

Creating Modernised and Inclusive Neighbourhood Houses 2011-2012

Variation request to Darebin City Council to allocate unspent funds of \$109,750 for upgrades to Neighbourhood Houses



Darebin Neighbourhood House Network

The Darebin Neighbourhood House network consists of 7 Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres across the municipality. With support from Darebin Council, the houses offer a myriad of accredited and non accredited classes, support groups, childcare, playgroups, arts & crafts, volunteer opportunities and community development and welfare programs for the citizens of Darebin everyday.

Background

The *Creating Modernised and Inclusive Neighbourhood Houses* grant program was opened through the Victorian Department of Human Services and was designed to improve Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centre (NH&LC) infrastructure to increase community access to valuable programs and activities.

The grant was open to all Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres in Victoria. Five out of the seven NH&LC's in Darebin applied for the funding in order to activate a diverse range of upgrades to Council owned community buildings.

The DHS application process required \$1 for \$1 matched funding from Council to be eligible for the grant. Darebin City Council agreed to match the funding for each house and budgeted for this via the annual Capital Works application process. In October 2012, the Department of Human Services announced the successful grants. None of the Darebin Neighbourhood Houses received any funding via this process..

Variation Request

The Darebin Neighbourhood House Network would like Council to consider the request for Council funding allocated to each of the NH&LC projects be made available to enable modified upgrades at each site, without the requirement of the matched funding criteria.

Upgrade to Entrance and Kitchenette area

Funding request: \$30,000



Address: Corner Plant and Union Streets Northcote 3070
Phone: 9482 5100
Contact: Gina Wittingslow



Jika's community survey results showed over 700 participants utilise the centre every week. Usage figures from 2011 and 2012 showed a noticeable increase in this number and it is expected that Jika's ongoing partnerships will increase the number of users into the centre again in 2013. Jika's current space configuration is a major factor in determining capacity of the Centre to actively respond to the community's needs.

Our proposal will increase the ability of the Centre to engage the Northcote community, as well as encourage social interactions between the diverse users of the the centre.

The original project planned for an extension of our existing entrance, expanding the social space and kitchenette area, allowing for improved engagement and activities

The variation to the plan is to replace and rejuvenate the kitchenette area to create a more functional and accessible space for all our participants.

Kitchen Upgrade

Funding request: \$28,750



Address: 2 Kelvin Rd, Alphington 3078
Phone: 9499 7227
Contact: Becca Smith



The building currently housing the Alphington Community Centre was originally built as a maternal and child health centre and still retains many of the original features, including the highly utilised kitchen.

We would like to replace the kitchen with a more functional, modern one and also one that allows compliance with safe food handling. This will also enable us to utilise the kitchen for classes and events. We currently have 7 playgroups per week meeting here as well as health & fitness classes, art classes, toy libraries, low cost counselling, music groups, self-help groups and as a public and community space. The current kitchen is not accessible to many of our participants and is lacking in modern conveniences.

The original project planned was for an upgrade of the centre entrance, including installing a customer contact point, upgrading of the kitchen, increasing storage and installing a shade cloth over the sandpit/outdoor area.

The variation to the plan is to the kitchen to create a safer, more functional and accessible space for all our participants.

Entrance Upgrade

Funding Request: \$15,000

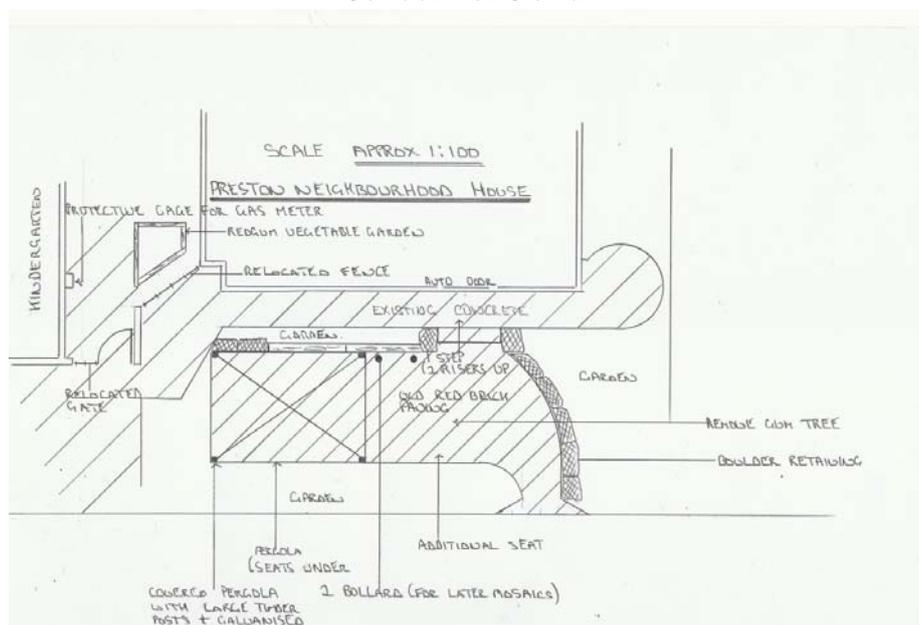
Preston Neighbourhood House input: \$18,000



