



Neighbourhood Houses Survey 2013





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The Neighbourhood Houses Survey 2013 incorporates data from 367 of the 370 Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) funded Neighbourhood Houses & Learning Centres (NHs) (99% of the total)¹. 2013 survey analysis is based on 95.4% of the total NHs in Victoria which includes data from 10 of the estimated 25 non-NHCP funded Houses.

For the second consecutive year this report relates to actual figures without extrapolation².

Summary of key highlights and trends

- **Participation:** Over 157,400 people visit NHs each week in Victoria
- **Leveraging:** For every dollar invested by the NHCP, Neighbourhood Houses raise \$6.23, an increase of 17% (\$5.29 in 2012)
- **Value adding:** The average NH delivers 252% on its NHCP funding requirements
- **Volunteering opportunities:** Nearly 5,500 people volunteer at a NH each week. This represents more than 14 people per NH per week with an estimated value of over \$20 million
- **Vital community infrastructure:** Communities are making use of their NH's for 52.7 hours per week on average – almost 8 hours per day, 7 days a week
- **Getting out of the House:** 54% of NHs deliver programs/activities in facilities owned or managed by other organisations.
- **'Housemates':** In 2013 in an average month, NHs engaged in 3,040 active partnerships, or 8.1 regular partnerships per NH per month an increase of 7% from 2012.

1. The Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres (ANHLC) estimates there are 395 NHs in Victoria. This reflects the history of initiative taken by some communities to create their own Neighbourhood House's independently of government funding through the NHCP and potentially not yet identified through formal or informal channels.

2. As part of ANHLC's commitment to quality improvement a number of checks were made in relation to the 2013 survey data with respondents given an opportunity to correct their 2013 responses if appropriate.

Location

Approximately 50% of NHs are in rural or regional Victoria.

	% of NHs	Number of NHs
Metropolitan	51.5%	194
Regional/Rural: population greater than 10,000	13.0%	49
Rural: population between 3,000 and 10,000	14.3%	54
Rural: population below 3,000	21.2%	80

Participants

2013 data confirms that extrapolations of participant numbers prior to 2012 understated levels of community participation in NHs.

- 418 people on average use their NH each week (2012: 417 people)
- Over 157,400 people visit NHs each week across Victoria
- There was a statewide 5% increase in weekly participation in activities in NHs - 106,904 people or 284 per NH

Programs

Health and wellbeing courses accounted for the greatest proportion of total NH activity³

2013 program areas	% of total activity 2013
Health and wellbeing courses (eg walking, yoga, exercise, recreational etc)	15.4%
Art and craft	9.4%
Accredited vocational education & training	8.2%
Pre-accredited/Non-accredited adult education & training	7.9%
Computer training / digital literacy	7.4%
Childcare	6.4%
English as a second language (ESL) training / English conversation	4.6%
Play Groups	4.0%
Self help groups	3.9%
Senior's Groups (60+)	3.8%
Life Skills programs & courses	3.4%
Family Support Programs	2.8%
Literacy & numeracy training	2.3%
Early childhood development programs (e.g. early literacy, language development)	2.1%
Community Choirs/Music/Theatre	2.0%

2013 program areas	% of total activity 2013
Alternative to School programs (VCAL, etc)	1.8%
Community Lunches / Social Eating Groups	1.8%
Volunteer training	1.7%
Languages Other Than English	1.5%
Outside School Hours Care / holiday programs	1.3%
Youth Groups (13-25)	1.3%
Community Transport (trips and outings)	1.2%
Personal Counselling Programs	1.2%
Environmental sustainability projects / groups	1.1%
Community Newspaper / magazine / newsletter	0.8%
Homework clubs	0.8%
Community Events/Festivals/Markets	0.7%
Parenting courses / groups	0.6%
Community Safety	0.4%
Disaster/emergency preparedness/recovery	0.2%

3. This was a focus of checking the data integrity with a number of corrections made to improve the accuracy of the analysis.

