



Neighbourhood House Survey 2021 Report

Report by David Perry
Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
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This report has been prepared for the
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.



Neighbourhood Houses Victoria Inc

Shop B41, Level 4, 744 Bourke Street, Docklands VIC 3008
(03) 9602 1228 | info@nhvic.org.au | nhvic.org.au
ACN A0001368L ABN 30 174 498 896

IN A SNAPSHOT:

\$4,253,583

MEASURABLE COMMUNITY VALUE
PROVIDED BY NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSES IN **JUST 4 DAYS**
IN COVID-19 RESTRICTED SETTINGS!

Emergency relief value includes:

- Food and groceries: \$810,100
- Food vouchers: \$17,267
- Cash/prepaid or gift card: \$3,435
- Bill payments: \$6,019
- Fuel vouchers: \$1,205
- Public transport cards: \$606

Services value includes:

- Internet usage: \$3,818
- Facilities use or hire: \$269,272
- Resume assistance: \$7,350
- Social enterprise goods and services: \$126,546
- Community lunch, frozen or other meals: \$100,770
- School aged breakfasts \$33,441

This figure includes the value of:

- Improved quality of life through social connection: \$1,613,091
- Volunteer contributions: \$850,229
- Emergency relief: \$838,632
- Services: \$541,197
- Childcare: \$334,151
- Kinder: \$69,434

This community value equates to:

\$7.26 for every \$1 of NHCP funding

Over \$292 for every hour the average neighbourhood house is in use

In 2021, 400 neighbourhood houses also provided:

2,263 full time equivalent positions including 1,628 direct
and 635 indirect positions

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Background

This report draws on data collected from 400 Victorian neighbourhood houses through a survey completed for the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). It was administered by Neighbourhood Houses Victoria on behalf of DFFH.

Initially the data was scheduled to be collected over a one-month period across July and August 2021. This process was interrupted by an outbreak of COVID-19 in the community, resulting in the state going into lockdown. Successive lockdowns over the planned collection period resulted in the capture of only four days of activity data.

Data collection commenced on August 2 following the lifting of a state-wide lockdown and ceased on August 5 as Melbourne returned to an enduring lockdown.

Restrictions, including density limits, during the period covered by this report reduced the number of participants and activities. This adversely affected the intended evaluation method as weekly or monthly data could no longer be reliably annualised.

Due to the widespread impact of COVID-19 on neighbourhood house operations, this report also draws on data from three years of surveys conducted from 2015 to 2017 in a COVID-19 free environment for comparative purposes. These benchmarks are used as completion of those surveys was a compulsory reporting requirement providing a reliable baseline for comparisons. Three-year medians are used for comparisons to account for annual variability in data as conditions, such as funding availability and regulatory changes, impact activities, for example, childcare, vocational education etc.

Unlike previous annual survey reports, this report only provides a limited snapshot of neighbourhood house activity under difficult and exceptional circumstances. Importantly, many neighbourhood houses have adopted new activities in response to the pandemic which are not captured here.

Data collected in May and July 2020 by DFFH showed neighbourhood houses undertook the following during stage 3 restrictions.

Table 1: Activities undertaken by neighbourhood houses during Stage 3 COVID-19 restrictions in May and July 2020

Activity type	Percentage of Neighbourhood Houses	Number of Neighbourhood Houses
Providing online content including exercise classes or craft activities online	62%	234
Making phone calls and contacting vulnerable community members	92%	346

Connection via social media	90%	340
Hosting group catch ups via audio/video linking platforms	56%	210
Providing shopping/food collection services for vulnerable community members	38%	144
Pickup/delivery of medications/pharmaceuticals	12%	44
Providing or linking people to official Covid-19 information and advice	71%	267
Other	27%	101
Nil	2%	7

The 2020 surveys show that throughout that time, the majority of neighbourhood houses that provide essential services continued to do so including childcare, Centrelink and food relief etc. where it could be done safely and they were not prevented by landlords, or auspicing organisations from doing so.

The 2020 surveys also show that Neighbourhood Houses reported new, creative and diverse activities, which included but were not limited to:

- delivering child and adult activity packs, care packs, learning packs and meals
- producing and/or distributing masks and scrubs
- providing takeaway lunches and other meals
- Increasing communications such as newsletters and establishing online groups
- assisting people to find official COVID-19 advice including in community languages
- IT support and equipment loans to assist people to remain connected

Except for meals distributed, none of these activities are captured or valued in the 2021 survey.

Value to Victorian communities from selected neighbourhood house activities

Victorian neighbourhood houses provided in excess of **\$4.25 million of calculable value** to the community in just four days.