Address: 218-220 High Street Preston

Phone: 9484 5806

Contact: Neil Gidman



Due to the unsuccessful application for DHS funding, Preston Neighbourhood House has committed to allocating \$18,000, adding to the \$15,000 committed by Council to ensure the project can go ahead as planned. A consultative process has identified the need for access to both an external / informal meeting area, together with provision of meeting and office space as priorities to facilitate improved access and participation by individuals and groups from our very diverse community. Further to this joint planning with local government will ensure PNH is able to work with council on meeting the changing needs across its community plans, and assist us as we work to embed the role of community development in PNH's strategic planning processes.

The original project plan was for an upgrade of our entrance as detailed below:

- improves access (particularly disability access) to the front entrance of the House,
- provides a sustainable garden space, a pleasant face to High Street and a useable meeting space,
- provides for an alternative meeting place for groups, outside in a pleasant, landscaped area,
- high usage areas will be paved,
- provides a pleasant meeting area for community use,
- allows Childcare parents a pleasant area to sit whilst waiting for their children,
- includes bollards which the children in occasional care will assist design.

Pottery Space Upgrade and Outdoor Awning Funding request - \$14,000



131 Shaftesbury Pde Thornbury 3071

Phone: 9480 0466

Contact: Ursula Harrison



TWNH Pottery programs are popular with the local community as they provide creative, therapeutic and social opportunities for participants. There are no other community accessible pottery programs in the local area since the closure of the Northcote Potteries. There are currently more than 60 participants per week.

The installation of a sheltered waiting area for parents and children waiting at the beginning and end of childcare sessions is essential to provide a separate waiting area from the outdoor pottery area, and an all weather covered area. It is important to separate the waiting area from the pottery area due to dust hazards, and the lack of space. An all weather waiting area is required as parents with prams and pushers often attend and are forced to leave these in an open and unprotected area outside.

The current storage area is overcrowded and poses a potential occupational health and safety threat to staff when they are removing and stacking equipment.

The improvements include: installation of wet area flooring for the pottery and other art programs; additional shelving and storage for the pottery programs and additional storage for outdoor play equipment; outdoor awning for weather protection for childcare families and other program participants.

All Weather Outdoor Structure

Funding request - \$22,000



64 Clyde St Thornbury 3071

Phone: 9480 1364

Contact: Renate Tratter



This project seeks to provide an all weather structure-outdoor 'room' to be located in the new SPAN food garden. The all weather structure/outdoor 'room' would include bench and storage space, sink (including a wheelchair accessible sink) and a water tank.

This new community space will provide much needed infrastructure particularly an all weather outdoor space (not currently available in the food garden) for participants to conduct a range of activities which cannot be undertaken within the main facility. These activities include gardening related activities such as potting up and propagation, craft work, and an outdoor gathering place and refuge from inclement (or other) weather. Much needed storage space will be provided for tools and equipment. Although an organic garden, storage space is essential for housing fertilisers, etc as children will also be onsite.

SPAN Community House is a member of the Horticultural Therapy Association and is keen to further develop its outdoor and gardening programs. The lack of storage and an all weather structure in the food garden is imposing limitations we would like to address. The Clyde Street kindergarten and the Clyde St Playgroup Association (amongst others) are also interested in accessing the food garden.

Variation request: to modify the existing plan for an outdoor shelter (quotation submitted by Adrienne Cleaver Leong, Building Project Management, City of Darebin) as negotiated or consider other options eg Colourbond shed with some adaptations.