennings and Kenneth Mayne

Lunch with a Mate

ZEEHAN NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE



Zeehan's senior community members have minimal opportunity to socialise outside of their home environment or to access cheap, nutritional meals.

Subsequently, social isolation and depression is a major issue on the West Coast of Tasmania. We wanted to assist to minimise the impact of this on our senior community members.

We approached the local Senior Citizen Club and asked if we could start running a session once a month that did not clash with their current programs. The club

supported us and began to attend. The numbers quickly grew and we applied for a grant to cover the ongoing costs of the program.

Senior community members are attending lunches at the Centre with a mate as well as linking in with other programs that the Centre runs – such as community morning teas and bus trips up the coast.

Those attending have taken ownership of the program and assist in menu planning, as well as often bringing in vegetables and desserts to share.

Some that attend assist others by carpooling so that no-one misses out.

Senior citizens play an important role in our community and at times this has been over looked.

Their life experiences and skills are invaluable and something we will never get back once they pass on.

 I was invited to the lunch and thought it was a good idea. It is a great place to interact with other West Coast people.

Pat P

Community Lunch, May 2016.





BURNIE 

ULVERSTONE 

DEVONPORT 

EAST DEVONPORT 

GEORGE TOWN 

BEACONSFIELD 

TRESCA 

DELORAINÉ 

ROCHERLEA (NSCC) 

MOWBRAY (NSCC) 

STARTING POINT 

DORSET 

ST HELENS 

ROSEBERRY 

ZEEHAN 

FINGAL VALLEY 

DERWENT VALLEY 

BRIDGEWATER (JRS) 

GAGEBROOK (JRS) 

RISDON VALE 

WARRANE MORNINGTON 

BUCAAN 

WEST MOONAH 

KARADI 

DOWSING POINT 

PITTWATER 

CLARENDON VALE 

ROKEBY 

OKINES 

MARANOA HEIGHTS 

GEEVESTON 

WEST WINDS 

DUNALLEY TASMAN 



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