

Neighbourhood Houses Framework 2023 – A Snapshot

March 2023





Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Boroondara acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



Introduction

Neighbourhood houses are places where people can come together to connect, learn, and contribute to their community through social, educational, recreational and support activities. Boroondara has 11 neighbourhood houses, and Council provides important support and works closely with them to offer services, programs and activities that respond to community needs.

Through the recent consultation for the Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031 (BCP), we know that our community services, facilities, and activities are highly valued and continue to play a pivotal role in fostering community connections and contributing to people's health and wellbeing in Boroondara.

Neighbourhood houses play an important role fostering community connections, providing a place for people to meet and participate in programs and activities that are affordable and respond to a wide range of community interests. Council recognises this by providing funding, support and advice, capacity building for committees of management and staff through workshops, and buildings for neighbourhood houses to operate from.

With the adoption of the BCP, we have developed the Boroondara Neighbourhood Houses Framework (the Framework) to articulate how Council and neighbourhood houses will work together to deliver on strategies under Theme 1 Community, Services and Facilities to ensure that community services and facilities are high quality, sustainable, inclusive and strengthen resilience.

The Framework has been developed in consultation with the Boroondara neighbourhood houses. It builds on our existing relationship and is predicated on a mutual obligation to work in partnership to deliver community programs and services that are responsive, inclusive and facilitate social connections and belonging. It outlines Council's commitment to a strategic and coordinated approach to supporting and promoting neighbourhood houses as key hubs for community learning, community participation, development, and capacity building.

A key element of the Framework is the Action Plan. An Annual Action Plan will be developed and reviewed each year to track progress and maintain responsiveness and flexibility.

This snapshot document provides an overview of the Neighbourhood Houses Framework. You can find the detailed framework document on the City of Boroondara website.

Boroondara neighbourhood houses

The City of Boroondara supports a network of 11 neighbourhood houses that provide a range of programs and services, facilitating social connections for people of all ages.

- Alamein Neighbourhood and Learning
- Ashburton Community Centre
- Balwyn Community Centre
- Bowen Street Community Centre
- Camberwell Community Centre
- Canterbury Neighbourhood Centre
- Craig Family Centre
- Hawthorn Community House
- Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre
- Trentwood at the Hub



Purpose

The Neighbourhood Houses Framework is underpinned by the mutual obligation of Council and the neighbourhood houses to work together to deliver accessible and inclusive services and programs that build community wellbeing, connectivity, provide opportunities for people to participate in community life.

The purpose of the Framework is to:

- articulate a shared vision and commitment of Council and the neighbourhood houses to work in partnership
- strengthen the relationship between neighbourhood houses and Council
- encourage collaboration amongst neighbourhood houses in community engagement, program design and delivery, marketing, and operations
- encourage knowledge, information and resource sharing
- support strategic planning by neighbourhood houses to deliver programs, activities and services that respond to community need.



Vision

The vision of the Framework is for Council and the neighbourhood houses to work collaboratively to create vibrant and resilient communities that thrive, grow and connect using a community development approach.



Principles

The Framework is underpinned by the following 7 principles:

1. **Collaboration:** Council and the neighbourhood houses will work collaboratively together to meet the needs and aspirations of our community.
2. **Empowerment:** Council and the neighbourhood houses respect each other's individual needs and aspirations and value the important role each plays in connecting, supporting, and empowering our community.
3. **Support:** Council will continue to support neighbourhood houses through access to funding, community infrastructure, resources, and capacity building opportunities within the parameters of Council's resources.
4. **Partnership:** Council and neighbourhood houses are committed to working in partnership together and seek to foster new and constructive ways of working together to respond to community needs.
5. **Accountability:** Council and the neighbourhood houses are committed to working openly and transparently with each other. The roles and responsibilities of Council and neighbourhood houses are clearly articulated in leases, licences, and funding agreements.
6. **Diversity:** Councils and neighbourhood houses welcome, respect and celebrate diversity within the Boroondara community and support each other to ensure there are programs and services offered by neighbourhood houses that meet all the needs within the community.
7. **Community Development:** Council and neighbourhood houses work within a community development framework and are guided by the principles of community ownership and participation, empowerment, access and equity, inclusion, networking, advocacy, self-help, social action, and lifelong learning.

