



Lifting  
Spirits

MARCH 2023

# Lifting Spirits

End of Project Review of the  
North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative

Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House

SAMBUSA  
(Meat or Veggie)  
for \$5



## Foreword

Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House has been part of the Richmond public housing estate community for over 40 years. We work to increase belonging, wellbeing and to create positive change for local people, and we do this work in partnership with other community organisations, individuals, and the government.

In late 2019 the Victorian Government advertised for a community partner in the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative (known as the NRCCBI). After some initial trepidation, we realised that we could not miss the opportunity for us to expand the work we were already doing and to provide our strong input to the implementation of this program.

After some dedicated work by both staff and volunteers to prepare our application, we were very excited when we were chosen to partner with the local Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and could expand our community development work on the public housing estate for a three-year period.

Our new Community Development workers started at BANH in January 2020, and we all know that the pandemic emerged soon after. The goals shared by BANH and the NRCCBI became more important than ever and the partnerships between the house, state and local governments, community sector organisations and - most importantly - the local community, truly embraced the immense challenges and achieved great things!

This review is not a formal evaluation of the NRCCBI but a celebration of BANH's participation in this exciting project. 'Lifting Spirits' provides a window into BANH's overall community development approach on the Richmond public housing estate and the power and impact this has created locally. Finally, it tries to capture what 'good practice' community development looks like from a BANH perspective. While we constantly acknowledge the importance of collective work, we have also deliberately focused on BANH's role within the NRCCBI rather than the approaches and achievements of others.

BANH has a strengths-based philosophy which acknowledges the importance of listening and sharing stories and experiences to help each other. As you read 'Lifting Spirits' you will learn more about the NRCCBI, the stories that it has written over the past 3 years and the incredible body of community development work that BANH has undertaken.

I am proud to share this with all who take the time to listen – I hope you enjoy the BANH NRCCBI journey and that reading it lifts your spirits even further!

Yours Sincerely,

President, Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House



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## Acknowledgements



*We would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Richmond on which we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and to all First Nations people and communities.*

*We would like to thank and acknowledge the many Richmond public housing estate residents who generously gave their time to express and share their cultures, ideas, aspirations, and insightful perspectives. We would also like to thank and acknowledge the broader Richmond community and the many volunteers, staff, and organisations that contribute to Richmond's diverse and vibrant community.*

*We would particularly like to thank the following people and organisations for their participation in the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative:*

- *Public housing residents and community members who provided translation and interpreting support to connect and communicate with the community.*

*BANH Inc staff, their many friends, volunteers, and the Committee of Governance members for their support and guidance in delivering the project including:*

- *Karen Hovenga*
- *Danae Bosler*
- *Emma Wise*
- *Sumaya Barud*
- *Stephen Duff*
- *James Clarke*
- *Helen King*
- *Lis Blake*
- *Penelope Drummond*

- *Our Victorian Government partners, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Homes Victoria, and Richmond Housing*

- *Our other government and philanthropic partners including, Bendigo Bank, Heart Foundation, Inner Metropolitan Partnership Fund, Inner North Community Foundation and VicHealth who generously supported the project.*

- *Our key project partners and their staff including, Carringbush Adult Education, Cultivating Community, Neighbourhood Justice Centre, North Richmond Community Health, Yarra City Council and Yarra Libraries.*



## Glossary

Abbreviation	
ARC	Arts Richmond Collective
BANH	Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
BANH CD Team	Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House Community Development Team
CALD	Culturally Linguistically Diverse
Carringbush	Carringbush Adult Education
CASI	Community Activation and Social Isolation
COVID-19	Coronavirus (SARS-Cov-2)
CoY	City of Yarra
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
HRAR	High-Risk Accommodation Response
MSIR	Medically Supervised Injecting Room
NSP	Needle and Syringe Program
NJC	Neighbourhood Justice Centre
NRCCBI	North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative
NRCH	North Richmond Community Health
NRP	North Richmond Precinct
PWID	People Who Inject Drugs
REAL	Richmond Estate Action-Led program
VPTA	Victoria Public Tenants Association
YCC	Yarra City Council
YEP	Youth Employment Program

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## Executive Summary

This end of project review presents Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood (BANH) perspectives and experiences of delivering the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative (NRCCBI) from December 2019 – September 2022.