The 2013 data shows a decline in the number of Neighbourhood Houses delivering 19 program types while 11 others increased. The most significant reductions ranging from -5.6% to -3.9% were for Personal Counselling Programs, Environmental sustainability projects / groups, Community Transport, Community Newspaper / magazine / newsletter and Senior's Groups. Health and wellbeing courses, Community Choirs / Music / Theatre and Outside School Hours Care / holiday programs saw increases ranging from 3.2% to 2.3%.

Program/activity type	% of NHs involved 2013	% of NHs involved 2012
Health and wellbeing courses (eg walking, yoga, exercise, recreational etc)	93.9%	91.6%
Art & Craft	91.5%	93.0%
Computer training / digital literacy	78.8%	80.5%
Community Events/Festivals/Markets	77.2%	76.2%
Pre-accredited/Non-accredited adult education & training	63.7%	66.4%
Community Lunches / Social Eating Groups	61.8%	63.1%
Life Skills programs & courses	61.8%	61.5%
Volunteer training	59.2%	58.8%
Self help groups	58.4%	57.2%
Senior's Groups (60+)	55.7%	59.6%
Play Groups	53.6%	55.6%
Community Newspaper / magazine / newsletter	49.6%	53.9%
Community Choirs/Music/Theatre	43.5%	41.2%
Environmental sustainability projects / groups	43.0%	48.5%
Accredited vocational education & training	41.4%	41.7%
Community Transport (trips and outings)	39.0%	43.6%
Outside School Hours Care / holiday programs	38.2%	35.0%
Childcare	37.1%	39.8%
Family Support Programs	37.1%	37.9%
Community Safety	32.6%	35.8%
English as a second language (ESL) training / English conversation	32.1%	31.4%
Youth Groups (13-25)	30.8%	29.5%
Literacy & numeracy training	30.2%	33.9%
Languages Other Than English	26.8%	26.0%
Parenting courses / groups	26.0%	28.7%
Early childhood development programs (e.g. early literacy, language development)	21.8%	20.6%
Personal Counselling Programs	20.4%	26.0%
Disaster/emergency preparedness/recovery	17.8%	19.2%
Homework clubs	15.9%	16.3%
Alternative to School programs (VCAL, etc)	9.8%	10.3%

The number of NHs delivering programs and activities in community languages and/or 'determined by' specific groups were quantified for the first time in 2012. The aim was to establish a better understanding of which groups are engaged in NHs across all demographics, and their involvement in decision making related to determining how their needs are being met.

The 2013 results indicate that participants from vulnerable groups remain actively involved in program planning and design, particularly seniors and people with disability.

Program/activity type	% of NHs 2013	% of NHs 2012
Determined by senior Victorians (60+)	71%	71%
Determined by people with a disability	56%	55%
Determined by men aged 45-64	51%	49%
Determined by people with mental health issues	40%	40%
Determined by young people (13-25)	40%	40%
Determined by single parents	28%	23%
Determined by public housing tenants	20%	18%
Delivered in community languages	15%	17%
Determined by teenaged parents	10%	10%
Determined by Aborigines and/or Torres Strait Islanders	11%	8%
Determined by gay, lesbian, bisexual and / or transgender people	6%	5%

Data collected in 2013 provides evidence of a 5% increase in the number of NHs running activities led by single parents (2013: 28%) In addition there was a 3% increase for Aborigines and /or Torres Strait Islanders (2013: 11%)

Neighbourhood House Infrastructure

In 2013 a new category 'Informal space for people to hang out and meet people' was included in recognition of the role this informal space plays in supporting social inclusion within communities as well as providing a potential catalyst for the development of new networks and community programming.

Infrastructure type	Number of NHs	% of NHs
Small meeting / activity rooms (for 20 people or less)	360	95.5%
Photo copier / printer / fax services	360	95.5%
Public computer / internet access / kiosks	290	77%
Large meeting / activity rooms (for more than 20 people)	287	76%
ICT training rooms / Computer labs	272	72%
Informal space for people to hang out and meet people	248	66%
Community Kitchens	187	50%
Playgrounds	169	45%
Community gardens	166	44%
Child care rooms / facilities	160	42%
Halls	128	34%
Public telephone access points	123	33%
Men's Sheds / Community Sheds	100	26.5%
Community buses / cars	59	16%
Community/social enterprise (e.g. café, catering, op shop, etc.)	61	16%

Whilst the number of Community Enterprises supported through NHs increased in 2013 (n=6), there has been a significant reduction in the number of Men's Sheds (n=12) attached to NHs.

