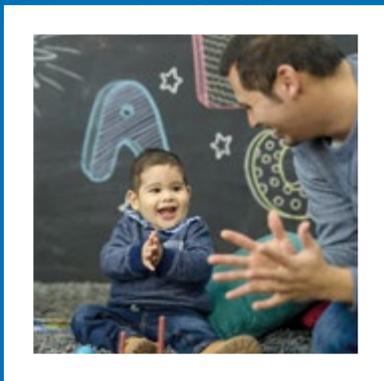NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSE PROGRAM

**STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
2018–2023
PART 1**

*Achieving, Belonging,
Celebrating, Doing – Community
Development in Action*

Neighbourhood Houses
Tasmania

Tasmanian
Government

Contents

Introduction

This Strategic Framework builds on the success of previous versions, continuing to elevate the work and approach of the network of Neighbourhood Houses across Tasmania.

This document was produced during 2018 in a collaboration between the Department of Communities Tasmania (Communities Tasmania), previously Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the sector peak body, Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Inc. (NHT), in consultation with Houses around the state.

This Framework is in two parts:

Part 1 is an overview of the Neighbourhood House Program Strategy. Part 2 is an Operations and Practice Guide and contains detailed information on implementing the Framework at an individual House level, and history of the program and the updated funding and eligibility matrix.

Today our House network is established, recognised and respected for its community development achievements under prior versions of the Strategic Framework (the Framework).

The Framework updates the program goals based on feedback and program growth, and includes new information about the Department's Outcome Reporting approach.

This document gives an overview of the sector. It provides links to practice and operational resources to support and advance the work of individual Neighbourhood Houses.

Thank you to the Boards, members, staff and volunteers of Houses throughout Tasmania who made valuable contributions to this process and final product.

Thank you to the Communities Tasmania staff, especially those in the Community Services Program, and the ongoing commitment from our friends in Neighbourhood Houses across the state and NHT for their dedication and work on this new Framework and for inspiring and improving community outcomes for Tasmania.

Foreword from the Minister

Tasmania's Neighbourhood House network is at the heart of our local communities. Houses link effort with spirit, harness momentum and grow goodwill. Their teams leverage opportunity, see possibilities, work with purpose, connect and upskill people to strengthen local communities.

I thank all the staff and volunteers who run our Houses and provide these vital connections.

When I visit our Houses I see the development opportunities first hand. Over time I've watched participants become volunteers and true local leaders. Put simply, Houses reach through the barriers and give hope to people – and people give back.

A House broadcasts and also captures effort. People reinvest themselves into their community through their local House. Through collaboration and collective impact communities become more vibrant. Personal and community health and wellbeing become priorities. A sense of citizenry and pride grows. Things change for the better, and local people set and lead the direction.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to supporting these important community services to continue their vital work in the community. This is why we have boosted funding to Neighbourhood Houses by $8.8 million over four years – an increase of $45,000 per year, per house. This is in addition to new funding for capital works and security measures.

This increase will help our Neighbourhood Houses to engage additional staff to assist in their vital work. Recurrent funding was also granted to Phoenix Community House on King Island for the first time, as a Remote Community Neighbourhood House, giving certainty to that community and growing the network.

I am pleased to introduce this updated program framework to guide the network's next five years. During the period of the 2013–2018 Framework, our Houses made a leap into outcomes measurement. This has advanced the sophistication of the network as it began to operate and measure its work using a Results Based Accountability framework.

The outcomes reporting back to government allows mapping of the achievements of the network as a whole and will contribute to our understanding of how place-based approaches make a difference in our communities.

This shift into place-based outcomes investment marks a step up in our approach to funding the Neighbourhood House network. We value the importance of Houses to our Tasmanian communities. While funding in the earliest days was to simply keep doors open and allow people a place to meet, Houses have grown to provide so much more. They have a lasting impact on the lives of the people who engage with them and support and coordinate positive changes in their communities.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to creating strong, active and inclusive communities. We want our children, families and communities to thrive and be strong and resilient. Communities Tasmania will deliver more holistic and joined up support and development opportunities. The name of this new agency is significant and reflects our ongoing commitment to work in close partnership with the community, for the community.

I commend our Houses for their work to date, and am confident in a brighter future for Tasmanian communities with their ongoing involvement.

The Hon. Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Human Services
Minister for Housing
Minister for Planning

Foreword from the NHT President

Community development has long been seen as a way to produce happy, healthy and engaged communities, but how do we describe it? This updated Strategic Framework doesn't change our goal posts, but highlights the goals that grassroots community development is able to achieve.

The Strategic Framework succinctly covers our four program goals about connecting, supporting, creating opportunity and encouraging local leadership. At its core, it's about experiencing community, tapping into the ideas and resources of local people and facilitating people's hopes and dreams.

Starting in the 1970s Neighbourhood Houses provided opportunities for local communities to come together in a welcoming meeting space to work on local needs. Nearly 50 years later we are still providing similar opportunities, an incredible range of new opportunities, and finding the need for our community development work greater than ever. Some things about human nature do not change; the need for connection within our local neighbourhood; meaningful opportunities; and the joy in making our world a bit better will always be part of the success of community development.

As part of the review for this edition of the Strategic Framework, the House network and government have identified how effective the Houses and NHT have been in supporting each other in their community development practice and local governance. By using a new method of reporting, Results Based Accountability, greater impact has been shown through funding place-based community development.

One of the difficulties in the past for Houses has been that everyone involved knew Houses had a great impact in their community – often by having witnessed it firsthand. However, demonstrating that impact very clearly on paper was not easy.

Evaluation is important to funding bodies, our communities and our own management, as it demonstrates we are measured, reflective and thoughtful about our work and its aims.

On behalf of the network I'd like to thank the staff at the Department of Communities, and in particular, Baden Phillips, for the effort they put in to collaborate so thoroughly in reviewing the previous Framework.