### Key Points

- The **NRCCBI** was a three-year place-based pilot project delivered on the **Richmond public housing estate** funded by the **Victorian Government**. The NRCCBI piloted community development and participatory approaches to create meaningful change and involve residents in decisions that impact their daily lives.
- The **NRCCBI** was established in response to the identified need to improve outcomes for people living in public housing due to many complex issues and opportunities present within the Richmond public housing estate.
- The **Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)** partnered with BANH to deliver the project. This offered many advantages, such as building on the existing trust, networks and the reputation BANH has established within the local community and stakeholders for over 40 years.
- BANH employed two **community development workers** in January 2020 to deliver the project in collaboration with public housing estate residents. The community development workers were supported by BANH management, the community arts manager and the extended BANH team across both Collingwood and Richmond neighbourhood houses.
- The community development team (CD team) utilised **strengths-based approaches** to engage and work with residents, to better understand their needs and aspirations, build their capacity and skills, involve them in decision-making processes to address local issues, and develop community-led activities and projects.
- The establishment of NRCCBI coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in concerted efforts to collaborate with the Yarra City Council community to provide crisis responses such as food relief and information and education.
- DFFH and BANH developed the **NRCCBI Community Action Plan** in partnership with residents and local stakeholders to inform and guide the delivery of the NRCCBI. The following four themes emerged i) **Health, Development and Opportunity**, ii) **Safety and Security**, iii) **Pride and Participation** and iv) **Amenity and Neighbourhood**.
- Partnerships and collaboration were instrumental drivers for change, leveraging the necessary expertise, skills, and resources to deliver innovative and collaborative community-led initiatives that responded directly to community desires and needs. This also resulted in improved social and health outcomes for residents through increased awareness and connection to local services.



## Key Outcomes

- Public housing residents participated through a variety of measures in a supportive and welcoming environment, to ensure meaningful and participatory outcomes. Community engagement and capacity building approaches varied from small-scale and informal approaches including a series of **Café Conversations** and the **Wishing Tree** initiative to better understand residents' experiences and perspectives. Paralleled with comprehensive strategies such as the **Resident Estate Action-Led (REAL)** project, facilitating community-led focus groups for the **Greening Your Garden** consultation, participation in formal governance structures associated with the **North Richmond Precinct** and the **Food for Thought II** consultation.
- To assist in the effective and efficient delivery of community-based projects, the NRCCBI team received an annual provision of brokerage of \$100K. The funding provided unique opportunities to test and trial initiatives such as the **REAL** project, the **NRCCBI Small Grants Program** and the **Community Connectors** program. Furthermore, the BANH team were successful in obtaining \$667,170 in external funding throughout the duration of the project which provided additional opportunities to continue to deliver successful programs and pilot innovative projects.
- A strong theme to improve **volunteer, education and employment pathways** was identified throughout the project. In response, BANH developed a variety of opportunities in collaboration with local partners such as delivering **First Aid** training and **Public Speaking** in partnership with Carringbush and capacity-building and volunteering opportunities at the **Digital Hub, Caravan Cafe, and Twilight Markets**. BANH also delivered a **Community Connectors** program, employing three public housing residents for a 12-month period and provided various other short-term and casual opportunities such as the **Cultural Catering** program.
- Safety and amenity of the estate was another common theme that emerged. In response, BANH delivered a variety of place-making activities in collaboration with project partners, including the **Pop-up Laneway Market, Creative Pathway** project, enhancements to the **Gathering Place** and the **West Car Park Revitalisation** project. Furthermore, consultations and community events focused on connecting residents and services to discuss safety concerns such as the **North Richmond Community Safety Dinner** which resulted in the **Richmond Community Safety Campaign** and collaborations with the **Neighbourhood Justice Centre, VicPol, and Crime Stoppers**.
- Many innovative and strategic partnerships were established to improve outcomes for residents including **North Richmond Community Health** employing the CD team to support the delivery of the **High-Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR)** project and deliver capacity building opportunities with the HRAR team. **Cultivating Community** and BANH established a social enterprise delivering the **Caravan Café** and **High-Rise Baking** project resulting in employment and volunteering opportunities and social connections. **Yarra Libraries** and BANH partnered to deliver a range of digital inclusion and computer literacy projects including a computer-based **Train the Trainer** project and the **Digital Hub** at the Factory.
- Celebrating and showcasing the diversity and culture of the Richmond community was a fundamental outcome and a highlight for many involved. Community groups and networks shared their cultures and talents through delivering events including **Chinese New Year** and **Iftar** events and showcased arts and dance performances at the **Twilight Market** and **Moon Lantern Festival**.