This figure includes the value of:

- Improved quality of life through social connection: based on **49,390** participants in programmed activities and volunteering
- Volunteer contributions: based on **16,183** volunteer hours
- Improved health through physical activity based on **9,646** participants in physical activities
- Food and groceries: based on **40,404 kgs** of food relief provided
- Food vouchers: based on an average of **\$17,267** of vouchers provided
- Cash/prepaid or gift card: based on **\$3,435** cash/card value provided
- Bill payments: based on **\$6,019** of participant bills paid for
- Fuel Vouchers: based on an average of **\$1,205** of vouchers provided
- Public transport cards: based on average **\$606** of travel cards value
- Internet usage: based on **1,909 hours** of individual computer/internet use
- Facilities use or hire: based on **6,842** hours of room use or hire
- Resume assistance: based on assisting with **245** resumes
- Community lunch, frozen or other meals: based on providing **10,077** meals
- School aged breakfast programs: based on providing **1,065** breakfasts
- Childcare provided: based on **\$334,151** childcare income
- Social enterprise goods and services: based on **126,546** of sales
- 4-year-old kindergarten: based on **34,717** kindergarten income
- Auspicing other organisations: based on auspicing **899** organisations or groups in 2021

Additionally:

- Community value for every \$1 of Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) funding is based on 80 per cent of **10,674** hours/week of NHCP.
- Community value for every hour each neighbourhood house is in use is based on Neighbourhood House buildings in use for **14,593** hours over four days.
- Direct and indirect full-time equivalent employment positions created are based on **61,883** hours total weekly hours of paid employment.
- This data represents just a portion of the value from just some of the activities provided!

These values are not reflective of typical activity but are a snapshot of values generated under challenging pandemic conditions. Please refer to the [2019 Sector Value Snapshot](#) where possible for a more typical, pre-COVID overview.

The report does not include community benefits that are not within the scope of the 2021 Neighbourhood House Survey, are not compatible with the survey methodology or have been impacted by changes due to COVID-19 that would make calculations of value unreliable, including:

- Adult education and tax help
- All services and activities not listed above or their flow on economic or social benefits (except social connection) including hobby courses, exercise classes, referral, counselling or social support, community transport etc
- Agencies or brokered in services such as Centrelink, maternal and child health etc.
- Economic multipliers from indirect or induced economic activity
- Intangible benefits such as community pride and sense of belonging, leadership development, community voice through advocacy, increased personal independence etc.

The total community benefit is significantly greater than what has been valued here.

We use the term 'community value' because the valuations above incorporate a range of methods depending on the available evidence. These include methods such as social return on investment (SROI), return on investment (ROI) and replacement cost.

All valuations are conservative and based on existing research by reputable organisations using widely used and/or well documented methods together with benchmarked market values for replacement cost valuations.

Impact of COVID-19

There is almost no area of neighbourhood house practice left untouched by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number and type of activities, how they are run, who and how many people participated were all affected. Staffing and volunteerism also changed.

The table below compares median measures taken over three years from 2015-2017 to responses from 2021 and provides insight into the extent the neighbourhood house activity in this survey deviates from pre-COVID activity. While lower medians are expected due to the four days of activity captured in 2021 compared to a full week in the 2015-2017 data, the magnitude of difference relating to participation, including volunteering, cannot be attributed solely to the different timeframe and are attributable to COVID-19 impacts. This is evidenced by the relatively high open and staffing hours ratio compared to those for participation measures.

Table 2: Comparison of 2021 survey medians with benchmark three-year medians – various measures

Measure	2021 four-day median	2015-17 weekly median	2021 medians as % of 2015-17
Number of visits	144	286	50%
Number of participants in programmed activities (includes online activity)	78	185	42%
Number of volunteers	6	11	54%
Number of hours of volunteering	24	44	55%
Program sessions undertaken	14	20.5	68%
Staffed open hours	36	43	83%
Total paid staff hours	79	84	94%

Participation

As indicated above, neighbourhood houses reported lower levels of participants attending and participating in activities. This was expected given applicable density limits and post lockdown hesitancy together with a four-day data collection timeframe.

Despite these conditions, there were just over **91,000 visits by over 63,200 individuals** over the four days. Density limits drove down participation across the state however metropolitan participants accounted for 75 per cent of all participants in 2021 compared to 80 per cent in 2017.

While participants in neighbourhood house programmed activities fluctuates over time, predictably the proportion of visitors that participated in programmed activities declined significantly from a three-year median of 65 per cent to 55 per cent in 2021. This reflects a changed usage pattern with increased use of neighbourhood houses for services as discussed below.



Alphington Community Centre - Women in the Shed

Women in the Shed is designed by women, for women, and is all about women building the skills they need to pursue their own practical needs and projects - whilst being inspired by each other in a small class environment. Participants explore a wide range of hand and power tools as they work on self-selected projects that utilise timber, tiles or metal. The program is designed to build skills and

confidence, encourage community friendships, and expand possibilities for women of all ages. It enables women to have the confidence to tackle basic tasks at home, particularly valuable for women who live alone, and gives them the skills to explore alternative micro-business opportunities.

Activity types undertaken

This year's survey asked about the types of activities participants undertook. Once again, the impact of COVID-19 is evident when compared to data from 2017.