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania is very pleased to endorse this 2018–2023 version of the Strategic Framework. We thank the state government and Department of Communities for their continued support of Houses and their commitment to a clear framework that ties our funding, reporting and compliance to our core business of community development. The network of Houses, through the Framework, has continued to lead in community development practice which has brought great benefits to our communities and Tasmania as a whole.

Kate Beer
NHT President

Neighbourhood House Network Map

An integrated network of 35 Neighbourhood Houses supports Tasmania.
The Tasmanian Government via the Department of Communities funds 34 Houses.
The Australian Government Department of Defence funds the House at Dowsing
Point. Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania is the sector peak body which leads and
represents the interests of Houses.

1. Phoenix Community House
2. Burnie Community House
3. Ulverstone
   Neighbourhood House
4. Devonport Community House
5. East Devonport Community House
6. Beaconsfield House
7. George Town Neighbourhood House
8. Dorset Community House
9. St Helens Neighbourhood House
10. Fingal Valley Neighbourhood House
11. Northern Suburbs Community
    Centre (Newnham)
12. Northern Suburbs Community
    Centre (Mowbray)
13. Starting Point Neighbourhood House
14. Tresca Community Centre (Exeter)
15. Deloraine House
16. Rosebery Community House
17. Zeehan Neighbourhood Centre
18. Derwent Valley Community House
19. Bridgewater Community Centre
20. Gagebrook Community Centre
21. Risdon Vale Neighbourhood House
22. Bucaan Community House
23. West Moonah Community House
24. Warrane Mornington
    Neighbourhood Centre
25. Midway Point Neighbourhood House
26. Dowsing Point Community Centre
27. Karadi Aboriginal Corporation
28. Goodwood Community Centre
29. Rokeby Neighbourhood Centre
30. Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood Centre
31. Okines Community House
32. Dunalley/Tasman House
33. Maranoa Heights Community Centre
34. West Winds Community Centre
35. Geeveston Community Centre
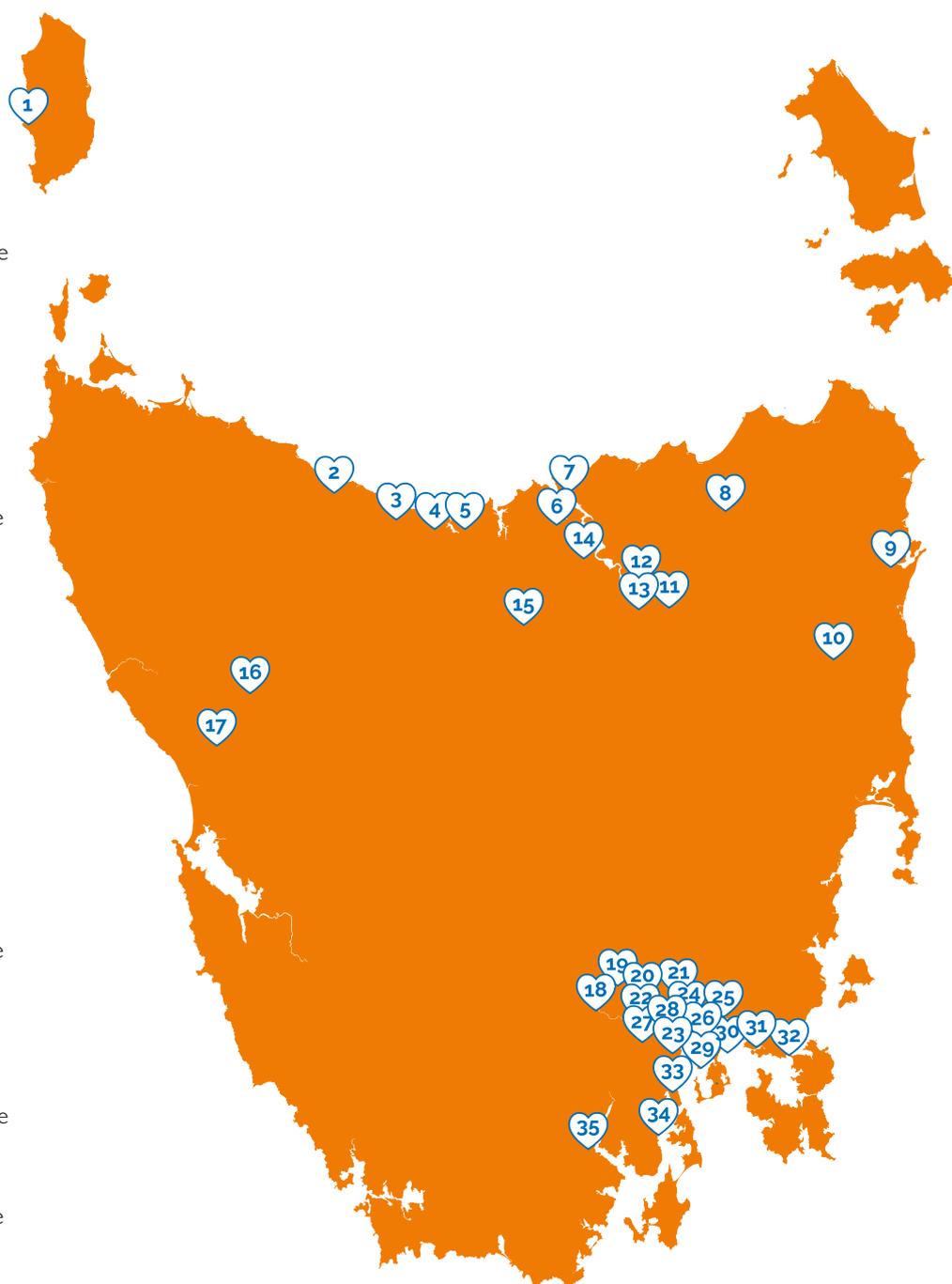
Strategic Framework Summary

A House will reach out to the community and reflect these statements and values internally in its work.