## Project Summary

The North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative (NRCCBI) was a place-based community development program delivered on the Richmond Public Housing Estate that ‘aimed to build socially, economically and environmentally sustainable neighbourhoods where residents can learn, work, be connected and have a say in their community’ (State of Victoria, 2019). Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House (BANH) was engaged by the Department and Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to deliver the NRCCBI between December 2019 and September 2022 by working with people across the Richmond public housing estate community to enhance the capacity and skills of the community, empower them to address local issues, and to develop stronger relationships and linkages across community organisations and networks.

BANH is a grass-roots community organisation operating neighbourhood houses on the Richmond and Collingwood public housing estates. It is driven by a belief that a stronger community comes from shared experience. BANH works from a community development and social justice lens, supporting and involving community members in meaningful community development approaches and opportunities to value and encourage community participation. The neighbourhood houses are places where people come to meet others, form friendships, and nurture a strong and supportive community. BANH offers a variety of educational, cultural, recreational, and social activities within the local community and has developed a trusted and strong working relationship with residents living in public housing within Richmond and Collingwood.

This end-of-project review outlines BANH’s perspective and approaches, highlighting an assortment of strategies, projects and interventions that were delivered to improve outcomes for the Richmond community. Importantly, its focus on community-led projects and engagement with public housing estate residents offers insights into the project’s collaborative and participatory nature, which was a critical indicator of success. The numerous community partner’s and stakeholders’ involvement and participation are highlighted throughout. Significant stakeholder engagement was undertaken; it was essential to the project that everyone worked together to try to address the numerous complex challenges and opportunities that are present in and around the Richmond public housing estate.







To ensure the project met the needs of the Richmond community, a range of community development approaches were undertaken in partnership with a diverse variety of residents and key stakeholders to understand local issues and priorities. In response, the NRCCBI team developed the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative Action Plan. The action plan aimed to:

- Identify public housing residents' needs and aspirations
- Ensure that new projects and services respond to their needs
- Support residents to have a voice in responses that impact their community

The NRCCBI community action plan was a key deliverable and provided a guiding framework, alongside additional DFFH guiding principles and frameworks to measure the impacts and outcomes of the NRCCBI.

This report outlines a diverse range of initiatives from the perspective of BANH, highlighting a selection of projects and activities that BANH was responsible for, or instrumental in the design and delivery in collaboration with project partners. Initiatives that BANH was involved in, yet were not directly responsible for, are not the key focus of this report. This report is not a project evaluation, but a celebration and reflection of the power and impact that a neighbourhood house can create within a community through a sustained period of collaboration and partnership.

## Context

The establishment of the NRCCBI in early 2020 coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the project pivoted to respond to the immediate needs of local people. This involved collaborating with local partners to provide access to essential household items, education and information, increased cleaning in buildings and shared spaces, and supporting pathways to volunteer and employment opportunities. These undertakings supported the community to keep safe, supported and connected during a difficult time.

Furthermore, significant efforts were directed towards supporting residents with the necessary access and capabilities to transition to an online environment and advocating for digital inclusion. As COVID-19 restrictions and measures to respond to the pandemic were reduced, the project focus had greater opportunities to engage the community in person through capacity-building and community development approaches.

## Background

The Richmond public housing estate is a vibrant and culturally diverse area and is one of Melbourne's most prominent and distinctive public housing estates located within the local government area of the City of Yarra, Melbourne (Dwyer, Power, Denham, & Dietze, 2016). The estate is Melbourne's largest public housing estate by population, with an estimated 3,000 residents with a mix of high, medium, and low-density dwellings (State of Victoria, 2020). Historically, the Richmond estate has experienced challenges associated with social, economic, and political factors that have resulted in place-based disadvantage. Furthermore, public housing residents with complex needs have not always been able to maintain their tenancies or be provided with adequate access and connections to social support (State of Victoria, 2020). In response, DFFH developed the Social Landlord pilot to deliver community development approaches across various public housing estates within Melbourne. In early 2019, two South Melbourne



public housing estates (Park Towers and Emerald Hill) commenced as the initial pilot site followed closely by Richmond. The Social Landlord pilot projects aimed to improve outcomes for residents in public housing across three domains:

- **Shelter** – improving property and tenancy responses to meet the needs of residents with complex needs
- **Place** – addressing safety and security in public housing, education and employment outcomes, liveability and diversity, and community connectedness to address the drivers of socioeconomic disadvantage
- **Care** – connecting residents to the support services they need to live a healthy life.

(State of Victoria, 2019)

The objectives of the NRCCBI were to:

- To reduce isolation, build understanding between residents, build community resilience, and increase connection to local health, education, training, and community services
- Increase access and community awareness to a range of support services to proactively manage social support needs, reduce anti-social behaviour and improve wellbeing
- Develop strategies for on-site housing services to increase responsiveness and supports to resident, property, and community needs
- Support a direct relationship between police and the community, including housing staff, to address safety issues.

