SECTION SIX

IDENTIFYING SECONDARY RESOURCES

IDENTIFYING SECONDARY RESOURCES

Introduction

Building a knowledge of resources that can support community initiatives

The third step in a Community Partnering project is to identify secondary community resources such as:

- Community associations
- Local institutions
- Businesses; and
- Physical resources.

This step augments the second, which has positioned people who are marginalised, disadvantaged and isolated as the primary resources of any community.

The aim of the third step is to build up a knowledge of the secondary resources that could contribute to and support the development of community initiatives.

The third step can be undertaken at the same time as the second, with community researchers and other members of the project team involved in the tasks.

Community Associations and Local Institutions

Identifying who can support community initiatives

Objective

To identify and build relationships with a range of community associations and local institutions.

Key Tasks

1. Identify community associations that may be interested in supporting community initiatives, such as neighbourhood houses, residents' groups, sports clubs, hobby and art groups, and service clubs.
2. Identify local institutions that may be interested in contributing such as churches, schools, TAFE colleges and universities, government departments and agencies.
3. Contact the associations and institutions to let them know about the project and to explore potential connections.

Tools and Tips

The community researchers will be in contact with community associations and local institutions through their work with people who are marginalised. Build on these connections.

Many local Councils produce directories of community groups, hobby groups, sports clubs, schools and so on.

A good way to keep in touch with community associations and local institutions is to make sure they receive regular updates on the project.

Community groups are often looking for speakers; offer to talk about the project.

Time

6 months (approximately).

Outcome

Good working relationships with community associations and local institutions.

Businesses

Businesses have potential to contribute to community initiatives

Objective

To identify ways in which businesses might be able to contribute to community initiatives.

Key Tasks

1. Identify a range of small, medium and large businesses, or business groups (like the Chamber of Commerce).
2. Make a time to talk with the managers or owners.
3. Interview managers or owners about the ways businesses currently contribute to the community, and potential avenues for contributing.
4. Collate some of the examples of business contributions.

Tools and Tips

This does not have to be a comprehensive survey of all businesses. The idea is to assemble some examples of business contributions and provide some ideas for resourcing community initiatives.

An example of the topics to cover in an interview with business managers or owners is included on page 84. The outcome of one interview is on page 85.

Time

2 months (approximately).

Outcome

Examples of ways businesses currently or could potentially contribute to community initiatives.

Sample Only

Topics to Cover with Businesses

1. What are some examples of business practices that make a contribution to the community? These examples may be ones that people are involved in, or they may know of them from the local area or from elsewhere. Practices might include:

- Sponsorship of community events (like sporting clubs, art awards, fairs)
- Donations of equipment, products and materials (e.g. donating products to non-profit groups)
- Contributions of time and expertise (e.g. legal or financial companies who offer their expertise to non-profit groups; companies who allow staff time off for voluntary work)
- Community services (e.g. pharmacies who pick up and deliver prescriptions free of charge to pensioners)
- Education, training and employment initiatives (e.g. developing training programs for young people)
- Purchasing policies (e.g. purchasing locally produced products and services)
- Investment policies (e.g. providing low interest loans to local non-profit groups)

2. How are decisions made about community contributions?

- Is there a strategic plan for 'investing in the community'?
- Are contributions made to groups that business people have personal ties with?
- Are they looking to support groups that are likely to become self-sufficient?

3. What are the benefits for businesses of making community contributions?

- Contribution to community well-being.
- Enhancing company image and good will of communities.
- Improved employee motivation and commitment.

4. What are the obstacles to making community contributions?

- No coordinating group to manage and direct contributions.
- Difficulty of deciding between the many different groups that make requests.

The following are useful references about business contributions:

America, Richard, 1995, *Philanthropy and Economic Development*, Greenwood Press, Connecticut.

Christie, Ian; Carley, Michael; and Fogarty, Michael, 1991, *Profitable Partnerships: A Report on Business Investment in the Community*, Policy Studies Institute, London.

Summary of Discussion with Local Restaurateur

1. The contribution of the restaurateur to the community:

- Sponsorship of the local eisteddfod, carols-by-candlelight and other performing arts events that have broad appeal.
- Sponsorship of community health initiatives.
- Contributions of food to the Salvation Army.
- Providing food scraps to a local worm farm that runs on ecological principles.
- Specifically employing and training young people who have a passion for cooking (in one case this involved financially helping a young person at risk of homelessness to find secure housing).
- Policy of purchasing and showcasing local and seasonal produce.
- Policy of displaying the work of local artists and artisans.

1a. Other contributions that the restaurateur would be interested in making:

- Opening up the restaurant kitchen and offering training to young single mothers in food preparation and budgeting.

2. How decisions are made about community contributions:

- The restaurateur has an interest in the performing arts, healthy living, and the welfare of young people, and specifically supports projects that will benefit these groups and causes.
- The restaurateur also supports community projects that are unlikely to be supported by other businesses.

3. The benefits of making these community contributions:

- Contributes to the overall quality of life in the community.
- Provides support for the groups and causes the restaurateur values.

4. What are the obstacles to making community contributions?

- Lack of an efficient way of making contact with groups.

Physical Resources

Objective

To identify unused or underused physical resources that could be used for community initiatives.

Key Tasks

1. Find some large and easy to read maps of the area.
2. Identify on the maps examples of unused or underused physical resources that could potentially be used for community initiatives. Resources might include industrial and commercial buildings, housing, halls and other public buildings, parks and bushland.

Unused physical resources can support community initiatives

Tools and Tips

This does not have to be a comprehensive survey of all physical resources in the community. The idea is to assemble examples of resources that could be used for community initiatives.

Walking around an area is an excellent way of finding out more about unused or underused resources. It also provides opportunities to talk with local residents about the project, and to find out what they know about physical resources in their neighbourhood.

Time

2 months (approximately).