Who we are

We are a network of organisations supported by the Tasmanian Government to support and coordinate local community development.

What we do

- We respond to community needs
- We build community capacity
- We represent community views
- We enable delivery of community programs and services

Our Goals

Goal 1
Connect Community

Goal 2
Support People

Goal 3
Create Opportunity

Goal 4
Local Leadership

How we do it

We link and connect with community information and referrals, develop and maintain partnerships, run community events, promote pride. (Goal 1)

We have opportunities for socialising, learning and skills development for people and groups. (Goal 2)

We provide access to programs to increase everyday literacy, financial, life, communication and employment skills. (Goal 3)

We have a Board of Governance elected from community representatives who manage the organisation using good governance practices. (Goal 4)

Principles of a Neighbourhood House

The purpose of Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania is to be local community-led organisations that build community capacity using a community development framework.

Neighbourhood Houses are welcoming safe places, which are inclusive and respectful and aim to connect people and community. Houses can vary in focus and activities but must always reflect the elements below.

What a Neighbourhood House is:

- a locally based community asset
- run by volunteers – residents and people who work in the community focused on strengthening the community
- recognised and participating as a vital community resource
- not-for-profit
- a legally incorporated association
- a member of Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Inc.
- led by this Strategic Framework and Communities Tasmania Funding Agreement requirements
- non-partisan – not aligned to any political party
- secular - not aligned to any religion

What a Neighbourhood House does:

- delivers programs using a community development model
- consults to plan its priorities and actions
- works to meet the diverse needs of communities and their people
- promotes belonging and community spirit
- works to reduce social isolation
- has 'open door' access, is welcoming, inclusive and non-discriminatory
- fosters personal and group supports, community connections and learning opportunities
- provides a local structure for responding to community needs, representing community views, delivering community programs and building community capacity.

Values and practices: I know it's a House because we…

- have an 'open door' policy that welcomes people equally and with respect
- make spaces to enrich personal, family and community development
- facilitate social, cultural, learning and creative programs
- create supportive environments to allow self and group development
- have a social justice and human rights approach
- facilitate programs to address people's identified needs

- have strong links with organisations and service providers to meet community needs
- are engaged with the local service system
- have cooperative working relationships with other Neighbourhood Houses
- maintain high ethical standards at an organisational and personal level.

Values that guide our work with communities and their people

We:

- cooperate and share information and resources with each other
- involve people affected by our work in planning and delivery
- respect the rights, culture and dignity of people involved in or affected by our work
- actively seek to collaborate, network and work with other agencies and organisations
- have accountable and responsive programs
- are not influenced by external or internal bias or self-interests
- consult with our community to make our plans
- report back to our community on our progress and achievements
- look for measurable outcomes
- look for opportunity, not deficits
- look for root causes and work with the community towards solutions.

About the Strategic Framework

The Tasmanian Government funding of the Neighbourhood Houses Program is an investment in place-based community development. It enables each House and its members to coordinate and support local community development.

Houses spark and fuel community strengthening activities. They maintain a focus on community development by:

- responding to community needs
- representing community views
- delivering programs using community practices
- facilitating delivery of services locally
- building community capacity.

This means that the way Houses do their work is as important as the projects chosen.

House programs and activities always strive to ensure community members feel welcomed, included, represented and have a say in what happens.

Why we use a Strategic Framework

A Strategic Framework is a guide for activity and operations. It is a way to ground your activity. We have one for the Neighbourhood House Program to unify effort and practice. Having a Framework means fairness and consistency across the Program. It also allows for improvement through the sharing of good practices and ideas.

The role played by Houses is important to each local community as well as the whole state. This underpins government investment in Houses. Under the Outcomes Framework progress and achievements by each Neighbourhood House will demonstrate contributions toward building a better Tasmania.

In the table below are some of the needs and benefits of this Framework.

Benefits of the Strategic Framework

Need	Benefits
To support Houses to support and coordinate local community development.	• Houses have an agreed shared guide that outlines shared values, planning processes and a community development model.
Focus the House program on broad outcomes to improve the wellbeing, independence and self-efficacy of people, families and communities.	• Communities have improved wellbeing outcomes, and a positive influence on local health and social conditions. • People have a say in what matters to them, and what happens about it at an individual and community level.
Enhance the contribution of Houses towards community capacity building, resilience and sustainability.	• House programs and services are targeted at community identified needs and designed to build community capacity using existing strengths and assets. • House outcomes contribute to population level improvements.
Describe the House program including the: • Four program goals • Government's core funding investment • commitment to community development, not service delivery • governance and management structures • the Peak body's role in supporting Houses • outcomes reporting approach being used by the network and government.	• Houses can deliver targeted programs and services • Houses operate by clear and agreed principles • The integrity of the place-based community development model is maintained • House Boards maintain their responsibilities • Houses know how to report on their work to the funding body.

Alignment with other strategies

The House program aligns with other government strategy and policy directions such as:

- A Healthy Tasmania, and the associated Thrive Tasmania model

- The Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement.

A Healthy Tasmania recognises that by far the main contributors to health and wellbeing are social, environmental and behavioural conditions. The House program aligns with A Healthy Tasmania by:

- increasing the health and wellbeing intelligence provided to government via its outcome reporting

- adopting a life-course and Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) approach to addressing inequalities

- building resilience in people and communities

- being place-based and designed to empower communities and individuals through collaborative approaches which address inequality.

The House program centres around the three elements of A Healthy Tasmania: place-based action, statewide action, and evidence-based action. Some of the House network's most successful activity during recent years has been consistent with the Thrive Tasmania model.

The Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement aims to support better community engagement practices, coordination and information sharing and improves community participation to achieve better outcomes for communities and government.