The NRCCBI was initially guided by outcomes linked to these overarching Social Landlord principles and the findings from the Resident Survey in Public Housing 2019 (State of Victoria, 2020) which are briefly outlined below.

## Resident Survey in Public Housing 2019

In September 2019, the State of Victoria commissioned an external review to conduct the 'Resident Survey in Public Housing 2019' amongst Victorian residents living in public housing (State of Victoria, 2020). The survey explored themes including i) Stable and Suitable Housing, ii) Health and Lifestyle, iii) Safety and Security, and iv) Culture and Community Engagement. The themes explored issues associated with housing, such as residents' perceptions of housing services, and the condition of their homes and shared spaces (State of Victoria, 2020). The research indicated that respondents at Richmond were least satisfied with the security of the car park (39%), security of their home (35%) and maintenance of inside common areas and facilities (28%) (State of Victoria, 2020). These findings informed the NRCCBI team's planning and development and supported planning approaches for the design of the NRCCBI community action plan to ensure responses were locally relevant and contextual.

## North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative Action Plan

The NRCCBI community action plan (Appendix 1) was developed as the guiding framework for effective community development in Richmond that could best meet the needs and priorities of residents and stakeholders (State of Victoria, 2022). The community action plan was a collaborative undertaking between the various stakeholders that ‘live, work and play’ within the Richmond public housing estate. This was achieved through extensive community engagement and community consultations between 2020 – 2021 which were undertaken to identify short to medium-term actions and priorities. Subsequently, the following themes were identified as key priorities to help make Richmond estate and safer and more enjoyable place:

1. Health, development, and opportunity
2. Safety and security
3. Pride and participation
4. Amenity and neighbourhood

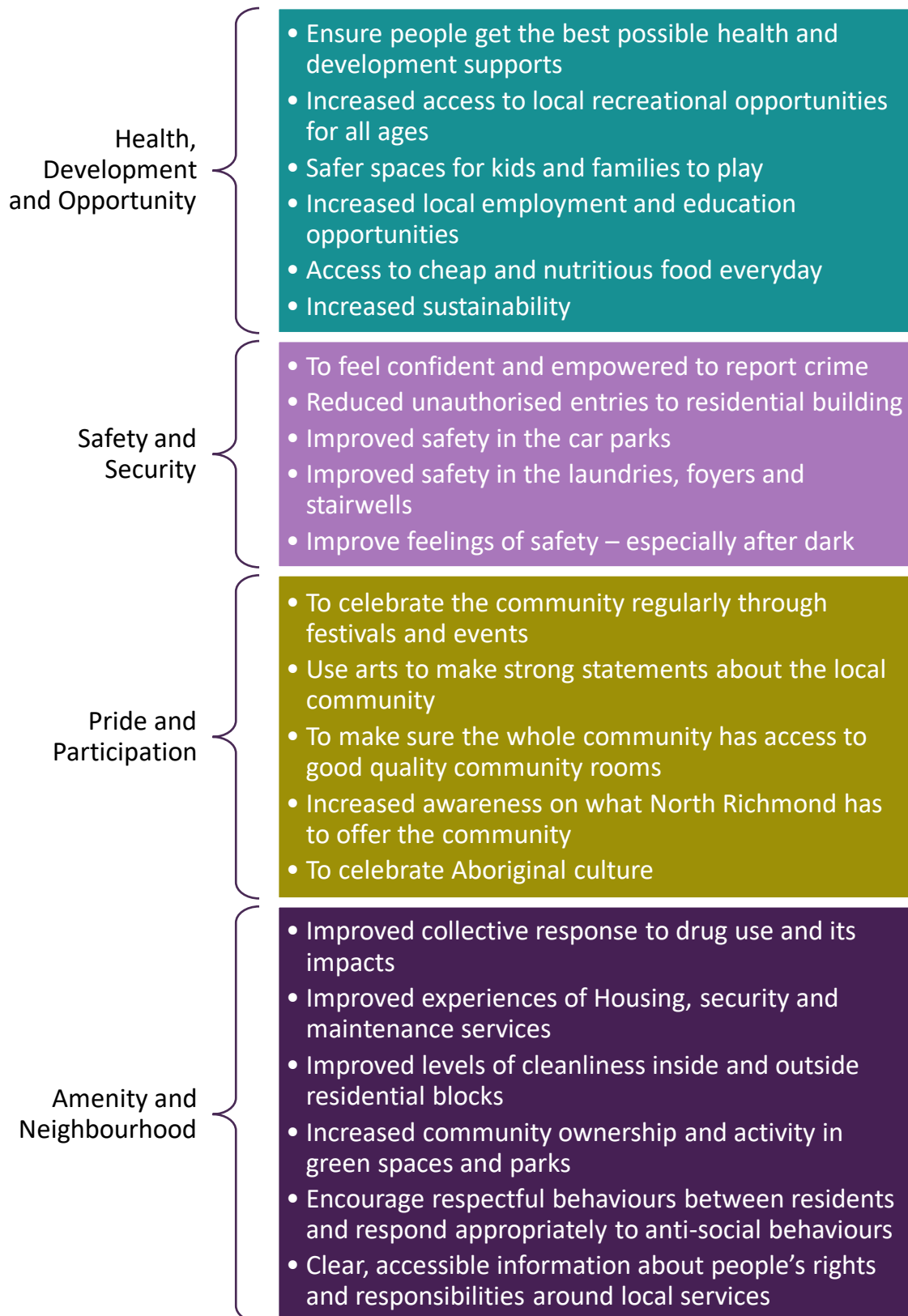
Each theme correlated to a sub-set of specific actions and initiatives to address the key priorities based on what needed to improve, what residents wanted, and who needed to be involved. Figure 1 outlines the themes and what residents wanted as described in the action plan.