Outcome

Examples of unused or underused physical resources that could by used for community initiatives (see page 87).

New Uses for Physical Resources in the Latrobe Valley

Unused or Underused Resource	New Use
Former Turnaround for Steam Locomotives	The Roundhouse Arts Centre
Old Butter Factory	Artists Resource Collective
Showground Buildings	WorkFocus (employment and training initiative)

Former Pre-School Buildings	Santa's Workshop and Creative Reuse Centre
Vacant Shops	Display Space for Santa's Workshop
Former Caravan Park	Community Garden
Old Industrial Premises	Community Workshed

SECTION SEVEN

GENERATING IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

GENERATING IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Introduction

The fourth step in a Community Partnering project is to generate ideas for community initiatives.

The strategy is to bring people who are marginalised, together for a community workshop. There are three main elements to the community workshop:

1. *Establishing common ground and providing background material.*
   This involves presenting information gathered throughout the project about:
   - people's skills, abilities, ideas and interests (i.e. people as the primary resource)
   - businesses, community associations, institutions and physical resources (i.e. the secondary resources)
   - examples of other community initiatives.

   This background material provides a stimulus for brainstorming ideas for community initiatives.

2. *Brainstorming ideas for community initiatives.*
   This involves breaking into small groups of between six and eight people, with a facilitator, to brainstorm ideas.

3. *Discussing the next step.*
   This involves breaking into groups who are interested in common ideas to discuss the next step. Potential outcomes of the discussion might be:
   - a future workshop to find out more about other projects based on the idea
   - the group meets again to keep working on the idea
   - agreement that no-one in the group wants to pursue the idea any further for the moment.

Community Workshop

Objective

To bring marginalised people and others together to generate ideas for community initiatives.

Key Tasks

1. Organise venue, catering, program and facilitators.
2. Invite people that community researchers have worked with.
3. Advertise widely.
4. Hold the workshop.
5. Follow-up with press releases and project update.

Tools and Tips

People respond best to a face-to-face invitation. Community researchers should concentrate on inviting the people they have had contact with throughout the project.

Advertising strategies can include:

- distributing flyers to community groups
- displaying flyers in shops, Centrelink, health centres, churches etc.
- letterbox drop of flyers
- press releases and radio interviews
- word-of-mouth invitations.

An example of a flyer is on page 93, and a sample workshop program is on page 94.

A detailed program and instructions for workshop facilitators is included in Appendix 5; and a project update produced after a workshop and widely distributed is in Appendix 6.

Time

1-2 months (approximately).

Outcomes

An "ideas bank" (see pages 95 to 96).
An indication of the community initiatives that people are specifically interested in working on; and an indication of what the next step might be.

Space and time to generate ideas for community initiatives

Sample Only

COMMUNITY
PARTNERING

"IDEAS" WORKSHOP

Share your ideas for community projects for the Latrobe Valley.

Wednesday, 6 October, 10am-3pm
Kernot Hall, Old Princes Highway, Morwell

Lunch provided.
Transport available, ring 5136 9270.

RSVP (for lunch numbers) 5136 9270.

For more information, contact Yvonne Joyce, Stephen Lister, or Leanne Vella, 5136 9270.

Community Partnering is funded by La Trobe Shire Council, Monash University, and Dept of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (Australian Research Council), with support from Australian Paper and Loy Yang Power.

Latrobe CITY

MONASH UNIVERSITY

Sample Only

Welcome to the

"IDEAS" WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY, 6 OCTOBER, 1999, 10am - 3pm

10.00am	Introduction
10.15am	The Assets of the Latrobe Valley
10.45am	Examples of Community Projects
11.00am	Introduction to Workshop One
	11.15am MORNING TEA
11.45am	Workshop One - Brainstorm of Ideas
	12.30pm LUNCH
1.30pm	Introduction to Workshop Two
2.00pm	Workshop Two – The Next Step
2.45pm	Summary

For more information contact 5136 9270

Community Partnering is funded by La Trobe Shire Council, Monash University, and Dept of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (Australian Research Council), with support from Australian Paper and Loy Yang Power.

Sample Only

Community Ideas Bank

Ideas for community projects generated through one “Ideas Workshop”.

Making and Exchanging

Fixing old bikes and making them roadworthy
Tool recycling and lending library
Making wooden furniture without power tools (bodging)
Sharing boat building skills
Making bush furniture
Lawn mowing for elderly people
Fixing broken furniture and furniture exchange
Half-used paint bank and exchange
Dress pattern exchange
Fibre and fabric bank
Sharing garden tools
Book binding
Learning exchange that utilizes ‘grey power’
Handyman assistance for the aged
Inventors resource centre
Community wood workshop
Inventory of skills that could be offered by people with time on their hands

Cultural Projects

Internet café for youth in small towns
Community film making workshop
Photographic developing room
Youth newspaper
Matching social dancers with learners
Music festivals
Music workshops
Communal cooking kitchen
SEC recognition day
Community bush dances
Documenting family histories, personal stories
Music jam sessions

Sheet music and or musical instrument exchange
Book reading
Matching people who play musical instruments with those who want to start to learn to play music
Street parties
Collector's directory
Art and beautification projects
Christmas street decorations
Murals and painting spaces
Designing trees
Family art celebrations between Christmas and New Year

Environmental Projects

Fixing gardens for elderly or others in need of assistance
Wetland management
Cleaning up waterways for children's play
Revegetation projects
Backyard seed banks for native plants
Water recycling off roofs
Backyard tank yabbie and fish farming
Recycling demolition materials
Public bushland care
Garden produce exchange
Community chook yard
Community gardens
Teaching young people bush appreciation
Collection point for sawdust and manure for community composting
Register of public open space that could be used for community projects
Recycling centre for clean industrial waste to be used by pre-schools, primary schools etc. for art activities

Ideas for Specific Workshops

How to set up a community garden
Cooperatives—how do they work?
How to set up a community toolshed
Sleep workshop
Communication and networking workshop
Management options for community projects

SECTION EIGHT

TURNING IDEAS INTO REALITY

TURNING IDEAS INTO REALITY

Introduction

The final step in a Community Partnering project is to help groups turn ideas for community initiatives into tangible outcomes.