The proportion of people attending to use childcare and to use a service are both significantly higher at the expense of social and support groups as well as volunteering.

Neighbourhood houses' transitioning of activities outdoors and online in response to the pandemic may have contributed to exercise/health classes and courses/classes remaining steady as a proportion of activity types undertaken.

Table 3: Participation according to activity types, comparing 2021 to 2017

Activity type	2021	2017
Social group	10.0%	21.9%
Support group	3.3%	6.3%
Volunteering, placement	4.0%	6.4%
Childcare / playgroup	18.8%	8.0%
Use a service	16.9%	10.7%
Course or class	26.0%	25.5%
Exercise / health class	13.6%	13.1%
Advice / Help	5.8%	5.6%
Job training / job support	1.6%	2.6%

Community development projects

In 2021, **377** neighbourhood houses reported facilitating or actively supporting over **3,300** diverse community development projects designed to benefit their whole community or a group within their community. The following table outlines the types of projects by intended primary aim.

Table 4: Project aim of community development projects undertaken in 2021

Project Aim	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Promote understanding and positive relationships between different groups within the community e.g. host cross cultural forums, awareness raising strategy in the community of minority group issues etc.	2.3	448	191
Strengthen the capacity of a community to advocate for its needs e.g. training in lobbying, use of media, establish an advocacy group etc.	1.8	188	105
Strengthen leadership within a community or cohort e.g. leadership training for a cultural group, set up youth mentoring for leadership etc.	1.8	192	107
Advocate with and for the rights of a group within the community e.g. assist a group to engage with political leaders or other decision makers about an issue affecting them etc.	1.8	171	94
Improve access to services for a group within the community e.g. a project to encourage a service or facility to improve access for people with limited mobility, requiring translators, requiring cultural safety etc.	1.7	285	163
Attract, create, protect or improve local services or infrastructure e.g. new health facility, mens shed, visits by services that otherwise not exist locally, public transport connections etc.	1.6	289	177

Protect or improve the local environment e.g. tree planting, clean ups, advocacy to protect an environmental asset, sustainable energy project etc.	1.7	266	161
Increase community participation in decision making at the community, local, state, or federal level e.g. encourage or facilitate participation on planning changes or applications, government consultations, meet the candidates session etc.	1.7	230	132
Increase understanding of issues affecting a community or a cohort within the community e.g. local media strategy or public forums to increase community awareness of issues affecting a group e.g. youth, unemployed, refugees, LGBTIQ+ community etc.	2.0	289	148
Improve safety for the community or a cohort within the community e.g. bushfire preparedness project, crime prevention projects, reclaim the night project etc.	1.5	148	99
Increase community self-reliance e.g. grow your own food project, energy reduction project, community fundraising activity etc.	1.9	373	201
Strengthen the local economy e.g. develop a community enterprise, run a 'buy local' campaign etc.	1.3	122	91
Strengthen community resilience e.g. post disaster, loss of major local employer etc.	1.9	202	105
Other	1.6	101	63
Total projects		3,304	

Community Agencies for Digital Inclusion

A group of neighbourhood houses in Melbourne have formed the collective 'Community Agencies for Digital Inclusion' (CADI) to advocate high speed, reliable, affordable internet access and infrastructure for public housing tenants. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, too many people in public housing had little or no access to digital devices, limited data and low computer literacy.

The hard lockdowns has highlighted the need for fairness in accessing essential digital services. CADI believes digital inclusion is vital for the social recovery of Victoria following COVID-19 and that empowering public housing tenants with access affordable data and devices is an important consideration to improve community wellbeing.



Support of other groups/organisations

While many community groups have often been unable to meet during restrictions, neighbourhood houses continued to support other organisations and groups with **1,292 groups using 292 neighbourhood houses' facilities** over four days.

Furthermore, **239 neighbourhood houses supported 1,074 community groups** in other ways or an average of 10 groups per neighbourhood house.

This year's survey asked neighbourhood houses to quantify the different types of groups they auspice. Overall, **931 groups were directly auspiced by 197 neighbourhood houses**. This auspicing enables groups to receive and account for funds through their neighbourhood house as well as providing public liability and other protections enabling a range of activities to occur that may not otherwise.

The value of this public liability cover is over \$1.73 million.

Table 5: A breakdown of the types of groups auspiced by neighbourhood houses

Group Type	Number auspiced
Men's Shed	53

CALD group(s)	81
Indigenous group(s)	17
Self-help group(s)	87
Disability group(s)	30
Mental health group(s)	23
Health / Physical activity group(s)	135
Child Care	17
Playgroup or other children's activities	74
Recreation or leisure group(s), including art, craft, etc	261
U3A / Senior Citizens	25
Other	128
Total	931



Anglesea Community House - Anglesea Resale Shed

The Resale Shed has played an important role in helping the local community understand the benefits of a circular economy and creates opportunities for the community to participate in climate action. The Resale Shed helps divert an estimated 144 tonnes of non-organic material from landfill each year. Volunteer community groups, including disability support services groups, manage the day to day sales, and to date, the Resale Shed has raised over \$200,000 for local community groups.