This report responds to the themes and priorities of the action plan, highlighting the many activities and outcomes delivered by BANH and their community partners to achieve the projects goals and objectives.



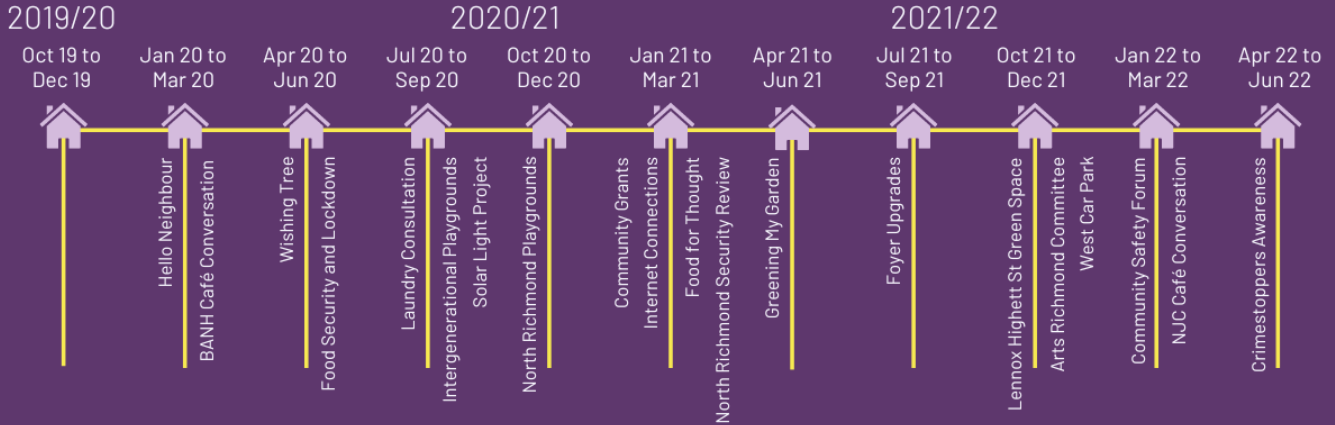


FIGURE 1 NORTH RICHMOND COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVE ACTION PLAN – PRIORITIES



Adapted from (State of Victoria, 2022)

# Community Engagement and Consultations



## The Numbers

1,762

Contributions, submissions and participants

14

Different consultation approaches including:

4

Café Conversations

3

Workshops

2

Focus groups

1

Safety walk

1

Laneway Market

## Total Participants

Face to Face



Pop Ups



Surveys



Workshop



Focus Groups





## Approach

The BANH team utilised community development and strengths-based approaches to engage and support Richmond public housing estate residents to ensure their participation, their perspectives and voices were heard and informed actions and activities. Residents were presented with a variety of opportunities to participate, to feel empowered, and to effectively demonstrate that actions reflected the diversity and aspirations of the estate community. This ensured that decisions were informed and guided by residents, for residents and had a positive impact on their daily lives. Examples of how residents contributed are outlined below and detailed throughout the report:

- The **Richmond Estate Action-Led (REAL)** program
- **Community Connectors** program
- Community Engagement including the **Pop-up Laneway Market** and the **Arts Richmond Collective (ARC)** initiative
- Community Consultations including the **Greening My Garden** and **Food for Thought II**
- The **North Richmond Precinct Community Committee and Reference Groups**

Many of these initiatives empowered residents to participate and have their voices heard in a creative, supportive, and accessible environment. For example, the **Wishing Tree** was a preliminary engagement at a food distribution session during COVID-19 lockdowns. Residents wrote their aspirations for Richmond and tied them to two cumquats Wishing trees. One resident wrote about "*flowers, trees and more attractive open spaces, better lighting, more child-friendly spaces, better security and safety so that open spaces can be used.*" The cumquat trees were planted on the estate at the Gathering Place with residents and Cultivating Community, planting the seeds for change.

highlights an indicative timeline and captures some of the key community engagement and consultations, highlighting the methods and methodologies used. Historically, the Richmond community has been over consulted, this project attempted to engage the community through creative and personalised methods, and continually advocated for action-orientated outcomes, to reduce any issues associated with over-consultation and ensure genuine and effective community engagement.





Importantly, many of these engagements informed and guided the establishment and implementation of the NRCCBI action plan, alongside guiding the establishment of programs and activities delivered by BANH and other partners. This end-of-project review outlines and highlights several the innovative projects, partnerships and community engagement activities undertaken between December 2019 – September 2022 by the NRCCBI team.

## NRCCBI Team Members

The following BANH and DFFH team members delivered the NRCCBI:

**FIGURE 3 NRCCBI TEAM MEMBERS**



**Ian Adotey**  
DFFH, Manager NRCCBI



**Sue Kent**  
BANH Manager



**Lydia Dobbin**  
BANH Community Arts Manager



**Sally Anthony**  
BANH Community Development Worker



**Conor Sibly**  
BANH Community Development Worker



**Maria Filippow**  
BANH Community Cultural Development Worker



**Allison Andrews**  
BANH Administrator

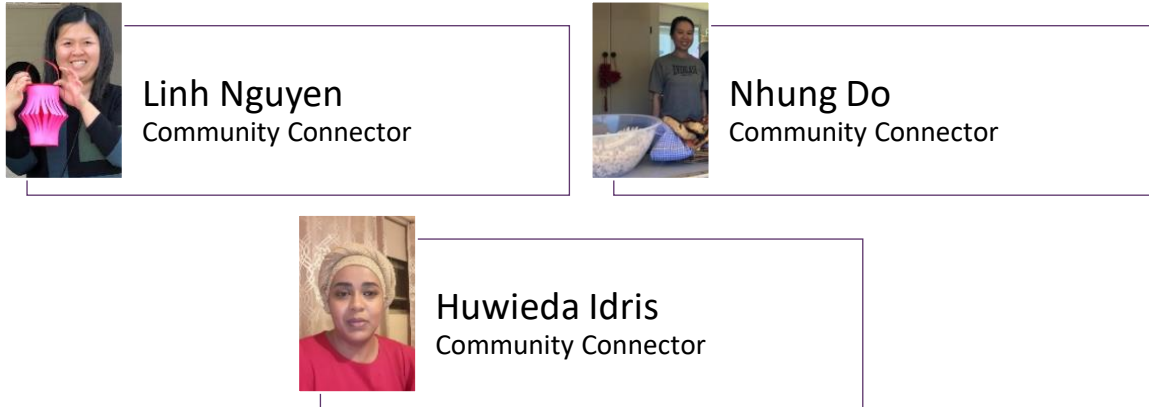
This report refers to the NRCCBI team when indicating the role and responsibilities of the above team members. Throughout the report the term *BANH CD team* refers specifically to outcomes and projects facilitated and led by Sally Anthony and Conor Sibly, who were employed as community development workers to deliver the project.

The NRCCBI team was also supported by the amazing and vibrant BANH team, including Nga and Jovita and the Collingwood Neighbourhood House team, Richie, Wagner, Joshua and Fatuma, and BANH's extensive network of friends and family to deliver the project.



During the project, the **Community Connector** program was established which employed public housing residents to ensure the project was community-led. This presented many opportunities to build the capacity of residents while offering opportunities for the NRCCBI team to increase reach and build new connections. The following residents were employed for 12 months between September 2021-2022:

**FIGURE 4 COMMUNITY CONNECTORS**



The delivery of the NRCCBI was also supported by many government representatives involved in the Social Landlord pilot project and the North Richmond Precinct (NRP) project. BANH would like to thank the following DFFH, and City of Yarra representatives involved in the NRCCBI and NRP project teams:

- Clare Lorenz | DFFH, Director Yarra Estates
- Chris Newland | DFFH, North Richmond Precinct Manager
- Esther Kennedy | Yarra City Council, Economic Development Officer
- Julie Jacobs | Senior Project Officer
- Maree Webber | Senior Project Officer
- Abraham Herasan | Administration Support – Youth Employment Program
- Najat Omar | Administration Support – Youth Employment Program
- Nikol Tap | Administration Support – Youth Employment Program
- The Richmond Housing Team (various members over the course of the project).





