



Key Messages

Info Sheet 1

2026 Budget Campaign



Background information that Neighbourhood Houses can use when advocating to local MPs communities and others.

Who We Are:

- There are currently 401 Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria with contracts for Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) funding from the State Government.
- There are at least another 25 Neighbourhood Houses that do not receive any NHCP funding.
- 185,000 Victorians access Neighbourhood Houses every week (2024 Neighbourhood House Survey).
- Over 75% of Neighbourhood Houses receive funding of only 25 hours or less for weekly coordination.
- There is at least one Neighbourhood House in every electorate (excluding Niddrie) and in every Local Government Area.
- Almost one third of Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria are located in State Marginal seats
- In an average week Victorian Neighbourhood Houses deliver programs and activities addressing issues including digital literacy/inclusion, supporting disengaged youth, unemployment, childcare, emergency management, food security, community resilience, family violence, mental health and well-being, training and education, integration of new arrivals and refugee communities, rural isolation, issues that impact on older Victorians, offender programs, social enterprises, community resilience and community connectedness.



Other Key Statistics:

- **5,900** jobs and **12,000** volunteers supported
- **\$921 million** in measurable community value — a **\$11.02** return on every \$1 invested
- Ran over **426,000** group activity sessions and provided **10,400** referrals
- Provided over **244 tonnes** of food relief each month
- Supported **5,945** other community groups
- **94-96%** of participants said that the activity they participated in at their local Neighbourhood House had a positive or very positive impact on their physical and emotional wellbeing, and on their social connections.

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What we need:

1. Increase funding for Neighbourhood Houses by 25%.

- Due to rising costs and increasing community need, the current level of funding is no longer adequate – in 2023 and 2024, nearly half of all Neighbourhood Houses operated at a loss.
- The NHCP was originally designed along an 80/20 split: 80% of the funding should cover the wages of the Manager, while 20% was intended to provide operational funding. Due to inadequate indexation over many years, the NHCP doesn't even meet the costs of employing a manager, with nothing left to keep the lights on and the doors open.

Funding required: 2025-26: \$11.7M

Total over 4 years: \$46.75M*

2. Support 25 Neighbourhood Houses who do not currently receive any ongoing funding.

- There are currently 25 neighbourhood houses that receive no funding at all, yet half a million people have been added to Victoria's population since the last new Neighbourhood House was funded.

Funding required: 2025-26: \$3.241M

Total over 4 years: \$12.963M*

3. Develop a fund for the establishment of 5 additional Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria's growth areas annually.

- Many of Victoria's regional and outer metropolitan growth areas have no Neighbourhood House. We're calling on the government to fund 20 new neighbourhood houses in underserved growth areas over the next four years to ensure our newest neighbourhoods don't miss out on essential community infrastructure.

Funding required: 2025-26: \$684,130

Total over 4 years: \$6.482 M*

*includes indexation

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Why are we campaigning?

- Neighbourhood Houses have faced rising costs, increasing community need and an erosion of core funding. **Around half of all Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria are running at a loss.**
- The NHCP was designed to cover staff wages and operational costs, but due to inadequate indexation over many years, the NHCP doesn't even meet the costs of employing a manager, with nothing left to keep the lights on and the doors open.
- **Some Neighbourhood Houses are at risk of closure if there is no increase in funding.**
- There are currently at least 25 neighbourhood houses that receive no funding from the NHCP at all. Many of Victoria's regional and outer metropolitan growth areas have no Neighbourhood House. **Yet, half a million people have been added to Victoria's population since the last new Neighbourhood House was funded.**
- NHCP funding is not keeping pace with the growing demands of increasing population in Victoria, let alone with the levels laid out in the program. This is particularly true in growth corridors and where demands stemming from rural isolation or where there have been closures of industries that previously provided employment.

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@neighbourhoodhousesvic
nhvic.org.au/2526-campaign

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