Following the community workshops to generate ideas, people with common interests will initially need assistance to form as a group and refine their ideas. Further down the track the groups that form will require support with practical organisational and management matters (ranging from advice about insurance and legal issues, to assistance with funding grant applications, to facilitating strategic planning sessions).

The overall goal is to create initiatives that are primarily managed and run by people who have been marginalised and disadvantaged by social and economic changes. Remember that those who are marginalised are most often portrayed in terms of needs and problems, and that the emphasis is usually on servicing these needs (see pages 8 to 10). The initiatives that develop out of a Community Partnering process may be one of the few opportunities for marginalised people to work together and contribute to their communities.

There are no hard and fast rules about how ideas and groups should be supported. Each initiative will develop along its own pathway.

This section of the resource kit therefore provides a summary of different strategies for turning ideas into reality. It starts with strategies for facilitating the formation of groups and refining ideas. These include:

- "How To" Workshops

- Field Trips
- Working Groups
- Public Meetings
- Demonstration Projects

It then provides an overview of the different types of organisational and management support that groups may require once they have formed.

The section ends with case studies of five community initiatives developed through the Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering project and the strategies employed to support the development of each.

Perhaps more important than any of the strategies outlined in this section are the informal get-togethers and conversations that build connections and friendships.

Each of the more formal strategies outlined in this section needs to be punctuated by events such as:

- bbqs and picnics
- get-togethers at the local pub
- chats on the telephone
- celebrations of landmark events (like birthdays, Christmas or the handing over of a funding cheque)
- an evening at the bowling alley
- informal cups of coffee
- an afternoon of pizza-making or scone-baking
- a fishing trip to a local spot.

See also page 77 for a discussion of using food-based activities.

"How To" Workshops

Exploring what is involved in turning an idea into reality

Overview

"How To" workshops provide a forum for people to explore what is entailed in turning an idea into a reality.

When to use them

"How To" workshops are appropriate:

- when people have an idea but want to know more about what might be involved before proceeding
- when people have a general idea and need to turn their attention to more specific details
- when lots of different people have a similar area of interest and all the ideas need to be "on the table".

Activities

"How to" workshops can include:

- speakers from comparable community projects who discuss the development of their projects
- films or videos about other projects
- workshop activities where people begin to focus on key issues and specific details.

A program for a "How To" workshops is on page 102.

Follow-Up

"How To" workshops can be followed up in several ways, including:

- field trips to find out more about other projects (see page 103)
- formation of a smaller working group to address issues and report back to the larger group (see page 105)
- a more formal public meeting to agree on a course of action (see page 106).

Sample Only

"HOW TO" WORKSHOP

FRIDAY, 8 OCTOBER, 1999
10am – 1.30pm

10.00am Introduction to Community Gardens

10.15am Presentation, Gil Freeman,
Founding Member, CERES

See pages 20 to 21

10.45am Introduction to Workshop

11.00am Workshop- "Let's Talk Spuds & Daisies"
* land
* tools, equipment
* fencing, shed
* plots - individual/communal
* composting, chemicals, water strategies
* decision-making structure
* what to grow, who to grow for, groups to include

11.45am Questions
Discussion - "Where to From Here"

12.30pm LUNCH

Community Partnering is funded by La Trobe Shire Council, Monash University, and Dept of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (Australian Research Council), with support from Australian Paper and Loy Yang Power.

Field Trips

Visiting developed projects and making connections with each other

Overview

Field trips are an excellent way of refining and getting ideas. They also offer an opportunity for people to find out more about each other and to build connections with each other (see page 104 for some reflections on this aspect of field trips).

When to use them

Field trips workshops can be used:

- when people want to know more about what is involved in turning an idea into a reality
- when people want to address specific issues and find out how to get around those things that seem to be obstacles.

Activities

Visits to comparable projects and talks with key people involved.

Follow-Up

Field trips can be followed up with strategies such as:

- formation of a small working group to address the issues and then report back to the larger group (see page 105)
- a more formal public meeting to agree on a course of action (see page 106).

Reflections on a Bus Trip

The following are some reflections from two members of a group who went on a bus trip to CERES after a "How To" workshop (see page 93). This field trip proved to be pivotal, not only because it was a process of making an idea real but because it gave people the time and space to talk with each other and build connections and friendships.

Joan: It floored me, CERES, with their chickens and their bees and their recycled water and the excitement and the fun of the group. I really enjoyed the bus tour . . . You found yourself thinking. But what <u>really</u> got me was the crowd - it's a mixed group of people . . . [and] they're trying so hard to do something and we're talking about for the whole community. You're talking about elderly citizens, street kids, your drug addicts, correctional services, work-for-the-dole.

Jake: And then the bus trip and when we got back it was like, wow, these definitely are the people on the bus trip that are going to be part of the community garden . . . It was different though, we were all just definitely unique, I thought that. And everyone got on friendly. And I'm certain that for a while after that trip everyone kept meeting and most of them are all still around. I know when I came back after the bus trip I was saying to Jo, "I sat with this lady and she was telling me all these things that are happening in her life.". . . And when we got there you could just tell that it was something more than just a bus trip for people. It was to start thinking and get ideas. And the whole thing was an opportunity for us to get to know each other a bit and you can hear what others are interested in.

Working Groups

Regular small group meetings to plan and organise action

Overview

Working groups involve a small group of people meeting to address issues and decide on a course of action or a series of recommendations.