Strategy – Interconnecting concepts

Four Program Goals	Guide direction and areas of focus
Community Development Practices	Engage people for lasting change
Outcomes Focus	Used in design and evaluation. Measure change against goals
Collaboration	Strategic partnerships to see the work gets done. That it is done matters, not by whom

The Four Program Goals

The House program goals were set during earlier Framework development processes. They have been refined and updated as the program evolved. As part of the funded network each House works towards the four program goals.

There is flexibility in how Houses work towards the four program goals. Local conditions and resources will influence these decisions.

The four program goals are:

1. Connect Community
2. Support people
3. Create Opportunity
4. Local Leadership.

Central to the program goals is the idea of community development. Community development refers to both processes and outcomes – the doing and the result. It is a way of working that has been fundamental to the success of the Neighbourhood House network and is the basis for government investment.

Community development and the program goals

This way of working is as important as the goals it seeks to meet. Neighbourhood Houses facilitate local solutions to community-identified issues. Directed through consultation, Houses take a leadership role. They work with community development principles and practices to make lasting change.

The community development approach is asset based. It works by tapping into the resources, strengths and ideas of local people and communities. It harnesses that energy, expertise and passion into unified effort.

Being involved in a community development process brings new perspectives, skills, empowerment and ownership of the results to participants and their communities.

Resources for community development are available online at the NHT website, including the NHT Community Development Toolkit.

www.nht.org.au/resources/community-development/

Community Development Pinwheel

CONNECT COMMUNITY

SUPPORT PEOPLE

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

CREATE OPPORTUNITY

People power is the wind which generates community development
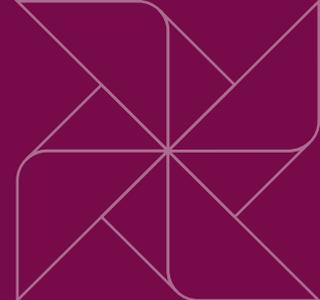
Goal 1: Connect Community

Neighbourhood Houses build, connect and support community networks of inclusiveness, involvement, trust and cooperation to improve community spirit, cohesion and wellbeing.

Neighbourhood Houses engage the broader community to develop ways of working together around a shared goal. This approach aims to increase community ability and capacity to respond to issues or opportunities.

While Houses are a key element in harnessing strengths and coordinating community development, lasting change cannot occur in isolation. Effective community building will have the support and collaboration of many players. This may include working with other Houses, community groups and residents, local service providers, organisations, institutions and businesses.

The Tasmanian Government Population Outcomes this contributes towards are:

- Communities are inclusive, safe and resilient (Population Outcome 3)
- Tasmanians have good health and wellbeing (Population Outcome 4).

Goal 2: Support People

Neighbourhood Houses support the development of the personal skills, knowledge, abilities and resilience of people to improve the health and wellbeing of themselves and their communities.

This goal recognises that communities include people with different strengths who, at times, may face different challenges. It recognises that people go through life changes and support from peers and community can be beneficial. Supporting people may include attracting funded services, such as individual or relationship counselling. However, support is not always during a crisis.

Preventative support can include growing resilience in people and groups by bringing people together to reduce isolation and gain new skills. It can include projects that strengthen relationships, grow interpersonal skills and improve confidence. Workshops on effective communication,

emotional literacy and peer groups that encourage sharing of experience all work towards strengthening a community by supporting people under this goal.

The Tasmanian Government Population Outcomes this contributes towards are:

- Families are strong and supportive (Population Outcome 2)
- Tasmanians have good health and wellbeing (Population Outcome 4).
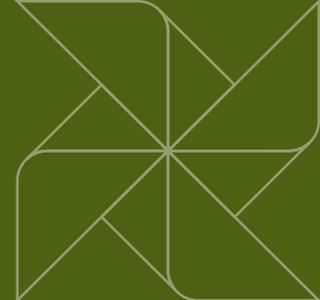
Goal 3: Create Opportunity

Neighbourhood Houses support skills development, life-long learning, training and employment readiness opportunities to improve people's social engagement and economic opportunities.

This goal is about life-long learning opportunities to develop and renew life and/or employment skills. Activities under this goal often work to create pathways for people into further training and/or employment. Some Houses work to improve literacy and numeracy levels. Others may focus on informal training opportunities. These may include skills and personal development through group activities, projects, social enterprise and peer support networks.

The idea is to increase pathways and opportunities for people. It often means taking that first step on a new path, or a new journey.

For example, by engaging with a House program a person's confidence in group settings can grow, new skills are developed, and they strengthen skills they already have. From here they may feel positive about going on to formal training after years of feeling that this was not an option.

The Tasmanian Government Population Outcomes this contributes towards are:

- Individuals reach their potential (Population Outcome 1)
- Tasmanians have good health and wellbeing (Population Outcome 4).

Goal 4: Local Leadership

Neighbourhood Houses must be community operated organisations, led by a Board of Governance consisting of volunteers living or working in the local community.

Maintaining local governance is central to the Neighbourhood Houses Program philosophy and is a requirement of the core funding. The model requires Houses to be community-led organisations that are responsive and accountable to a local community. A mix of locally connected people, consulting with the community and making governance decisions to set strategic directions gives a strong basis to the community development approach.

In addition to governance roles the Houses program aims to develop local leadership through other roles in Houses, including for:

- program participants
- volunteers
- House managers
- other House staff.

Board of Governance

This governance model ensures that there is consultation with the community and that is reflected in a House's strategic planning. The Board sets the behind the scenes governance structure of a House. It does not make day-to-day management or operational decisions. It is legally accountable to its membership base and government funding to:

- maintain effective governance processes
- ensure staff are well supported
- endorse the strategic and policy framework of the organisation
- ensure the financial viability of the legal entity
- ensure compliance with all legislative, statutory and contractual requirements.

Goal 4: Local Leadership (continued)

The governance model aims for members of the community to engage and become skilled and supported Board members.

The Board works cooperatively and collaboratively with staff, volunteers, House participants and the wider community. The principles used to work with the community are the same as those at play inside the organisation.

