



**STRATEGIC PLAN
2021 - 2024**

INTRODUCTION

Span Community House is located at 64 Clyde Street, Thornbury.

Span Community House has two activity rooms of varying sizes, a computer room plus an office, kitchen and dining room. There is also a community garden managed by the House. Adjacent to the House is a community hall which is currently owned and managed by the Darebin City Council

The Span Community House building is owned by the Darebin City Council and occupied under a lease arrangement.

Span Community House is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation offering a wide range of activities to community members in the City of Darebin and surrounding communities.

Approximately 150 people visit Span each week in early 2021. This is down from approximately 300 per week prior to the impact of Covid 19 lockdowns.

GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors currently has six members, elected at an Annual General Meeting. Members of the Board are unpaid volunteer's representative of the community. The Board of Directors consists of a maximum of 7 members.

OPERATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Staff

The staff currently consists of the following:

- Manager - 68.4 hours per fortnight
- Program Coordinator – 35.5 hours per fortnight (previous job split from Programs Coordinator)
- Community Development Coordinator – 30.4 hours per fortnight (previous job split from Programs Coordinator)
- Administrative Officer - 50 hours per fortnight
- Garden Coordinator - 12 hours per fortnight
- Art Tutor - 2.5 hours per week
- Sewing Tutor - 5 hours per week
- Project Officer - Compost Project – 6 hours per week (This is a temporary new role to run the compost program for the life of the program. Grant received early 2020 from Department of Industry, Innovation and Science under the community environment program.)

- Project Coordinator – Carers Project – 6 hours per week (This is a temporary new role to run the carers project for the life of the program. Grant received early 2020 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Supporting Carers Locally Program.)
- Tutors and facilitators are employed as required on a sessional basis.

Volunteers

Volunteers are used in a number of areas such as:

- Board of Directors
- Art for all abilities
- Gardening group
- Cooking programs
- Health and wellbeing
- Community lunch monthly
- Monthly public housing lunches
- Reception/Administration
- Free Tax help
- Food relief
- IT support

Other opportunities exist for Jack of all Trades, special events planner and Sensitive Santa Program, marketing and promotion.

FUNDING

Span receives support from the following agencies:

- Department of Health
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Commonwealth Department of Health
- Darebin City Council
- Adult Community and Further Education
- Department Education and Training

Each of these agencies require compliancy and accountability and outcomes for funding received. In kind funding and sponsorship is also received from local businesses on a regular basis or as required for specific events.

During 2020, as part of Covid 19 support, Span received substantial funding from both the Federal and State Governments.

CONTEXT FOR THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

The period for this strategic plan has been influenced by external events such as the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic. 2020 saw Span closed for part of the year and operating at reduced capacity for many months. Where possible classes were moved to an online platform however this was not possible for a number of regular activities provided by the house. In addition, not all users were comfortable with the online platform and as a result user numbers have decreased and despite the House operating in person classes from the beginning of 2021, user numbers have not reached pre covid levels.

Room hires which are a significant contributor to income has been heavily impacted by Covid 19 restrictions with social distancing reducing the number of people accommodated in each room. A number of previous groups who were based at Span have yet to return.

The health concerns and uncertainty due to Covid 19 have impacted individual and community behaviour and needs to be considered in the context of this plan.

In addition, as the plan was being prepared the Program Co-ordinator who was a key member of staff and who has been with the organisation for 8 years, resigned.

STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION

Empowering people to create an inclusive, healthy and sustainable community.

MISSION

Span Community House will develop and support the local community through educational, social inclusion and recreational activities:

- Community development and connectedness
- Sustainability
- Empowerment of marginalised groups and those experiencing economic disadvantage
- Health and wellbeing
- Social justice
- Education and knowledge

VALUES

Span provides programs and services underpinned by the following values:

Inclusiveness - We welcome and embrace diversity of culture, sexuality, religious beliefs and all abilities.

Quality - We are committed to operating our organisation with a high degree of competency and professionalism.

Empowerment - We are committed to supporting and upskilling our community so they can improve their own circumstances and contribute to the creation of an inclusive, healthy and sustainable community.

Responsiveness – We are proactive in identifying the needs of our community and providing timely programs and services to respond to their needs.

Equity – We will treat everybody fairly and ensure access, opportunity and empowerment for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Integrity - We operate our organisation and treat people with respect, honesty and fairness. Our decision making, and our processes will be transparent.

Sustainability – We adopt and model practices that contribute to the sustainability of our planet as well as providing education and projects that empower our community in these practices. We are also committed to the financial sustainability of our organisation by ensuring we comply with our funding bodies criteria and by proactively seeking and managing a variety of income streams.