When to use them

Working groups are a way of "nutting out" the issues.

Activities

Meeting together to discuss a series of issues. Usually working groups meet on a regular basis for a defined period of time.

Follow-Up

Working groups need to report back their findings to a larger group of interested people. This could be to a public meeting (page 106) or a formation meeting (page 109).

Public Meetings

Overview

Public meetings are an excellent strategy for reaching a decision about an idea or deciding on a course of action.

Larger, more formal public meetings to publicise plans and enlist support

When to use them

Public meetings are appropriate for a variety of purposes. They can be used:

- as an initial way of calling together people who might be interested in an idea
- as the forum for reporting back on the recommendations of a working group (see page 105).

Activities

Public meetings are usually conducted in a formal manner with a set agenda and a chairperson. Some people, such as local politicians, may be specifically invited while others may learn about the meeting through advertising and media coverage.

Follow-Up

Usually a public meeting will reach agreement on a course of action and the next steps in developing a project.

An excellent resource with hints for planning effective public meetings is:
McFarlene, Geoff; Carpenter, Julie; and Youl, Rob (editors and compilers)(no date) *Group Skills and Community Action*, available on-line at: http://www.netc.net.au/enviro/grpskills/

Demonstration Projects

Trying out an idea on a small scale

Overview

Demonstration projects are a way of trying out an idea on a small scale.

When to use them

Demonstration projects can be used:

- when there is a small group of people who are extremely keen to start working on an idea
- to gauge how much support there would be for an idea
- to get one part of a project started quickly while more planning goes into the other parts.

Activities

Usually a demonstration project will run for a defined period of time, and it should be evaluated. Both Santa's Workshop and Latrobe Cyber Circus started as demonstration projects (see pages 119 to 121 and 127 to 129).

Follow-Up

If the evaluation is favourable, a demonstration project may lead to a larger project. The evaluation may point to areas where the idea needs to be modified.

Organisational and Management Support

Overview

Once the ball is rolling and community initiatives start taking shape there is a range of matters that will need to be dealt with. The Community Partnering project team may be able to work through the issues with groups, or it may be necessary to call in expert advice.

The community's secondary resources can play a vital role at this point in the Community Partnering process (see pages 79 – 87). Existing businesses, institutions, community groups and associations all have experience dealing with organisational and management matters and may be able to lend support.

The following provides an overview of the sorts of issues that groups will encounter, and a list of useful references and resources.

Group Processes

Good group processes are key to the success of a community project

Establishing good group processes is key to the success of community initiatives. Groups that communicate well with each other and are able to work together will be able to address issues and overcome obstacles far more easily than groups that are not working well.

There is a multitude of resources on group processes. Local libraries and the internet are probably the best places to start. We have found the following to be extremely useful:

Kennedy, Gael, 1995, *Managing Community Organisations: 4 Working Together*, Ettinger House, Sydney. For more information contact Ettinger House, (02) 9754 1811.

McFarlene, Geoff; Carpenter, Julie; and Youl, Rob (editors and compilers)(no date) *Group Skills and Community Action*, available on-line at: http://www.netc.net.au/enviro/grpskills/

NSW Community Builders Website, Working with People, http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/getting_organised/people/

Sheil, Helen, 1997, *Building Rural Futures Through Cooperation: Study Circles Kit*, Centre for Rural Communities Inc., Monash University, Gippsland Campus, Churchill, Victoria.

Forming as an incorporated association has important benefits

Formation Meetings

These are the meetings at which a group forms as an incorporated association and adopts a constitution. This may also be the time when a Committee of Management is elected.

There are good reasons why a group running a community initiative should form as an incorporated association:

- many funding bodies, especially government departments, will only provide funds to an incorporated association
- when compared with unincorporated associations, incorporation provides members with more protection against legal action
- incorporated associations can own property, lease land or premises, borrow money, sign contracts and so on.

Each state has its own Act of Parliament governing incorporated associations, and most produce an easy to use guide to forming an incorporated association and sample constitutions (or rules). For information about incorporated associations, contact:

Australian Capital Territory
Registrar-General's Office
Phone: (02) 6207 0461
http://www.rgo.act.gov.au/home.htm

New South Wales
Department of Fair Trading
Phone: (02) 9895 0111 or 133 220

Queensland
Office of Fair Trading
Phone: (07) 3246 1500
http://www.consumer.qld.gov.au/forms/association

South Australia
Office of Consumer and Business Affairs
Phone: (08) 8204 1900 or 8204 9799

Tasmania
Department of Justice and Industrial Relations
Phone: (03) 6233 3450 or 6233 4104

Victoria
Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs
Phone: (03) 9627 6200 or for long distance callers 1 800 240 251

Western Australia
Ministry of Fair Trading
Phone: 1300 30 40 14

The Council of Social Services in each state will also be able to provide information about incorporation.

ACTCOSS
Phone: (02) 6248 7566

NCOSS
Phone: (02) 9211 2599

NTCOSS
Phone: (08) 8941 2006

QCOSS
Phone: (07) 3832 1266

SACOSS
Phone: (08) 8226 4111

TASCOSS
Phone: (03) 6231 0755 or 6231 0542

VCOSS
Phone: (03) 9654 5649

WACOSS
Phone: (08) 9220 0601 or 9220 0616

Committees of Management

A Committee of Management needs to know its roles and responsibilities

The affairs of an incorporated association are managed by a Committee of Management, usually made up of a President (or Chairperson), Vice-President (or Deputy Chairperson), Treasurer, Secretary (or Administrator) and Ordinary Members.

The Council of Social Services in each state will have resources about the roles and responsibilities of Committees of Management (contact details above).