The House Program has protections against organisational or personal self-interest and bias in Board memberships. This includes:

- ethically managing actual or perceived conflicts of interests within Board membership including maintaining a Register of Interests
- ensuring diversity of community representation and avoiding conflicts of interest by limiting Board membership to:
  - o not more than one representative of any group or organisation at the same time without seeking specific exemption from the Department in writing.
  - o not more than two immediate family members as Board and/or staff at the same time without seeking specific exemption from the Department in writing.

NHT provides technical and operational support to Boards.

Participants and volunteers: design and deliver programs

A House will use the expertise of local people to design and deliver programs.

These people are the experts in their own lives and experience. A developmental program will harness this experience to improve skills, confidence, competence and knowledge of those taking part.

Past barriers are often overcome through the House's inclusive approach. This includes listening, trusting, responding, and making safe spaces for change. Personal and community benefits grow from new opportunities, skills and a greater sense of connection, purpose, contribution and belonging.

Participants and volunteers: peer leaders

These people are the backbone of House programs. They provide the people power to drive programs. Attending gives opportunities to uncover and develop their own skills and resourcefulness. People often realise they have leadership qualities when given the space to feel comfortable and explore them in safe environments. Participants and volunteers become peer leaders and a resource that binds programs and groups.

House manager

Day-to-day management functions are undertaken by the House manager, who is employed by the Board. The manager role is generally responsible for:

- managing the operations, internal processes, and day-to-day affairs and activities
- advising and informing the Board of activity, often via regular reporting.

House staff

Houses may have other paid staff positions. These roles and positions will vary across the network, often tied to administrative or support roles, specific projects or grant funding.

- Positions to support the House manager or specific programs.
- Paid staff.
- Often drawn from past participants and volunteers.
- A policy to employ locally is often used.

Supporting staff and volunteers

As part of the Funding Agreement with the Department, Houses must allocate a portion of the annual budget for staff development and staff and volunteer support. NHT has preferred provider arrangements for a range of organisational supports.

NHT governance resources

The Governance Handbook, detailed information and processes on governing a House, including sample position descriptions and template policies and procedures are available on the NHT website.
www.nht.org.au/resources

The Tasmanian Government Population Outcomes this contributes to are:

- Individuals reach their potential (Population Outcome 1)
- Communities are inclusive, safe and resilient (Population Outcome 3).

Goal Area	Gut Feeling/Values	Outcomes/Aims	Examples
Connect Community	See *Notice the potential we have in this place*	• Awareness • Belonging • Participation • Citizenry • Spirit • Harmony • Self-representation • Self-expression • Good news	• Programs to link people • News to unite • Places people can go • Events • Work to unify effort • Social enterprise • Social mapping • Partnerships • Strategic planning • Synergies • Computers and communication • Outside the box ideas
Support People	Hear *Listen and respond to what matters to us*	• People • Family • Groups – across the spectrum of age, ability, background and culture. • Skills development • Socialisation • Belonging • Healthier choices	• New populations • Emerging need • Food availability • Food production • Engagement opportunities • Skills development • Counselling services • Information for living • Peer support
Create Opportunity	Link *Notice the potential we have in this place*	• Socialisation • Connection • Skills • Qualifications • Recreation	• Individual and group • Formal and informal • Volunteering • Hobby • Education • Training • Work preparation • Job seeking and skills
Local Leadership	Lead *Walk with us – stepping up to new futures/opportunities*	• Own direction • Management skills • Work with community • Design programs • Run activities • Measure outcomes • Set strategic futures	• Induction and review • Governance training • Peer support • Supervision and development • Program evaluation and reporting • Organisational memberships • Sector collaboration

Outcomes focus

The DHHS Commissioning for Outcomes Model was established in 2014 to drive funding decisions that achieve the greatest impact on the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians. It aims to measure improvement in Population Outcomes.

Population Outcomes are high level health and wellbeing goals for the whole state.

While the four program goals of this Strategic Framework are within the direct influence of House programs, Population Outcomes are not.

The Population Outcomes are:

1. Individuals reach their potential
2. Families are strong and supportive
3. Communities are inclusive, safe and resilient
4. Tasmanians have good health and wellbeing.

These Population Outcomes are not the responsibility of individual organisations to achieve. Neighbourhood Houses are funded through this Framework to contribute towards improvements in Population Outcomes.

Houses do this by reporting on Program Outcomes. The Commissioning for Outcomes Statement for Neighbourhood Houses established the following Program Outcomes:

1. Neighbourhood Houses facilitates the achievement of agreed community goals.
2. Neighbourhood Houses priorities and goals reflect what is important to the community.

3. Community members, volunteers, local organisations and support providers are actively involved in the Neighbourhood Houses activities.

The annual collation of House Outcomes Reporting will map how Houses collectively contribute towards Population Outcomes.

This reporting provides a clear evidence base about the difference made by Houses, and helps Houses to identify opportunities to improve community outcomes into the future.

Collaboration

While primarily undertaking community development in local areas, the House network works together as a whole to improve the wellbeing of Tasmanian communities and the people and groups living there. The network has a collective impact. Partnership and alliances made locally also extend the reach of the place-based community development.

As collective impact experts Houses reach out and engage with other community assets to achieve community identified goals. These may include businesses, community, sporting and social groups as well as government.

Working in partnership broadens the capacity and reach of social programs and can advance shared goals. Successful partnerships and projects will continue to build towards the Program Goals and Population Outcomes.

Journeys and pathways

A House does not only focus within its four walls. Community development is about creating connections with other community groups, organisations and services to meet community needs.

The work done by Houses has a positive impact on people using the House as well as the broader community.

People volunteering or participating in a House's programs may find personal and social benefits to their volunteering. This could range from increased self-confidence, new connections, new skills, and opportunities, to a sense of purpose and belonging.