## Lifting Spirits

Review of the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative  
March 2023





## The North Richmond Precinct project

At the outset, the NRCCBI sought to include not only the Richmond public housing estate but residents and businesses from the wider North Richmond precinct within its scope. In mid-2020, DFFH established a North Richmond Precinct (NRP) team to focus on the wider cohort whilst the NRCCBI retained its focus on the public housing estate. From this point on, there was daily collaboration between the NRCCBI and NRP teams with the BANH CD team supporting public housing residents in wider community engagement mechanisms and initiatives. Most notably, this was achieved through the BANH CD team's support to the NRP Community Committee and its reference groups. These bodies were established as formal engagement processes in September 2020, in response to the allocation of funding of \$9 million to undertake neighbourhood renewal in Richmond under the Government's \$500 million Housing Building Works package (State of Victoria, 2022). Figure 5 outlines the area of the project focus.

The NRCCBI team supported the delivery of the NRP project in a variety of ways including the provision of support to public housing members of the NRP Committee and its reference groups and providing secretariat support and stewardship to the Safety, Neighbourhood and Amenity, and Health and Well-being Reference Groups, working with local stakeholders to shape the vision and future projects for the neighbourhood. Significant resources were required to develop and maintain the governance groups from the community development workers' perspective. A key learning was that this resourcing should be an active consideration in future work of this kind.