Latrobe City has produced *A Guide for Committees* which outlines the roles and responsibilities of Committees of Management. The Guide includes examples and pro-formas of commonly used forms. For more information contact:
Community Planning and Development Unit
Latrobe City
PO Box 345
Traralgon, VIC, 3145
Phone: (03) 5173 1400

Policies and procedures about everyday activities will ensure that a community initiative runs smoothly

Policies and Procedures

Establishing clear policies and procedures about the day-to-day activities and operations of community projects is important. Policies and procedures may cover issues such as use of equipment, supervision of children and hours of operation. A well thought out set of policies and procedures minimises the chance of misunderstandings and conflict.

Policies and procedures related to health and safety are also important to ensure that the group is fulfilling its duty of care.

An extremely useful overview to developing policies and procedures is included in:

Kennedy, Gael, 1995, *Managing Community Organisations: 4 Working Together*, Ettinger House, Sydney. For more information, contact Ettinger House (02) 9754 1811

Public liability insurance is essential for community groups

Insurance

Groups need to make sure that they have insurance coverage, particularly public liability.

AON Risk Services Australia Limited specialises in insurance coverage for community groups.
AON Speciality Group
PO Box 4189
Sydney, NSW, 2001
Phone: (02) 9253 7542
Fax: (02) 9253 7299

Volunteering Australia can also provide advice, particularly with regard to insurance for volunteer workers. There are state branches of Volunteering Australia:

Volunteering ACT
Phone: (02) 6251 4161

Volunteering New South Wales
Phone: (02) 9231 4000

Volunteering NT
Phone: (08) 8981 3405

Volunteering Queensland
Phone: (07) 3229 9700

Volunteering South Australia
Phone: (08) 8221 7177

Volunteering NT
Phone: (08) 8981 3405

Volunteering Queensland
Phone: (07) 3229 9700

Volunteering South Australia
Phone: (08) 8221 7177

Volunteering Tasmania
Phone: (03) 6231 5550

Volunteering Victoria
Phone: (03) 9650 5541

Volunteering Western Australia
Phone: (08) 9420 7288

The following publication provides a useful overview of the different insurance covers community groups may need:

Kennedy, Gael, 1995, *Managing Community Organisations: 2 Keeping It Legal*, Ettinger House, Sydney. For more information, contact Ettinger House (02) 9754 1811.

A range of legal issues will impact community initiatives

Legal Issues

These may range from securing planning permission from the local authority to signing leases on land or buildings.

The Council of Social Services will be able to provide more information for each state (contact details on page 110). A good overview is provided by:

Kennedy, Gael, 1995, *Managing Community Organisations: 2 Keeping It Legal*, Ettinger House, Sydney. For more information, contact Ettinger House (02) 9754 1811.

Financial matters need to be well-managed

Finances

Groups may need assistance with a range of financial matters, including:

- opening bank accounts
- establishing good account-keeping procedures
- registering for an Australian Business Number (ABN)
- registering as a GST compliant organisation

The Council of Social Services in each state will have material on the management of financial matters (see page 108). Another useful reference is:

Kennedy, Gael, 1995, *Managing Community Organisations: 5 Money*, Ettinger House, Sydney. For more information, contact Ettinger House (02) 9754 1811.

Latrobe City's *A Guide for Committees* also includes examples and pro-formas related to financial reporting. Contact:
Community Planning and Development Unit
Latrobe City
PO Box 345
Traralgon, VIC, 3145
Phone: (03) 5173 1400

Information on ABNs and the GST for incorporated associations can be found at the Australian Tax Office internet site:
http://www.taxreform.ato.gov.au/

See also http://www.community builders.nsw.gov.au/ getting_organised/managing/

Fund-Raising

Fund-raising activities may need the approval of state and local authorities

Most community initiatives will need to raise funds for their activities. This can include activities such as running sausage-sizzles, raffles and cent auctions. States have legislation governing fund-raising for charitable or non-profit purposes, and groups may need to apply for permission. Be sure to find out what the requirements are in your state. The Council of Social Services in your state will be able to help (see page 110 for contact details).

Community groups need to also be aware that local authorities have codes that govern activities like food preparation and handling. Even the humble sausage sizzle on a Saturday morning may need permission from the local authority. Check with your local council.

Grant Applications

Applying for funding grants from government bodies or philanthropic trusts is an excellent way to fund projects.

Government Departments and philanthropic trusts provide funds for community groups

The best way to find out about government funds is to keep an eye on major newspapers (for State and Federal grants), and local newspapers (for local council grants).

Local, State and Federal parliamentarians are a good source of information about government funding.

Philanthropy Australia has a website on funds offered through philanthropic trusts. Each year they publish a directory of funds available:
Philanthrophy Australia
Phone: (03) 9620 0200
Directory of Australian Philanthropy
http://www.philanthropy.org.au/bshop/bshop.htm
The NSW Community Builders Website also has information on funding,
http://www.community builders.nsw.gov.au/finding-funds/

Communication Strategies

Groups may need support developing communication strategies. This can include activities such as writing press releases or developing a newsletter to keep members and interested people up to date with activities and events. An example of a newsletter is in Appendix 6.

Community initiatives will need support to develop communication strategies and undertake strategic planning activities

For tips on producing user-friendly publications, see,
http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/getting_organised/message/

Strategic Planning and Coordination

Finally groups may need support to coordinate their activities, and develop strategy plans.

An extremely useful overview to planning and coordination activities is included in:

McFarlene, Geoff; Carpenter, Julie; and Youl, Rob (editors and compilers)(no date) *Group Skills and Community Action*, available on-line at: http://www.netc.net.au/enviro/grpskills/

Kennedy, Gael, 1995, *Managing Community Organisations: 4 Working Together*, Ettinger House, Sydney. For more information, contact Ettinger House (02) 9754 1811.

Case Study 1
Latrobe Valley Community Environmental Gardens Inc.