Volunteering

Over four days, **3,414** volunteers contributed **16,183** hours of volunteering. This is an average of 9.5 volunteers and 45 hours of volunteering per neighbourhood house (medians 24 and 6 respectively). While volunteering was down on pre-COVID years as noted above, the average volunteer contributed 4.7 hours compared to an average 3.9 in the 2015-17 period.

Programs and activities

While the table above shows the distribution of participants across activity types, the table below shows the mix programs as a percentage of all program sessions run across all neighbourhood houses.

Table 6: Programs as a percentage of all program sessions run across neighbourhood houses, in 2021 compared to 2017

Program type	2021	2017
Accredited vocational education and training**	4.0%	6.5%
Childcare*	4.7%	5.5%
Children's activities (5-12)	3.4%	3.9%
Children's activities (under 5)	1.6%	2.7%
Community choirs / music / theatre	0.9%	1.9%
Community events / festivals / markets	0.3%	0.8%
Community lunches / social eating groups	2.2%	2.2%
Community newspaper / magazine / newsletter	1.2%	0.7%
Community safety	0.2%	0.2%
Community transport (trips and outings)	1.1%	1.0%
Computer training / digital literacy	5.6%	5.7%
English as a second language (ESL) training / English conversation	5.5%	4.8%
Environmental sustainability projects / groups	1.7%	1.4%
Family support programs	1.2%	1.7%
Languages other than English	1.0%	1.8%

Life skills programs and courses	2.4%	3.1%
Play groups	2.4%	2.6%
Pre-accredited / non-accredited adult education and training	11.2%	9.2%
Self help groups	1.8%	3.0%
Senior's groups (60+)	3.3%	3.0%
Volunteer training	1.8%	1.0%
Youth groups (13-25)	1.1%	1.8%
Outside school hours care / holiday programs	1.2%	1.9%
Indigenous or CALD cultural activities	1.1%	1.0%
Literacy and numeracy training	0.8%	1.3%
Personal counselling programs	1.8%	1.3%
Parenting courses / groups	0.3%	0.2%
Disaster/emergency preparedness and/or recovery	0.5%	0.2%
Homework clubs	0.7%	0.8%
Early childhood development programs (e.g. early literacy, language development)	0.2%	0.5%
Alternative to school programs (VCAL, etc)	1.5%	1.9%

*Note that the number of neighbourhood house childcare providers has declined by 25% since 2017 from 120 to 90.

**Note that the number of Neighbourhood House Registered Training Organisations providers has declined by 10% since 2017 from 43 to 39.

Some program types were reclassified in 2021. The health and wellbeing category used in 2017 included both physical activity and social connection type groups such as recreational activities. There was also a separate art and craft activity. These accounted in total for 25.8 per cent of activity.

In 2021, these categories were realigned to provide a clearer picture. The 'Art and craft' category was combined with other activities designed to facilitate social connection into a single 'social connection, recreational' category which accounted for 17.7 per cent of activity. A 'health / exercise' activities category, covering physical health promoting activities such as exercise and healthy eating, accounted for 15.6 per cent of activity. Together these accounted for one third of activity compared to just over a quarter of activity for comparable categories in 2017.

It is not possible to determine to what extent this data is affected by either the pandemic or the reclassification.



Sydenham Neighbourhood House – Brimbank Live

Brimbank Live is a digital radio platform supporting young people to connect and learn through media production. Participants receive training in writing, hosting and production of radio shows and podcasts. It is aimed at young people experiencing structural disadvantage, to unpack issues that are important to them, on their terms. Conceived during the pandemic as a way of supporting young people to feel connected, the platform provides opportunities to showcase the talents of young people and provides a space for learning about mental health, gender and racial diversity, and career pathways.

Staff

Victoria's neighbourhood houses are staffed by coordinator/managers with a collective experience exceeding **2,700 years**. On average neighbourhood house coordinators have been in their role for 6.9 years. The median number of years in the role is 4.5.

Of the **5,046 employee or contractor roles** within neighbourhood houses, 8.1 per cent are full time (5.8 per cent in 2017), with 36.5 per cent part time (32.2 per cent in 2017), and 30 per cent casual or sessional tutors (39.8 per cent in 2017). This latter reduction in the percentage of tutors is likely reflective of cuts to education activities due to COVID-19.

Overall there were 969 fewer employees and contractors compared to 2017 despite new neighbourhood houses being funded in 2018.

Emergency food relief

The survey also captured emergency relief data for the first time across the whole Neighbourhood House sector. This has not been a traditional function of neighbourhood houses, however the continued inadequacy of income support payments, together with the devastating impacts of COVID-19, has made the problem impossible for many neighbourhood houses to ignore. Generally, this relief is provided where a need in the community is not able to be met by charities or other services, including where the services do not exist, or alternatively where people may be excluded from or otherwise unable to access other services.