PROGRAMS

The House offers programs and services that meet the needs and requests of the people within the area such as

- Community and Social Support
- Creative
- Digital literacy
- Grow It, Cook It
- Health and Wellbeing
- Work, Study and Personal Skills
- Sustainable Activities

MARKETING STRATEGY

Target Market

- People living within Darebin and surrounding areas.
- The House has a focus on adult learners, people with disabilities, those who are socially isolated, have mental health issues as well as fee for service users.
- People who actively support the principles of environmental sustainability both locally and globally.

Promotion and Advertising

The primary methods used to promote Span programs and services are:

- Social Media
- Span's website
- Weekly eNewsletter
- A4 printed program
- A5 flyer for each class
- Themed activities promoted together e.g health and wellbeing, social support programs
- Other specialist websites – e.g. Darebin events and other sites where it is free to post relevant content

FINANCIAL STRATEGY

As a not for profit organisation, Span relies on recurrent Government funding in order to deliver the service. Government funding ensures the “doors are open” however, Span proactively seeks grants and other income opportunities to expand program and service offerings as well as reduce reliance on government funding. A range of fee for service programs are also offered to contribute to the various income streams within the House, as well as venue hire.

Span aims to generate an operating surplus each year.

Pricing

Activities are priced as low as possible to cover costs and to ensure accessibility for all.

CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITY, THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE AND THE BOARD

During the workshop held in March 2021, the Board and staff identified the following issues affecting the community, the organisation, the Board and the staff team.

ISSUES

The following issues were identified during the workshop.

- Pandemic
- Lack of social connection/social isolation
- Access to technology
- Digital literacy
- Staff & board resources
- Succession planning
- Marketing
- Food security, poverty, high rents
- Detailed knowledge of local community
- Funding security - Recurrent funding from Darebin?
- Lack of innovation
- Community reach - both individual and community groups
- Community perception
- Access/visibility/profile due to location
- Increase in family violence
- Lack of system to capture data re local community
- Telecommunications/IT systems and processes
- Overall systems and planning processes
- Storage
- Security of the building
- Policy development
- Board education/training
- Staff and volunteer training - IT, customer service, team development, OH&S compliance e.g. first aid

STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

A SCOT analysis was also undertaken to identify the strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats of the organisation. The findings of the SCOT and the issues were used to formulate the actions outlined in the Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Community first Inclusive and welcoming Vibrant community DDA compliant NDIS connection Space - garden buildings Networks - disability/mental health Sector relationships Good reputation Diverse + skilled board Progressive Experienced and committed staff Volunteer contribution</p>	<p>Solar panels on roof Management of Clyde Street Hall Connecting with local networks & community groups Social media/marketing (lack of volunteer/staff enthusiasm) NDIS provider Darebin repair café/partnerships Engage with rainbow community Compost program - total recycling group Front courtyard - more workable space Increase volunteer pool Increase use of hires in centre Align with Darebin 'Ageing in Place' Website Partner with tertiary students - data analytics Process to filter and assess ideas - effective planning Review current program provision and service Out of hours' use Use existing State events to promote Span i.e Neighbourhood House Week, Seniors Week Younger families in the area with a number of childcare/kindergarten/primary schools within 1 km of Span – new parents – what can we offer them? Single older people in the area – what can we offer? A lot of participants were prepared to become involved with Span online during Covid 19. How can we enhance that and help develop their computer/online skills further. Develop opportunities that link with Darebin's Annual Action Plan</p>

CHALLENGES	THREATS
<p>Re-engagement of community Replacing Sarah Maintaining a strong financial position Induct more board members Current environment due to COVID Effective onboarding of staff, volunteers and board To effectively communicate with older CALD members of the community Market share being taken by other Community Houses and Northcote Leisure Centre 50% of participants in early 2020 were over 50 years of age</p>	<p>Funding IT systems Staff resources Program offerings becoming stale That the pre Covid 19 participants do not return Not thoroughly reviewing programs especially when numbers drop Losing room hirers – where have they gone, why have they left</p>

STRATEGIES

ACTION PLAN 2021 – 2024

The action plan below is based on the five practice areas for neighbourhood houses.

Practice Area: Governance

Objective 1: To provide effective and efficient governance of the organisation.