An abandoned caravan park becomes the site for a community garden

Overview

Latrobe Valley Community Environmental Gardens Inc. (LV CEG) is located on a 3 hectare site near the main shopping area of Morwell. The site was once a caravan park but for the past ten years has been an unused physical resource. The long term vision is for a community garden that includes:

- individual garden plots
- larger shared garden plots for groups of people
- raised garden beds for people who have difficulty bending over
- composting projects
- recycling projects (including water recycling)
- free-range chickens
- mud-brick and straw-bale building projects
- picnic and bbq area.

Sources of Inspiration/Group Motivation

LV CEG has been inspired by a number of community gardens in Melbourne including CERES (see pages 20-21), "Veg-Out" (St Kilda Community Garden), Nunawading Community Garden and Kevin Heinze Community Garden Centre.

LV CEG has been particularly inspired by the way these projects cater for a broad cross-section of people by offering a range of community, gardening and environmental activities. The group is determined and motivated to create a similar resource for people of the Latrobe Valley.

Aims and Objectives

To be a place for people of the Latrobe Valley to come together and participate in garden-based activities with a community and environmental emphasis.

Community Objectives

- To build community spirit and foster connections across differences like age, ethnicity and ability through shared involvement in garden-based activities
- To build community spirit and foster connections across differences like age, ethnicity and ability through shared involvement in garden-based activities
- To provide an environment for people to work cooperatively.
- To support and contribute to other community-based initiatives like food banks

Educational Objectives

- To foster an environment in which people can contribute their skills, learn from each other, and develop new skills and fresh ideas

Environmental Objectives

- To support environmentally-responsive gardening practices including composting and water recycling

Forming as a Group and Refining Ideas

From ideas and inspiration to a working reality

The possibility of a community garden was initially raised at a hot dog luncheon at Morwell Neighbourhood and Learning House, and at a pizza-making lunch for three TAFE Numeracy and Literacy classes. The idea of a community garden and other related projects like a community chook yard and community produce exchange were also talked about at the community workshops (see pages 92-96).

To build on the level of interest in community gardens a number of the strategies discussed on pages 101 to 106 were then used to form a group and refine the ideas:

1. A "How-To" workshop was held in early October 1999. Gil Freeman, one of the founding members of CERES (see pages 20-21), was the guest speaker.
2. Those who attended were so inspired by Gil's talk that two bus trips to CERES were quickly organised (see page 103). (The group has also visited three other community gardens).
3. A smaller working group formed to address some of the issues, including finding a site and forming as an incorporated association.
4. A public meeting was then held in March 2000 at which LV CEG formed as an incorporated association and elected a Committee of Management.

The "How-To" workshop was attended by a range of people including those from TAFE Numeracy and Literacy classes and Morwell and Moe Neighbourhood and Learning Houses, people of

non-English speaking background, unemployed people, people with disabilities and young unemployed people. The Committee of Management is made up of people from these groups. Indeed several young unemployed people who came along to the "How-To" workshop simply for the free lunch have become some of the most active members of LV CEG and are members of the Committee of Management.

Organisational and Management Support

From October 1999 to November 2000, the group has been supported by the Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering project to complete a range of organisational and management tasks including:

- holding workshops on group skills and roles and responsibilities of Committees of Management
- securing the approval of the Latrobe City to use a disused caravan park site in Morwell for the gardens
- obtaining planning permission from the Latrobe City
- forming an incorporated association
- obtaining public liability and volunteers' accident insurance
- holding sausage sizzle fund-raisers
- submitting successful funding grant applications to the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (Family and Community Networks Initiatives) and Latrobe City's Gambling Impact Fund
- developing a regular newsletter for members
- holding strategic planning afternoons.

Difficulties and Solutions

The first difficulty facing LV CEG has been the size of the project. The issues that needed to be addressed before any work on the site could commence appeared to be never-ending. For example, the group decided to hold sausage sizzles to raise money for public liability insurance. In order to carry out this seemingly simple activity they needed a fund-raising permit from the Victorian Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs and a food permit from Latrobe City. They also needed to open a special fund-raising bank account, and develop sound book-keeping and banking procedures.

One solution to this difficulty has been to work through each task and related issues as they arise. It would have been easy for the group to become frustrated with the amount of time it took before any work could commence on the site. Instead the group has tried to see each of the preparatory tasks as a necessary step along the way. And regular review of the steps that had been successfully completed was a way of reminding the group of the progress that was being

achieved. The group has also tried to ensure that people do not lose interest and drop out by including plenty of social get-togethers and informal events to balance the work activities.

Drawing on secondary resources in the community

The second difficulty facing the group has been the lack of resources to begin developing the harden site. The solution has been to draw upon the secondary resources within the community. For example, the site was covered with old shrubs that needed to be removed in order to clear a space for garden beds. A local community organisation had some Work for the Dole participants who were trained in the use of chain-saws and were prepared to fell the shrubs. Pieces that were large enough were taken away as fire-wood. A group of people serving Community Service Orders stacked the remainder of the shrubs, and the local Fire Brigade burned the stacks as a training exercise for new volunteers.

A local hire business has also donated the use of a rotary hoe for preparing the ground, and the local waste management company is donating old railway sleepers and bricks that can be used for garden bed edging.

Next Steps

Building relationships to ensure sustainability of the community garden

The group's priority is to establish garden beds so that individuals and groups can begin gardening.

A second priority is to manage two funding grants. LV CEG has received a grant from the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services through the Family and Community Networks Initiative. This grant is to be spent on developing a master plan for the site, developing health and safety policies and procedures, training in group processes, and fencing for the site (a requirement of the planning permit). The group has also received a grant from the Latrobe City Trust for reestablishing water supply to the site.

The third priority is to continue building relationships with community organisations and institutions to ensure the sustainability of the project.