Services

The 2013 survey quantified services provided through NHs. The most commonly available services available through NHs in Victoria are outlined as follows:

- 92% of NHs provide room hire
- 80% provide referral (formal & informal)
- 79% provide public computer/internet access
- 64.5% provide gardening groups/clubs/activities
- 59% provide opportunities for community consultation
- 58% provide Community Information/Citizens Advice Bureau services
- 54% auspice other organisations
- 54% provide community advocacy
- 46% provide a library service / book swap

Some 30-40% of NHs provide:

- Childcare
- Resume services
- Reception for community hubs/other services
- Grant writing support

Approximately 25% of NH's provide tax help, emergency relief and visitor/tourist information services.

In the past 12 months in Victoria, NHs:

- were involved in 2,277 (2012: 2,086) community events – an average of 6 community events per NH.
- managed 1,399 projects (2012: 1,349) – an average 3.6 projects per NH.
- Invested in 2,369 funding applications (2012: 2,218) – an average of 6 funding applications per NH.
- Collaborated in 902 (2012: 865) projects managed by other organisations – average of 2+ external projects per NH.

Fifty four per cent of NHs delivered programs / activities in facilities other than their main premises which are owned or managed by other organisations (n=203)⁴.

Governance structure

Governance structures remain consistent with 2012 figures.

- 86.7% of respondents are Incorporated Associations with Committee/Board
- 5.4% are Council managed, 66% of these with an Advisory Committee/Steering Group
- 5.3% in auspice arrangement with an NGO, half with an Advisory Committee/Steering Group
- 2.1% co-operatives or company limited by guarantee.

Committees

In Victoria, 2,993 people serve on Neighbourhood House committees of management. The average committee of management has approximately 8 members. These figures have been consistent for the past 4 years (2012: 8, 2011: 8.7, 2010:8.3).

Each committee spends just over 33 hours per month on committee business (up from 32 hours/month in 2012) or 143,068 hours per year⁵. This is equivalent to more than 72.4 people working full-time on community governance each year.

4. This is down on last year's figure of 236 due to refinement of the question to only include use of facilities other than the NH's main premises.

Income

Almost 56% of NHs successfully attracted increases in funding. The number of NHs reporting a decrease in funding has consistently increased by approximately 2% over the last 2 years, 28.1% this year up from 26.6% in 2012 which is again up from 24.4% in 2011.

Annual income	% NHs in 2013	% NHs in 2012	% NHs in 2011
<\$250,000	59.6%	61.5%	64.0%
\$250,000-\$500,000	21.2%	21.8%	22.2%
>\$500,001	18.5%	16.7%	13.8%

The percentage of NHs with an annual income over \$500,000 has increased steadily over the past four years, though the majority (59.6%) remain in the category of less than \$250,000, and nearly 20% have an income below \$100,000 per year (n=71). There is evidence of a nominal increase in NH income in 2013. The median has increased to \$194,341 (2012: \$192,695).

Income sources⁶

- 97% of survey respondents were NHCP funded
- 98% of NHs generate their own income with an estimated total value of approximately \$48 million annually
- with 83% receive local government funding worth over \$11.6 million annually (2012: \$10.5 million)
- The median funding from local government saw a significant increase in 2013 to \$19,236, up from \$12,950 in 2012. This ranges from \$0-\$670,000⁷.
- 57.3% receive Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) funding
- 33.4% receive Federal government funding, those NHs with an annual income over \$500,000 being twice as likely to receive Federal government funding
- 10.9% raise funds from corporate sponsorship, 11.5% in 2012
- 50 NHs raise philanthropic funds, up from 30 in 2012.

Income leveraging

For every dollar invested by the government NHCP, NHs managed to raise an additional \$6.23. This was an increase of 17%. (2012: \$5.29, 2011: \$5.91)

Each visit to a NH costs the NHCP \$2.81 representing a productivity gain when the increase in the NHCP due to Equal Remuneration Order increases and indexation is factored in.