In four days, **187 neighbourhood houses managed over 40,400 kgs of food** for emergency relief: an average of 10.1 tonnes per day.

Sixty per cent of neighbourhood houses in the survey reported they provide emergency food relief with 47 per cent providing emergency food relief in the four days. This compares to one third of neighbourhood houses reporting emergency food relief provision in 2019 from a survey completed by 323 Neighbourhood Houses.

In the 2019 survey, 107 Neighbourhood Houses managed an average 463kg of food each per month or approximately 115kg/week. In 2021, this almost doubled to 216 kg for 187 Neighbourhood Houses over just four days. This is consistent with the widely reported increase in demand for food aid associated with the pandemic.

Forty-six (11.5 per cent) neighbourhood houses provided over \$28,500 (average \$620) of material relief such as financial assistance for bills or vouchers. This compares to 9 per cent that provided an average \$543/week in the 2019 survey.

Referrals

Neighbourhood houses are active in referring community members to a broad range of services and agencies to meet diverse needs of individuals. In the four-day collection period 328 neighbourhood houses reported making **3,492 referrals**, an average of 10 referrals (median 5) for each of these neighbourhood houses.

As this was a new survey question, there are no benchmark data to determine to what extent, if any, the number of referrals in this period was influenced by the pandemic.

Neighbourhood houses were also actively participating in a project to connect people with the State Government's \$250 Power Saving Bonus, with 402 applications submitted via neighbourhood houses in the data collection period. These may also be included in referrals.



Bairnsdale Neighbourhood House – Rural Minds

The Rural Minds workshops aim to upskill people in remote rural communities so they are able to identify and support themselves, their family, friends and neighbours when mental health issues arise. The facilitator will often travel a five hour round trip to deliver the workshops to some of the most isolated and severely affected communities impacted by drought, bushfires and COVID-19, across the East Gippsland and Wellington

Shires. The workshops provide a tool box of resources, information and strategies, tailored specifically for agricultural communities, delivered by people working in the agricultural industry.

Social prescribing

Neighbourhood houses have been early participants in social prescribing initiatives with a number of neighbourhood houses and neighbourhood house networks initiating social prescription projects across the state.

Thirty-two per cent of neighbourhood houses indicated they were involved in a social prescription project or initiative. The table below outlines the types of involvement.

Table 7: Involvement in social prescription programs by neighbourhood houses

	Percentage of Neighbourhood Houses	Number of Neighbourhood Houses
We are managing a social prescribing project / partnership	7%	29
We are a non-leading partner in a social prescribing project	11%	44
People are prescribed to us by a social prescribing project	14%	54

Over the four-day data collection period, these neighbourhood houses reported handling **379 social prescription referrals**.

Table 8: Sources of social prescription referrals

	Number of Neighbourhood Houses
GPs / GP clinics	55
Hospital	22
Community Health Service	90
Allied health professionals (e.g. psychologists, physiotherapists etc.)	64

Other	46
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Enterprises

This year's survey asked new questions about neighbourhood house run social enterprises. Eighty-six neighbourhood houses run a diverse range of enterprises serving different purposes such as fundraising, providing training positions for accredited training students, providing volunteering opportunities, and even providing grants to community groups. Some Neighbourhood Houses run multiple enterprises.

Table 9: Social enterprises run by neighbourhood houses according to type

Enterprises	Number
Cafe	22
Catering Service	20
Op Shop, resale and upcycling	27
Book shop	5
Mechanic shop	2
Repair cafe/shop	5
Newspaper	11
Art /craft e.g. gallery, stall or supplies	8
Plants	4
Other	26
Total Responses	130

Other enterprises range from First Nation’s cultural immersion tours to handmade breast prosthesis, a golf course, a hair and beauty salon and bunting hire and sales – to name a few.



Bridge Darebin – Moon Rabbit

Moon Rabbit is an environmentally innovative social enterprise café in Preston. The café is a training site for Bridge Darebin’s Tiered Transitional Training (TTT) program, a tailored work-readiness program for young people with additional learning needs. Moon Rabbit serves the community by providing an income stream for Bridge Darebin’s underfunded community programs, and by providing affordable, accessible package-free food through their Bulk Foods Collective. When COVID-19 hit the hospitality sector hard, Moon Rabbit launched zero-waste takeaway, delivery and a brand new mobile café.

Appendix A: Community value calculation methods

Social Connection

In 2018, Deloitte Access Economics produced a report¹ that determined a monetary value for the community connection work of Morwell Neighbourhood House. The method, detailed in the report, uses existing research to calculate the contribution of community connection to a Quality-Adjusted-Life-Years (QALYs)². Quality-Adjusted-Life-Years is the most widely used approach for estimating quality of life benefits in economic evaluations³.

Different methods have been used to estimate the number of people who may potentially obtain social connection benefits. The 2018 report assumed that 50% of the unique visitors to the neighbourhood house were one off or infrequent for the purpose of their calculations. Appendix C of their report outlines the detail of their method.