For more information contact:

Janice McAdam, Administrator, (03) 5134 4934

Case Study 2
Santa's Workshop

Overview

Santa's Workshop is a community facility where people can make large Christmas decorations for the outside of their homes and for community display. The project draws on primary and secondary resources of the Latrobe Valley:

- Local residents including unemployed workers volunteer their time to supervise and help people make the Christmas decorations
- A local community organisation provides two Work for the Dole participants who assist people and also make decorations for community display
- Local businesses donate materials such as timber off-cuts, mistints of paint, drop-sheets and so on
- Latrobe City provides public liability insurance
- Latrobe City provides an unused pre-school building for the workshop.

An unused pre-school building becomes Santa's Workshop

Sources of Inspiration/Group Motivation

Like many communities, people across the Latrobe Valley decorate the outside of their houses for Christmas. The initial inspiration was to encourage more people to participate in this activity.

The group that has since formed to run the workshop is motivated by the friendships that develop, and the learning and sharing of skills that takes place.

From demonstration project to ongoing community enterprise

Aims and Objectives

The aim of Santa's Workshop is to provide a community resource where people with limited resources can come together to make large outdoor Christmas decorations.

Forming as a Group and Refining Ideas

Making Christmas street decorations was an idea raised at the community workshops (see page 92 to 96). Once the availability of a key person with an interest in sharing his skills was confirmed, a demonstration project was organised for November and December 1999. Given the success of the demonstration Santa's Workshop a small group emerged who were prepared to take a primary responsibility for running the workshop in subsequent years.

Organisational and Management Support

During the demonstration stage there was a high level of support from the Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering Project. The project team contacted businesses, coordinated the supply of materials and equipment, and provided a community researcher to supervise. The team also obtained planning permission and arranged for Latrobe City to provide public liaibility insurance.

Since then the small group that has taken responsibility for running the workshop has received a small level of support with tasks such as making initial contact with businesses, clarifying policies and procedures for use of the workshop, and assisting with an official launch.

Difficulties and Solutions

Santa's Workshop has encountered only minor difficulties that have been easily solved by putting in pace clear policies and procedures. For example during the demonstration project there was no charge and materials with high usage such as paint brushes had to be constantly replaced. Participants are now asked to contribute a gold coin each time they use the workshop to cover the cost of paint brushes, cleaning materials and tea and coffee.

Next Steps

During 2000 the group started to make decorations for businesses and community organisations. These were "paid" for in sheets of timber. The group has received orders for 2001 that they will begin making in February. Closer to Christmas the workshop will reopen for general community use. The hours of operation will be extended to include one evening a week so people who are in paid employment can participate. The group is also considering workshops to make Easter decorations.

For more information contact:
Keith Peters, (03) 5134 5249

Case Study 3
Creative Reuse Centre

Overview

The Creative Reuse Centre is a place where off-cuts, seconds and other "waste" materials from businesses and manufacturers are made available to the community for use in creative and inventive activities. The Centre is housed in the same premises as Santa's Workshop (see Case Study 2).

Sources of Inspiration and Group Motivation

The Centre was inspired by the idea of the "match" between individuals and groups who require extremely low-cost materials, and businesses and industries that have "waste" materials.

Waste materials as resources for creative projects

The group has been motivated by feedback from both users and suppliers. Many businesses and industries have accumulated materials they can no longer use but are, in their words, "too good to throw out". Kindergartens, pre-schools and artists have been delighted with the store of materials that the Centre is collecting.

Aims and Objectives

The aim is to be a community, educational and environmental resource centre where businesses and manufacturers can send off-cuts, seconds and other "waste" materials to be used in creative and inventive activities.

Objectives

1. Contribute to existing educational and learning activities by collecting materials appropriate for reuse by individuals and groups (including pre-schools, primary schools, guide and scout groups, hobby clubs).
2. Offer new learning opportunities by running workshops that reuse materials in creative and inventive ways (e.g. Santa's Workshop, Invention Workshops).
3. Promote the development of community networks by involving people who have been most affected by recent economic changes in the activities and operation of the Centre.
4. Contribute to the diversion of industrial and business waste from landfill.

Forming as a Group and Refining Ideas

Ideas for an inventor's resource centre, and a fabric and fibre bank were first raised at the community workshops in October 1999 (see pages 92 to 96). At the time no group emerged with a commitment to turning the ideas into a project; however with Santa's Workshop

Dreams, ideas and practicalities come together

developing as a project that used mistints of paint and off-cuts of timber it was clear that there was potential for a reuse centre. The Santa's Workshop group that had formed through the demonstration project expressed an interest in being involved in a broader reuse project.

The group was then joined by the Latrobe City's Child Care Unit Leader who had a long held dream of developing a reuse centre in the Latrobe Valley.

Organisational and Management Support

The group has been supported through the Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering project in a number of ways:

- developing a proposal to put to Council
- developing a strategy for approaching businesses
- assisting volunteers to contact businesses
- coordinating volunteers to collect materials

Difficulties and Solutions

To date the group's priority has been to establish a supply of materials in preparation for opening the Centre to users. The main difficulty now facing the group is that the amount of work required to get the Centre up and running exceeds the time that the volunteers have available.

The group feels that the Centre heeds a paid coordinator working at least one day each week to promote the centre and establish a steady flow of suppliers and users.

Next Steps

The group's priority is to secure funding for a part-time coordinator.

For more information contact:
Fairlie Sharp: (03) 5136 9276

Case Study 4
Latrobe Community Workshed @ Newborough Inc.

An old industrial building becomes a community workshed

Overview

Latrobe Community Workshed @ Newborough is a place where individuals and groups can work on hobby, and art and craft based activities. It is located in an old industrial building that has been made available by a local retired businessman as a community resource.

Sources of Inspiration/Group Motivation

The group is inspired by the idea of a community workshed where retired and unemployed workers and others can come together to informally work on their own or collaborative projects.