Our neighbourhood houses





Corporate framework

The Boroondara Community Plan (BCP) 2021-31 incorporating the 10-Year Community Vision, Council Plan 2021-25 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 is Council's key strategic document. Neighbourhood houses support the delivery of strategies under several of the BCP priority themes, including:

Theme 1: Community, services and facilities

Strategy 1.1: Neighbourhoods and community spaces facilitate social connections and belonging by providing, maintaining, and activating places for people to meet, organise activities and celebrate events

Strategy 1.2: Health and wellbeing is improved through delivering, facilitating, and advocating for services and programs that are accessible and affordable

Strategy 1.5: Life-long learning is supported by delivering and working with our community and partners to meet the broad range of interests within the community

Strategy 1.7: Community resilience, safety and public health are improved by working in partnership with community and government organisations.

The Framework will also support Council's health and wellbeing priorities, particularly improving mental wellbeing and social connections, and increasing active living through participation in activities and events.





Appendix: Action Plan

Action Plan 2023-27

The actions outlined below have been developed in consultation with Boroondara neighbourhood houses. The actions will be reviewed annually in consultation with the neighbourhood houses to ensure they are still relevant and to identify additional actions for an annual Action Plan.

Theme 1: Community, services and facilities

Community services and facilities are high quality, sustainable, inclusive and strengthen resilience.

Strategic Objective 1.1

Neighbourhoods and community spaces facilitate social connections and belonging by providing, maintaining, and activating places for people to meet, organise activities and celebrate events.

Partnerships

Action 1

Partner with neighbourhood houses across Boroondara to deliver services and programs for children, young people, and families

Action 2

Partner with neighbourhood houses to deliver activities in collaboration with Boroondara Library Service that promote lifelong learning and social connections

Action 3

Engage neighbourhood houses in the co-design of a community arts project to activate neighbourhood house spaces

Action 4

Engage neighbourhood houses in the co-design of a school holiday program, including promotion and marketing material with children and young people to encourage their attendance at school holiday programs and experiences

Events & Celebrations

Action 1

Engage neighbourhood houses in the promotion and delivery of key celebrations and events e.g., Children's Week, Cultural Diversity Week, Boroondara Sustainability Festival, International Women's Day, Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, International Day of People with Disability, Community Safety Week

Strategic Objective 1.2

Health and wellbeing are improved through delivering, facilitating and advocating for services and programs that are accessible and affordable.

Social inclusion

Action 1

Increase opportunities for community members to volunteer in the neighbourhood houses, including people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people from culturally diverse backgrounds

Action 2

Build the capacity of neighbourhood houses to promote the inclusion and participation of people with disability and from multicultural backgrounds through training, information, and resource sharing

Action 3

Work with neighbourhood houses to deliver digital literacy initiatives across Boroondara

Action 4

Support neighbourhood houses to create and strengthen reciprocal relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to contribute to reconciliation in Boroondara

Action 5

Consider the use of signage and messaging in neighbourhood houses that create welcoming environments to encourage participation from Boroondara's diverse residents including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Action Plan 2023-27

Strategic Objective 1.2

Health and wellbeing

Action 1

Partner with Boroondara neighbourhood houses and men's sheds to promote community connection opportunities and support the recovery from COVID-19

Strategic Objective 1.5

Life-long learning is supported by delivering and working with our community and partners to meet the broad range of interests within the community.

Marketing and promotions

Action 1

Promote programs and events, including through Council's marketing channels to increase awareness of neighbourhood house programs and activities

Action 2

Participate in Neighbourhood House Week and promote programs and activities through Council's communications and marketing channels to encourage participation

Strategic Objective 1.7

Community resilience, safety and public health are improved by working in partnership with community and government organisations.

Consultation

Action 1

Council to engage neighbourhood houses in the consultation for the development of key strategies and plans

Action 2

Council to hold workshops with neighbourhood houses to support capacity building, information sharing, collaboration and sustainability e.g. disability awareness training, engaging young people

Skill development

Action 1

Identify opportunities for skill development for neighbourhood house staff, volunteers, and committees of management

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