ACTION	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURE
1. Recruit new board members as required	External websites External contacts	Board & team	Ongoing	Maintain between 5-7 members
2. Induction of Board members	In house	Chair & manager	Ongoing	Effective contribution of Board
3. Development of induction kit	In house	Manager & Secretary	End April 2021	Induction kit and checklist developed
4. Governance training	Budget has been determined and approved	Chair	July 2021	Training undertaken
5. Financial literacy training	NENHN Network	Manager to investigate opportunities	As required	Training undertaken
6. Develop, review and maintain required policies	External resource. Budget to be determined and approved	Manager & Board	July 2021 (external resource engaged and briefed)	Policies updated and schedule for review developed and incorporated into board meeting agenda
7. Undertake broader training offered by NENHN	\$295	Board member	End 2022	Training undertaken by Board Members
8. Identification of skills needed for Board	In house	Board & manager	Ongoing	Skilled board members recruited

Practice Area: Management**Objective 2: To support the manager to effectively lead the organisation**

ACTION	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURE
1. Develop a tailored training program for individual team members	Budget to be determined and approved	Manager & staff	Ongoing	Relevant training undertaken Training plan provided to the Board
2. Effectively manage and lead team	In house	Manager	Ongoing	Fortnightly team meeting, with agendas provided and minutes taken by Admin Officer with action items identified and circulated within 2 days of the meeting to all staff. Weekly individual meetings Process to filter and assess ideas, effective planning Annual Performance Review of Staff
3. Support of Manager by Board	In house	Chair	Quarterly	Quarterly meeting/support provided to Manager
4. Development of comprehensive marketing and communications strategy with implementation plan	Budget to be determined and approved	Manager & staff	End of 2021	Marketing and communications strategy with implementation plan developed especially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CALD • LGTBIQ+ • Family carers • Single households • Rooming Houses
5. Explore and implement more effective IT solutions (cloud based) and train staff	Budget to be determined and approved	Manager & IT support	End of 2022	IT solution implemented

ACTION	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURE
6. Review membership criteria	In house	Linda & other Board members (subcommittee)	Feb 2022	Membership criteria established
7. Research demographic details of community including information from existing user data base	In house	Manager and Program Co-ordinator	April/May 2021	Profile of users and broader community documented
8. Needs analysis including access to technology & digital literacy	In house	Manager and Program Co-ordinator	End 2022	Needs analysis undertaken
9. Develop a review process of existing program	In house	Manager and Program Co-ordinator	Mid 2022	Existing programs reviewed and decisions made about the ongoing provision of each program. Annual survey of all participants, tutors, room hirers, Data collection – obtain feedback and comments regularly
10. Review of all staff position descriptions	In house	Manager and Board	ASAP	P.D's finalised

Practice Area 3: Delivery and Operations

Objective 3: To provide a responsive and inclusive program that empowers people to contribute to an inclusive, healthy and sustainable community.

ACTION	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURE
1. Continue existing programs and explore funding opportunities - sustainability	In house	Manager & Program Coordinator	Ongoing	Relevant programs identified and funding secured
2. Engage new and existing user organisations to hire and use Span facilities.	In house	Staff Team	Ongoing	Increase utilisation of Span including out of hours use
3. Continue to provide services to deliver digital literacy and access to technology	In house	Manager and Program Coordinator	Ongoing	Increased digital literacy and access to technology for Span users

Practice Area 4: External Relationships/Capacity Building

Objective 4: To maintain existing partnerships and build new partnerships with key local groups and individuals.

ACTION	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURE
1. Increase volunteer pool	In house	Volunteer Coordinator	Ongoing	Volunteer pool increased Volunteers with relevant skills
2. Review of volunteer skill needs	In house	Volunteer Coordinator	End of 2021	Skills required from volunteers identified and used for recruitment
3. Explore partnerships with groups in the sustainability sector	In house	Manager, Program Coordinator, Garden Co-ordinator	Ongoing	New partnership established

Practice Area 5: Community Development

Objective 5: Increase social connectedness and empower our community.

ACTION	RESOURCES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	MEASURE
1. Actively participate in local forums	In house	Manager	Ongoing	Local forums attended
2. Host Span community forums or activities that provide opportunities for informal feedback and discussion.	In house	Manager and staff team	Ongoing – at least one a year	At least one forum hosted per year
3. Host Span events such as a yearly Open Day to attract new community members.	In House	Manager and staff team	Ongoing – at least one a year	At least one significant community event hosted per year
4. Design new activities to attract new community members, especially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CALD • LGTBIQ+ • Family carers • Single households • Rooming Houses 	In House	Manager and staff team	Ongoing	Increase of attendance of community members, particularly from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CALD • LGTBIQ+ • Family carers • Single households • Rooming Houses