Initially the Men in Sheds project in Bendigo and the Tongola Shed in Central Victoria, both catering to older retired men, provided models for the project. The level of interest from a wide cross-section of the community has motivated the group to develop a facility that caters to younger and older people, women and men, and those with a range of abilities and interests.

Aims and Objectives

To be a place for people to participate in a range of social, hobby, and art and craft based activities.

Objectives

a. Build community spirit and foster connections across differences like ate, ethnicity and ability through shared involvement.
b. Provide an environment for people to work cooperatively and creatively.
c. Foster an environment in which people can contribute their hobbies and skills, learn from each other, and develop new hobbies, skills and ideas.
d. Support a healthy and safe workplace with environmentally responsible practices.

Forming as a Group and Refining Ideas

The possibility of a community workshed space was raised at the community workshops held in October 1999 (see pages 92 to 96). Through a series of contacts a Community Partnering community researcher met up with a retied businessman who had a disused Industrial building he was willing to make available as a community

resource. The availability of the physical resource meant that the idea for community workshed could become a reality, and a series of the strategies discussed on pages 105 to 106 were then used to form a group and refine the ideas:

Generating interest in using an available physical resource

1. A public meeting was held to gauge the level of community interest in the idea. Almost 50 people attended the meeting. Around half were retied and unemployed people who had an interest in using the workshed for their own activities. Many had sheds in their backyards but were missing the social contact that paid employment provided. The remaining half were people from community based organisation who were interested in running more formal programs through the workshed. This group included those who worked with unemployed youth, people with disabilities and people recovering from work-based injuries. There was an extremely high level of support for the idea.
2. A working group of eight people formed at the public meeting to begin refining the idea further and addressing key issues, such as obtaining planning permission, and investigating ways of equipping the workshed.
3. A second public meeting was then held to authorise the incorporation of Latrobe Community Workshed @ Newborough as an incorporated association, and to elect a Committee of Management. The committee is made up of employed, unemployed and retired people with a range of abilities, skills and interests.

Organisational and Management Support

The Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering project team provided assistance with a range of tasks, including:

- obtaining planning permission from the City of Latrobe
- securing a lease agreement for the building
- obtaining insurance coverage
- approaching businesses for contributions of materials and tools
- writing funding grant applications

Difficulties and Solutions

Managing eagerness and high expectations is a challenge for new community groups

The main difficulty confronting Latrobe Community Workshed @ Newborough is to manage the high expectations that people have of the project. The first public meeting drew such interest that people are now eager for the workshed to begin operating. Before operations can commence the group must finalise the lease agreement and obtain tools and equipment for people to use.

The group is managing this issue by keeping people up-to-date with progress through a newsletter, and involving people in as many activities as possible, such as working bees to prepare the building, and the assembly of hamper boxes for a small local business.

Next Steps

The priority is to obtain tools and equipment. The group is approaching local businesses and also submitting funding grant applications. The committee is also looking at ways of raising funds themselves. For example, a local school has approached the group about building a playground and involving students with learning disabilities. The local waste management company has offered broken furniture that the group could repair and sell.

For more information contact:
Ian Schroeter, Chairperson: (03) 5126 1945
Margaret Bartlett, Administrator: (03) 5127 5860

Case Study 5
Latrobe Cyber Circus

Supporting and extending a newly established youth initiative

Overview

Latrobe Cyber Circus is an initiative to support the development of a circus and performance enterprise for marginalised young people. The project combines traditional circus skills with a more contemporary "techno-electronica" style of performance and entertainment.

The project builds on primary and secondary resources in the Latrobe Valley

- It is being led by Triple O Productions Inc., a local collective of young people aged between 18 and 25 years who have been running fringe performances for over twelve months.
- Two youth-focused community organisation play a supporting role providing assistance with organisational and management matters.

Sources of Inspiration/Group Motivation

The project has been inspired by the commitment and passion of the members of Triple O to develop circus and performance skills, and share their skills with other young people, particularly those who are marginalised and isolated. The two community agencies, GET JPET (Gippsland Employment and Skills Training—Jobs Placement, Employment and Training) and Luke's Place, are motivated to support young people to own and manage youth-focused projects.

Aims and Objectives

- Open doorways for marginalised, disadvantaged and isolated young people to develop circus and performance skills.
- Introduce young people to circus-based performances and to inspire involvement in the youth arts movement more generally.
- Offer an avenue for young people to explore and celebrate their identities and build their futures.

A demonstration project makes links with a youth initiative

Forming as a Group and Refining Ideas

Latrobe Cyber Circus emerged through a circus workshop demonstration project coordinated by the Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering project and involving GEST—JPET and Luke's Place. A group of young people from Triple O Productions Inc. participated in the one day event (along with other unemployed young people).

The participants in the circus workshop all expressed an interest in further training, and the members of Triple O Productions Inc. were prepared to play a key role. Indeed, out of the demonstration project several Triple O members began making weekly trips to Melbourne to train with Circus Oz.

Representatives from Triple O Productions, Community Partnering, GEST—JPET and Luke's Place formed a working group to develop a funding proposal for additional training and performances.

Organisational and Management

The Latrobe City and Monash University Community Partnering project team played a key role:

- coordinating the demonstration project
- facilitating discussion between Triple O Productions Inc., GEST– JPET and Luke's Place; and
- writing funding proposals.

Photos courtesy Latrobe Valley Express

Difficulties and Solutions

Latrobe Cyber Circus faces the difficulty of three groups with different approaches working together. Community Partnering has been able to facilitate the initial discussions and development of a funding grant proposal. This role has now been picked up by a steering group consisting of representatives from each of the groups involved and from external agencies such as Latrobe City Council.

Next Steps

Latrobe Cyber Circus has received funding through VicHealth for a one week circus camp. The outcome of the camp will be the creation of performances for local primary schools, secondary schools and dance parties.

For more information, contact:
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(03) 5136 9231