Many Houses also work to make the whole community a better place for everyone by:

- reducing place-based stigma; using community events and media to combat negative perceptions
- lobbying for change on issues identified by a community
- increasing community cohesion by building bridges – within and between communities
- promoting local areas as friendly and supportive places to live
- improving local health and wellbeing
- attracting services to an area.

Why use a community development model?

Community development involves ways of working that empower individuals and groups of people to make changes in their community on issues that affect them.

At its most simple – and powerful – community development is the art of bringing people together, united by a community concern or opportunity, and choosing to work together to deliver change.

The process of working together connects people, groups and organisations with a greater sense of purpose and meaning. It also has greater potential for collective impact.

There are as many definitions for community development as there are differences in communities. The concept joins the ideas of 'community' and 'development' – with the joining signifying that the community itself takes the lead in its own development. Other forms of 'development', which involve external experts setting the rules for locals and not including local perspectives or strengths, are not part of this approach.

Houses bring people together to work on what is important for them and their community. Part of this bringing together is to facilitate personal and community development. This could be through developing social skills, making new connections, or working towards new opportunities for work or study.

People engaging with Houses have experienced personal growth just by joining in. Part of joining in can include designing and delivering programs. Examples include:

- improved parenting skills
- better communication skills
- work-readiness competencies – confidence, organisational and administrative experience
- improved self-esteem
- discovery of existing skills such as leadership or in assisting others.

Houses make a difference by being approachable, by listening to what did not work in the past, being imaginative about better futures, and remaining innovative and responsive to need.

Place-based action

Community development is sometimes known as place-based action. Place-based action is about community approaches that tap into and harness local capacity.
It is where the private, government and community sectors can work together to promote good health and wellbeing. This approach is about addressing the daily conditions of living that influence health, sustainability, economic engagement and equity.

Place-based action means:

- empowering individuals and groups in communities
- developing skills, knowledge and confidence
- increasing social connections and relationships

- making services more responsive to local need
- mobilising resources for communities in need
- community support of the action – because they designed it.

Service delivery tensions

Community development is not about service delivery; it is not a worker running a project for the community. It is drawing people together to unite and run with a possibility.

One of the greatest challenges facing Houses is the risk of moving into 'service delivery' rather than community development. To build community capacity a House may, at times, use grants to broker a service, or collaborate with an organisation to deliver a needed service locally. However, a House's core function is community development.

Programs must engage and grow the skills, strengths and capacities of participants and volunteers. Service models which 'funnel down' expertise onto local community members are not developmental in approach and will not have the lasting impacts of a community development approach.

As one House manager said, "if something only works because there is a paid worker running it, with no volunteers to drive it, then who wants it and why would we continue with it?"

NHT has tips for Boards of Governance on balancing these tensions in its Community Development Toolkit.

The Elements of Community Development for Neighbourhood Houses

Elements of Community Development and Consultation for Neighbourhood Houses

Time to consult again – and the cycle begins again
- report back to you community
- ask where to from here - What next?

EVALUATE

Consult – an ongoing process of gathering information by talking to the community. Meeting people where they are at, being flexible, reaching out to connect, bring people together.
- what are the issues?
- what is needed?
- what do people think might help?

CONSULT

Prioritise – what is most important at this time?
- what are the priorities?
- what can we realistically do?

PRIORITISE

METHODS
- Working Together
- Learning & Reflecting
- Active Participation
- Political Awareness

VALUES
- Equality
- Sustainability
- Mutual Respect
- Social Justice

BUILDING TRUST
- Trusting in the Community
- Community trusting Houses

TAKE ACTION

Take Action – make a start
- enact the Action Plan
- observe and reflect on progress.
- seek feedback to reflect on what you are doing. Ask people what is happening inside the project.
- review and monitor the project. Keep an Action learning style flexible approach. Ask; 'Is it achieving our goals, or are other things happening that we didn't expect?', 'How does this impact on our work?'. It's ok to make responsive tweaks and changes as the project unfolds.

CONSIDER

Consider – assess, review and reflect on the information gathered. Wonder about the options
- what do we think about what we heard?
- which bits can we do, or contribute towards?
- what resources are available? What showed in our environmental scan?
- who else has worked on this issue before?
- are there members of the community wanting to actively participate?

COLLABORATE

Collaborate – who can assist us reach our goals? Who is also invested in this?
- what did our Environmental Scan show us?
- who is already involved in this issue?
- who has resources?
- who has a shared interest on this issue?

PLAN

Plan – connecting ideas with reality, resources and budgets
- make an Action Plan
- who needs to be involved?
- what are the resources needed?
- how long will it take?
- how will we do it?
- what costs are involved?
- might this involve grants submissions?
- allocate roles to the Action plan? The Who, What and When.
- how will we keep the Action Plan moving along?

EVIDENCE

Evidence – what evidence will inform our actions?
- from consultation, previous project data,
- surveys, census, Population Health Surveys, Council Plans, local knowledge, surveys.