Neighbourhood Houses raise **\$6.23** for every **\$1** invested by the NHCP

5. 33.21 hours/month x 359 Houses (the 95.4% of respondents that have a COM) x 12 months.

6. Data collection in this section of the 2013 survey was checked for errors to improve accuracy in the data based on a review of the 2012 survey.

7. This does not include in-kind contributions such as subsidised rent, maintenance etc.

Workforce

Employment growth slowed significantly in 2013 compared to 2012.

- 32.1% NHs report an increase in paid staff hours in the past 12 months, down 14.4% from 2012
- 17.6% report a decrease in paid staff hours, up 3.6% from 2012
- 50.3% report no change, up 10.8% from 2012

Volunteers

- In 2013 5,356 people volunteered at a NH each week, an average of 14.2 volunteers per NH. This compares with 2012: 5,000 people, 2011: 5,265 people and 2010: 3080 people.
- The reported average number of volunteer hours per week for each NH is up on 2012 figures from 48.3 hours to 54.9 hours, a 13.6% increase.
- The estimated cash value of this voluntary contribution sector-wide is over \$20.5 million per year, up by nearly \$2 million from 2012.
- 1,314 student / volunteer work experience placements were provided in 2013, an average of 3.5 placements per NH.
- 1,139 (2012:882) people were supported to meet their mutual obligation requirements: 42.7% (2012:39%) of NHs support mutual obligation placements, with an average of 7 (2012:5.6) individuals per participating NH.
- 628 (2012:448) people fulfilled a Community Based Order in a NH (14% of NHs hosting CBOs (2012:16%))

Adding value to investment in Neighbourhood Houses

The average NH is supported by paid staff for 34.4 hours per week – this has remained largely unchanged with 2012 figure of 34.2 and 2010 figure of 35.2 hours per week.

The average Neighbourhood House is in use for 52.7 hours per week (also consistent with previous years 55.3 hours per week in 2012 and 52.6 hours per week in 2011), equal to 7.5 hours per day, 7 days a week.

The average NHCP funding is for 24 coordination hours per House/Centre per week. The NHCP guidelines require NHs "to be open for at least as many hours as the NHCP provides coordination funding, and provide at least twice as many activity hours as the NHCP funded coordination hours."

Given NHs are funded on average for 24 hours coordination per week but are being staffed on average for 34.4 hours, with an additional 10.4 hours of outreach, this suggests NHs are delivering 186% on their NHCP funding requirements (an increase from 2012 figures of 7.5 hours outreach and 173% of the NHCP funding requirement).

When the 12.6 hours that Neighbourhood Houses are staffed by volunteers without paid staff present are factored into this equation, NHs are delivering 252% against NHCP funding requirements

Partnerships

There are 3,040 active partnerships in NHs in an average month (2012:2,841), an average of 8 regular partnerships per NH per month (7.6 in 2012)⁸. These figures are consistent with previous years' results (cf. 8.5 partnerships per NH in 2011 and 8.9 partnerships per NH in 2010).

NHs representation on external groups has remained virtually unchanged since 2012, with 85% of NHs represented on a total of 1,554 external groups, or an average of 4 external groups per NH.

In the past year (2013), 3,264 groups used NHs. This represents an average of 8.6 groups per NH per month⁹. 2,083 groups were supported by NHs and 549 groups are auspiced by NHs, an increase of 21% on the 2012 figure.

Types of group auspiced	Percent of NHs providing auspice
Recreation or leisure group(s), including art, craft, etc	22.8%
Self-help group(s)	21.8%
Other (please specify)	18.8%
Men's Shed	16.2%
Playgroup or other children's activities	15.6%
Health / Physical activity group(s)	13.8%
CALD group(s)	9.3%
Disability group(s)	9.3%
U3A / Senior Citizens	9.3%
Mental health group(s)	6.1%
Child Care	5.8%
Indigenous group(s)	2.4%

For further information

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8. 97% of NHs work in regular partnerships in an average month

9. 2010 survey suggests the majority pay \$5 per week or less for room hire.



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