A subsequent Deloitte report⁴ assumed that only new participants obtained social connection benefits. This assumption effectively discounts the importance of maintaining connections over the life course. Analysis from the Neighbourhood House Participants Survey⁵ and the broader social isolation and loneliness literature⁶ identify the value of maintaining social connections.

The 2017 Neighbourhood House Participants Survey respondents clearly distinguished between the two distinct benefits used by Deloitte; “meet new people/make friends” and “spend time with other people as benefits”. The first benefit implies creating or expanding social networks through the Neighbourhood House whereas the latter implies maintaining existing social connections within the Neighbourhood House. Where both benefits were selected, the implication is that relationships are in a formative or expansion stage, or they have connection in the Neighbourhood House but want to make more.

¹ http://www.morwellnh.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/MNH_Social-Impact-Analysis_May-2018_.pdf

² https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/Value_of_Statistical_Life_guidance_note.pdf

³ <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/illicit-pubs-needle-return-1-rep-toc-illicit-pubs-needle-return-1-rep-5-illicit-pubs-needle-return-1-rep-5-2>

⁴ <https://mannagumcommunity.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/nhg-sroi-2020.pdf>

⁵ [Social isolation and loneliness - a neighbourhood house perspective](#)

⁶ https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/resources/408362_0318_bl1366_hrnt.pdf

NHVIC uses the number of people attending programmed activities to calculate social connection benefit because:

- Programmed activities are group activities run over a period of time and therefore not attended in a one-off or infrequent way,
- People maintaining existing relationships are not excluded
- The figure is conservative as it may exclude regular service users such as drop-in, food relief or other regular informal visitors that could potentially obtain a social connection benefit⁷ but are not participating in programmed activities.

Volunteers are also included for the above reasons, consistent with their inclusion in the 2017 participant survey.

The number of weekly participants in programmed activity plus volunteers is multiplied by the percentage of participants that identified “meeting new people/making friends” and/or “spending time with others” as benefits of attending their neighbourhood house based on each Neighbourhood House’s 2017 Participants Survey⁸. These two reported benefits are used in the Deloitte calculations and are most strongly associated with participants who identified attending various programmed activity types including, social and support groups, job training and support and other courses and classes.

The \$ Values are expressed in 2021 equivalents i.e., Quality Adjusted Life Year value of \$222,000⁹, which is consistent with Deloitte’s method.

The value of your Neighbourhood House’s increased social connection is calculated using this formula: *Number of participants in activities and volunteers X 1 QALY (\$222,000) X percentage of people identifying a social connection benefit X contribution of social connection to a QALY (3.84%) X the extent to which contribution of social connection to a QALY can be attributed to attending the Neighbourhood House (28.57%)/52 (weeks).*

The use of the participants in programmed activities as the basis for the calculation is conservative as it excludes regular attendees that receive a connection benefit through drop in, food relief or other non-program activities.

⁷ 2% of all participants in the 2017 participant survey attended solely to use a service and identified a social connection benefit

⁸ Where A Neighbourhood House’s participant data are absent or unreliable due to sample size, an average of Neighbourhood Houses in similar sized communities with similar incomes is used. Income is a proxy for volume of activities delivered through a Neighbourhood House.

⁹ <https://obpr.pmc.gov.au/resources/guidance-assessing-impacts/value-statistical-life>

Deloitte further calculate the value of increased connection through increased participation in the broader community due to participation at the Neighbourhood House. This was calculated using the formula above for 10% of the participants.

Volunteering

Volunteering value is based on the replacement cost of volunteers' labour. This is valued at \$52.54 per hour derived from the "State of Volunteering" replacement cost calculator for volunteers aged 55 -64¹⁰.

The formula for calculating the community value of volunteering is: *Number of volunteer hours undertaken X volunteer hourly replacement rate*

This is a conservative valuation. Replacement cost figure allows for some aging of Neighbourhood House volunteer population which averaged 50 years of age in 2012. The replacement cost for a 50-year-old is 7% greater than the figure used here.

In addition, the valuation does not include the value of the services provided as a result of volunteering or the contribution to the economy and taxation from participating in volunteering, e.g. cost of travel to the place of volunteering.

Improved health

Deloitte¹¹ established a method to value improved health through increased physical activity. The method assumes 50% of participants in physical activity programs would otherwise be inactive. It calculates avoided health costs at \$95.19 per person annually in 2020 financial year dollars. This equates to \$1.83 per week.

The formula used for calculating the value of improved health is: *Number of participants in physical activity groups x 50% x 95.19 / 52 (weeks)*

Emergency relief

Food and groceries

The value to community of emergency food relief is based on work undertaken by Foodbank in Australia¹². Their social return on investment analysis determined that food

¹⁰ [Volunteer Replacement Cost Calculator - State of Volunteering](#)

¹¹ <https://mannagumcommunity.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/nhg-sroi-2020.pdf>

¹² <https://www.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Foodbank-Hunger-Report-2014.pdf>

relief was valued at an average \$20.05 per kilogram of food in 2014 dollars. This valuation included the value of:

- Improved physical health (children)
- Better performance at school (students)
- Better social relationships
- Increased sense of self-worth
- Improved standard of living
- Improved physical health
- Increased emotional wellbeing
- Reduced waste and greenhouse emissions.