Measure Outcomes – what was achieved against goals?
- seek feedback and evaluation information throughout and at the end of a project.
- conduct participant and process evaluations
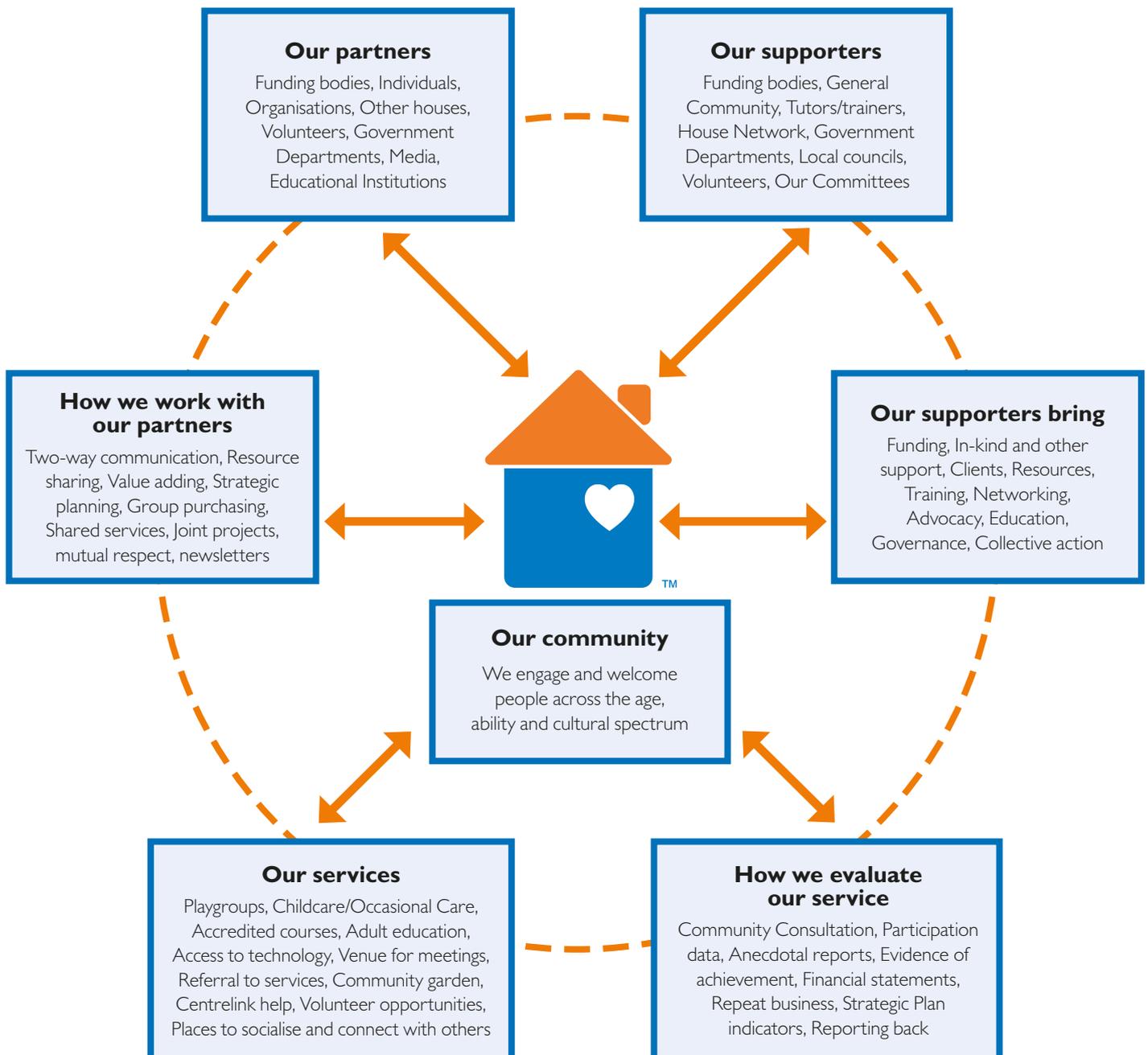- measures and milestones from Plan. Achieved?

Collaborating and consulting

Houses play an important grassroots networking and linking role. They channel a voice for their communities and facilitate place-based solutions. The work is based on the relationships they have, or will make, to meet their community's needs.

Many individuals, groups, agencies, government departments and businesses work to support and develop the Tasmanian community. This diagram recognises the extent of the relationships and the various roles all the members may play. The diagram places Houses at the centre to demonstrate the extent of working relationships needed to achieve community development and capacity-building outcomes for communities.

Our partners
Funding bodies, Individuals, Organisations, Other houses, Volunteers, Government Departments, Media, Educational Institutions

Our supporters
Funding bodies, General Community, Tutors/trainers, House Network, Government Departments, Local councils, Volunteers, Our Committees

How we work with our partners
Two-way communication, Resource sharing, Value adding, Strategic planning, Group purchasing, Shared services, Joint projects, mutual respect, newsletters

Our supporters bring
Funding, In-kind and other support, Clients, Resources, Training, Networking, Advocacy, Education, Governance, Collective action

Our community
We engage and welcome people across the age, ability and cultural spectrum

Our services
Playgroups, Childcare/Occasional Care, Accredited courses, Adult education, Access to technology, Venue for meetings, Referral to services, Community garden, Centrelink help, Volunteer opportunities, Places to socialise and connect with others

How we evaluate our service
Community Consultation, Participation data, Anecdotal reports, Evidence of achievement, Financial statements, Repeat business, Strategic Plan indicators, Reporting back

Community development

Community development is, at its heart, about people coming together around a common issue or opportunity and then working together to do something about it. Neighbourhood Houses work within a community development framework.

What is community development?

Our guiding principles of community development include:

- CD promotes change by the community, for the community
- CD values local knowledge, local skills, local culture, local resources and local processes
- CD is a process that can be owned, controlled and sustained by the community itself
- CD is not a means to an end but a dynamic process, with the journey itself as important as the outcome – good process is the key to good community development.
- CD is an inclusive, fair and responsive approach to creating solutions within communities

- CD encourages active participation, consultation and involvement from the broad community in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of a project
- CD improves the ability of communities to collectively make better decisions about the use of resources in their community
- CD is about following the energy and motivation of the people involved – you may initially start out planning to go from Point A to Point B – but you end up at C or J – and that's okay if you've gone with the energy and the input from the community
- CD is about giving up your "power" as a worker and collaborating with others
- CD provides the vehicle for people to act on community concerns
- CD builds on existing skills, experience, potential and passion of the community while continuing to foster leadership, entrepreneurship, learning and collaboration
- CD is about creating opportunities where people can 'rub shoulders', a chance to meet and connect with others in their community
- CD is more than a planning process – it is an ongoing learning process where new attitudes, ideas and networks develop from acting and reflecting together.