While the cost of food has increased since 2014, the change in value of the social benefits is unclear. For this reason, we have retained the \$20.05 figure, making this a conservative evaluation.

The formula for calculating the community value of food and groceries is: *Number of Kgs distributed in 4 days X \$20.05*

Food vouchers

The community value of providing food vouchers is based on the dollar value of vouchers given out. This is a conservative valuation as it does not include the benefit derived from accessing food such as improved health and wellbeing, improved school performance for children etc.

The formula for calculating the community value of food vouchers is: *Total \$ value of food vouchers distributed in 4 days*

Cash/prepaid or gift cards

The community value of providing cash/prepaid or gift cards is based on the dollar value of cash or gift cards given out. This is a conservative valuation as it does not include the benefit derived from items purchased such as improved health and wellbeing, improved school performance for children, added value to the economy etc.

The formula used for calculating the community value of cash/prepaid or gift cards is: *Total \$ value of cash/prepaid or gift cards distributed in 4 days*

Fuel Vouchers

The community value of providing fuel vouchers is based on the dollar value of vouchers given out. This is a conservative valuation as it does not include the benefit derived from increased access to transport or the alternative use of funds that would otherwise have

been used for transport such as improved health and wellbeing, improved school performance for children etc. It also does not include benefits to the local economy.

The formula used for calculating the community value of fuel vouchers is: *Total \$ value of fuel vouchers distributed in 4 days*

Bill payments

The community value of providing bill payments is based on the dollar value of bills paid by the Neighbourhood House for individuals in need. This is a conservative valuation as it does not include the benefit derived from access to services for which bills were paid or the alternative use of funds that would otherwise have been used for bills such as improved health and wellbeing, improved school performance for children etc. It also does not include benefits to the broader economy.

The formula used for calculating the community value of bill payments is: *Total \$ value of participants' bills paid in 4 days*

Public transport cards

The community value of providing public transport cards is based on the dollar value of public transport cards given out. This is a conservative valuation as it does not include the benefit derived from increased access to transport or the alternative use of funds that would otherwise have been used for transport such as improved health and wellbeing, improved school performance for children, etc.

The formula used for calculating the community value of public transport cards is: *Total \$ value of public transport cards distributed in 4 days*

Services

Except for school breakfast clubs, service valuations in this section do not include additional benefits from the service such as improved health, job prospects or employment nor the auspiced community groups' outcomes. This is due to the absence of appropriate research that quantifies these benefits.

Facilities Usage

The community value of facilities usage is based on the number of hours of room use by external groups and organisations per month and the cost of hiring an equivalent space locally as determined by each Neighbourhood House. This figure reflects value provided to the community rather than income received as rooms and facilities are often made available to community groups at heavily discounted rates or gratis. The value also does not include

the benefits to community of the room use activity e.g., improved health, improved access to information or services, reduced cost of services, increased economic activity etc relative to the activity type provided.

The formula used for calculating the community value of room hire is: *Total number of hours of room hire in 4 days X cost per hour of local equivalent (either supplied or \$30).*

Internet/computer usage

The community value of internet/ computer usage is based on the number of hours of internet or computer use by individuals in an average month. This is benchmarked to the cost of a commercially available equivalent i.e., internet kiosk regardless of whether a commercial alternative is available. Note that free Wi-Fi is not an equivalent as there is no support or equipment made available. Commercial rates from \$3-\$5¹³ have been benchmarked. The lower rate is used to account for the variation in the equipment and software provided. The rate does not include non-market benefits such as family connection, benefits from accessing or managing government services, etc.

The formula used for calculating the community value of internet/computer use is: *Total number of hours of internet/computer in 4 days X \$2*

Resume assistance

The community value of resume assistance is based on the cost of a resume service for a fee. The fee was benchmarked at the median price of \$50 on airtasker.com¹⁴. The value was discounted to \$30 to account for the fact that Neighbourhood Houses may provide a participant with assistance in developing a resume rather than creating a full resume as a service.

The formula used for calculating the community value of resume assistance is: *Total number of resumes assisted with in 4 days x \$30*

Auspicing other organisations

The community value of auspicing other organisations is asked on the cost of purchasing public liability cover which groups would have to take out if they were not covered by the

¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/dsinternet512/?rf=710935435612179>
<https://www.facebook.com/galaxysonicgaming>

¹⁴ <https://www.airtasker.com/writing/resume-writing/>

Neighbourhood House under auspicing arrangements. The price is benchmarked at over \$1,928 for annual cover provided by Local Community Insurance Services¹⁵

The formula used for calculating the community value of auspicing other organisations is:
Total number of organisations auspiced in 2021 x \$1,928

Community lunch, frozen or other meals

The community value of offering community lunch, frozen or other meals is based on the cost of purchasing a meal commercially, this has been benchmarked at \$10 per meal. This is benchmarked based on the prices quoted by ING, and numbeo.com¹⁶ ranging from \$13 to \$25. It is discounted to \$10 per meal to account for regional price variation.

While many meals provided at community lunches are likely to be a form of emergency relief, participants may attend community lunches for other reasons such as for company or a lack of cooking skills. Because we are unable to distinguish between the two, meals provided are not valued as emergency relief.

The formula used for calculating the community value of community lunches, frozen or other meals is: *Total number of individual meals served/provided in an average month x 12 months x \$10*

School aged breakfast clubs

The value to community of food provided through school breakfast clubs is based on work undertaken by Foodbank in Australia¹⁷. Their social return on investment analysis determined that school breakfast clubs were valued at an average \$110 per kilogram of food in 2014 dollars. This valuation included the value of:

- Improved physical health (children)
- Better performance at school (students)

Based on data from their report, the average breakfast is valued at \$31.40 in 2014 dollars. While the cost of food has increased since 2014, the change in value of the social benefits is unclear. For this reason, we have retained the \$31.40 figure making this a conservative evaluation.

¹⁵ <https://www.localcommunityinsurance.com.au/>

¹⁶ <https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/in/Melbourne> , <https://blog.ing.com.au/money-matters/saving/dust-off-your-lunch-boxes/#article-1811>,

¹⁷ <https://www.foodbank.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Foodbank-Hunger-in-the-Classroom-Report-May-2015.pdf>

The formula used for calculating the community value of school aged breakfast programs is: *Total number of individual breakfasts served/provided in an average month x 10 months x \$31.40*

Social enterprises

The community value of running social enterprises is based on the value of sales over 4 days from goods and services through Neighbourhood House run community enterprises. This reflects the market value of the goods and services provided. It does not include additional value generated such as avoided landfill, value of training and work experience, economic multipliers or the value of services or activities any profits support.

The formula used: *Total \$ value of social enterprise sales in 4 days*

Childcare

There is inadequate research to determine the value to community of occasional childcare beyond the market value of the service.

The formula used for calculating the community value of childcare is: *Total \$ value of government subsidies + parent fees in 2019 X 1*

Four-year-old Kinder

The community value of four-year-old Kinder is based on a 2019 Price Water House Coopers study¹⁸ which valued early childhood education in the year-before-school. It calculated a \$2 benefit for each dollar of costs.

The formula used for calculating the community value of four-year-old kinder is: *Total \$ value of government subsidies + parent fees in 2019 X 2*

Community value relative to inputs

Community value for every \$1 of Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP)

Shows the total calculable community value from the organisation for each dollar of NHCP funding received. It conservatively assumes that four weekdays of data accounts for 80% of weekly activity. The NHCP provides the platform to develop and attract funding for the various activities the organisation undertakes.

¹⁸ <https://www.thefrontproject.org.au/images/downloads/ECO%20ANALYSIS%20Full%20Report.pdf>

The formula used for calculating the community value for each dollar of NHCP is: *Total community value / 80% of weekly NHCP value*

Community value for every hour the Neighbourhood House is in use

Shows the total calculable community value as an average for each hour the Neighbourhood House is in use. 'In use' includes any time of the week or day when activities are occurring, regardless of whether the organisation is staffed or open to the broader public. It does not reflect concurrent usage i.e., multiple activities occurring simultaneously for one hour are counted as one hour of use, even if these activities occur at different sites operated by the organisation. It is essentially an expression of community value from a building utilisation perspective.

The formula used for calculating the community value for every hour the Neighbourhood House is in use is: *Total community value / hours the building/s was in use*

Employment

Employment is calculated using the total hours of paid employment response combined with multipliers derived from 2017 analysis by Deloitte ACCESS Economics on the Economic contribution of the Australian charity sector for the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission¹⁹. The multipliers are based on employment data for the development and housing sector classification. This classification covers much of the work done by Neighbourhood Houses including community development and training (multiplier = 1.39). This means that for every full-time equivalent employee, a further 0.39 full-time equivalent jobs are supported elsewhere in the economy due to the economic activity created by wage spending. Neighbourhood Houses engage in activities that fit in other classifications e.g., emergency relief, referral etc which fit within the social services classification (multiplier = 1.46) or recreational activities that fit within the culture and recreation (multiplier = 1.35). These classifications' multipliers are marginally higher and lower than the development and housing multiplier respectively, further supporting the use of a 1.39 employment multiplier for the sector.

The formula used for calculating the total employment effect is: *Total reported hours of paid employment / 38 X 1.39*

¹⁹ <https://www.acnc.gov.au/2Ftools/2Freports/2Feconomic-contribution-australian-charity-sector&usq=AOvVaw2R-20vVOybpm8ctvW5xsCY>