The principles of community development guide the process rather than a recipe or prescription. It is about drawing people together to unite and run with a POSSIBILITY.

Community development (continued)

At the NHT State Conference 2016 staff, volunteers and supporters from 30 Houses gathered, and in one session the question was posed to the audience:

Community development is our core business – so what does it mean to you?

Why we use this approach

Their answers show why we are all committed to community development:

… Dynamic

Community-driven…

…Empowering

Enabling…

…Building capacity of community for everyone

Working with community…

…Offering opportunities

Connected…

…Making mistakes & learning from these mistakes…

…Building resilience…

…Opening up the space to explore and change…

… Creating community ownership…

Creating community involvement that's sustainable…

… Developing skills and experience

Being responsible…

…Creating a safe environment…

…facilitating connections…

Positive future…

…Constantly changing

The heart of our community – our promotional video

This two – minute video gives an overview of the great work done by Neighbourhood Houses and why they really are amazing places.

www.nht.org.au/video

Community development (continued)

Community development is our core business.

We are all committed to community development because it has been proven to make effective and lasting change.

Reflections on community development

It is:
- Dynamic
- Community driven
- Empowering
- Enabling
- Constantly changing.

Community development is about:
- Building capacity of the community for everyone
- Working with community
- Offering opportunities

- Making mistakes and learning from them
- Building resilience
- Opening up the space to explore and change
- Creating community ownership.

"A key to good community development is bringing people together and collectively exploring the cause of an issue. This could happen at one meeting or over many social occasions. Take the time to truly understand the issue."

"Community building is a sea of events and people, not a racetrack over a set course with a starting and finishing line."

"Lasting community development is evolution, not revolution."

"We do it with no ego, it's about the outcomes."

"Something really beautiful happens at Neighbourhood Houses. Their gentle and accepting manner, safe environment and supportive focus make their reach and impact unique."

"Houses piece together community by filling the gaps they find in society."

"By welcoming socially isolated people our House has shown we are all connected in community development."

"Our House is a hub for our diverse community. We have one roof and many groups."

Funding environment

Ongoing core funding commitment

Communities Tasmania, through its Community Services Program (CSP) provides core funding to Neighbourhood Houses and their peak body Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania (NHT). Funding includes a component of $1.5 million sourced from the Community Support Levy (CSL).

This Framework and the associated Funding Agreements (Agreements) with Neighbourhood Houses address the program and reporting requirements of that funding.

This Framework signals a commitment to place-based action and community development. It indicates ongoing State Government funding support of the program and continued investment in the existing state-funded network of 34 Houses and their peak body.

As detailed in the Agreements, annual core funding levels will be maintained for the 34 Houses and NHT with upwards adjustments made to include additional funds to accommodate annual indexation and the staggered implementation of the Equal Remuneration Order (if applicable). The funding schedule in the Agreement specifies the amounts and timing of payments.

Additionally announced in 2018, the network is set to benefit from:

- infrastructure improvements through a $2m Capital Investment Program to address amenity and usability
- a $150 000 grant fund to provide for safety upgrades for staff and volunteer safety and security at individual House sites.

King Island was also granted recurrent funding for its Phoenix Community House, which was recognised by the incoming government in 2018 as a Remote Island Community Neighbourhood House. Its unique funding level was set in recognition of the remoteness and distinct needs impacting that island community. This was an allocation requiring special consideration and endorsement by the Minister following successful demonstration of capacity and need by the organisation and community.

Additional resources and project funding

Individual Houses may also gain additional project or program funding from various bodies. This is a good idea. Additional resources could be in the form of in-kind support, donations of goods or services or project funding which extend the reach of a House's work and outcomes.

Gathering in-kind and other support from business and community groups demonstrates that a House has good connections with and support from its community. The efforts contribute to the processes of community development and can get more people aware of and involved in a House's work.

Additional funding may require special reporting to the funding body or sponsor. This would be specified by them in the guidelines attached to the funding.

All projects must build on core NHH Program goals

Communities Tasmania expects that all local programs and services run by or with Houses will align with the community development intent of the core funding.

Establishment of funding levels

Prior iterations of this Framework described the original assessment and eligibility criteria used to establish House funding levels (e.g. Category A or B) and methods to identify communities of need in which Houses would be funded.

Budget submissions by NHT over recent years have resulted in increased core funding levels. These amounts represent a minimum baseline. Each of the 34 existing Houses is funded to maintain a priority focus on the low socio-economic community members

in their immediate catchments as defined in the original framework. Communities Tasmania and NHT commit to developing an updated funding and eligibility criteria in 2018 to assess future community proposals for new Neighbourhood Houses which will be published in Part 2 of this Framework, the Operations and Practice Guide. It should be noted that any new Houses must not impinge on the original catchment areas of the 34 existing Houses.

Requirements for establishing new Neighbourhood Houses

Communities seeking to establish new Houses must align with the Framework and the funding and eligibility criteria prior to seeking support for a new proposal. Assessment will be linked to budgetary capacity within Communities Tasmania and also require demonstration of the factors below.

As an overriding principle Communities Tasmania will target funding of new Houses to priority geographic areas of highest need as defined by agreed needs-based demographic funding criteria. Communities Tasmania and NHT will publish this updated funding and eligibility framework once it is developed.

Prior to being eligible, proposals must provide an annual strategic plan and report on a community consultation process in accordance with the Framework.

New House proposals must have a viable Board of Governance representative of a diversity of interests in the community.

The Board must have not less than 10 active members with a quorum set at not less than 6, or numbers as defined by its constitution.

To ensure diversity of representation and avoid conflicts of interest, not more than one representative of any group or organisation, or not more than two immediate family members, can be Board members or staff at the same time without seeking specific exemption from Communities Tasmania in writing.

As far as practicable, new Houses must be located geographically to best serve the spread of population in the target area.

Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania

Tasmanian Government