FIGURE 5 MAP OF NORTH RICHMOND PRECINCT



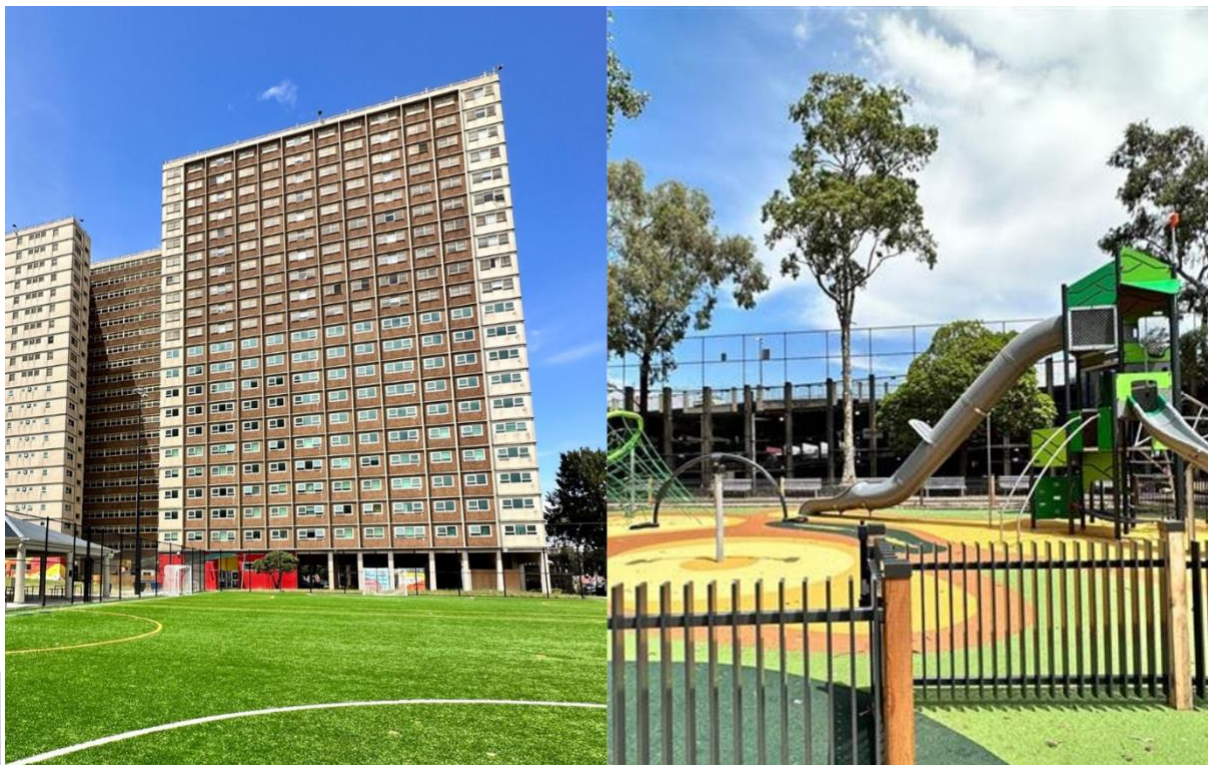


Additionally, the BANH CD team supported the design and delivery of the NRP Community Projects funds community engagement approaches. Community groups and local organisations were invited to apply for funding to design and deliver a community-led responses and initiatives to local based issues. The NRCCBI team worked with the YEP trainees, a DFFH initiative to employ young people living in public housing, to promote the NRP Community Project fund and support community groups and organisation to apply. Many community groups were provided with auspice support from BANH to ensure they could meet funding criteria and requirement such as public liability insurance. Another key learning for effective resourcing was identified to ensure the BANH administration team was adequately supported.

Additionally, the BANH CD team continuously advocated to collaborate and engage with the community to ensure their voices were heard. This resulted in participation and capacity building opportunities in governance groups

and community engagement activities including the **Greening my Garden** and the **Hihett Street and Lennox Street consultations**. These initiatives have resulted in long-term investment in the physical infrastructure of estate including new playgrounds, a futsal pitch and outdoor gym equipment which were informed by residents needs and perspectives.

A critical indicator for success of the NRCCBI, was demonstrated through the strong partnership established between DFFH and BANH. Ensuing opportunities to enable and advocate for systems-level change, while working with residents to include their voices and perspectives on decisions that impact their daily lives.





## Funding and Grants

### NRCCBI Brokerage

To support the development and delivery of the NRCCBI, DFFH allocated the NRCCBI team an annual provision of \$100,000 brokerage to fund and resource projects aimed at building the capacity of the local community and to support the delivery and implementation of the NRCCBI action plan. Access to brokerage created flexibility in designing and delivering interventions and reduced resource and time constraints associated with obtaining external funding and grants. Resources were allocated to support the establishment of programs and activities including the **North Richmond Small Grant Program, COVID Response Food Relief Program, Richmond Estate Action-Led Project, Community Connectors Program** and the **Pop-up Laneway Market** and **Creative Pathway** project which are described throughout the report.

The allocation of the brokerage was an effective strategy to ensure appropriate resources were readily available to deliver community-based projects and provide vital support that met the needs of the local community. This presented a transparent model for distributing resources to where they were needed within the local community through a trusted organisation. Access to brokerage presented unique and flexible opportunities to pilot initiatives and seek additional funding for successful projects. For example, digital inclusion initiatives delivered in during COVID-19 lock downs led to capacity building program such as the **train the trainer** project delivered in partnership with **Yarra Libraries**. The BANH team successfully partnered with a wide variety of government and philanthropic funders to secure additional resources to further meet the aims and objectives of the project.

### External Funding and Grants

The BANH team was successful in obtaining external funding to support a range of community-based projects. These projects were identified and developed in collaboration with residents and community partners to address the needs of the local community and improve outcomes for residents. **BANH obtained over \$667,170 in external funding** throughout the duration of the project, supporting and delivering a diverse range of projects and activities funded by a range of philanthropic and government organisations. Importantly, the BANH team united with local services and organisations, based on common goals and objectives which encompassed the expertise and skills of the respective organisations to deliver comprehensive and valuable projects with the community.

Many of these projects focused on showcasing and developing the creativity of the community such as the Multicultural Festival and Events grant for the delivery of online events and engagement during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Collaborations with the University of Melbourne's Creativity and Wellbeing Research Initiative to support the **playground consultations**, the Department of Justice and Crime Prevention funded the **Solar Light Project** and the Neighbourhood Justice Centre Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI Initiative) funded for the **Alone Together** podcast and digital inclusion initiatives.

Funding was secured to deliver programs focused on improving physical and mental health outcomes and access to food. The Vic Health Partnerships grant supported the delivery of the **Caravan Café, Mindful Mondays**, and the **Fun Exercise and Nutrition** in partnership with NRCH. Alongside Multicultural Priority Response grants and Bendigo Bank supported the delivery of **COVID-19 Food Relief Response** initiatives.



Placemaking activities were also a major component of the NRCCBI to create safer and more enjoyable places to connect and meet friends and family. The Stronger Communities Grant funded by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Queens Jubilee Tree planting grant funded by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources supported the development of the **Gathering Place** and the **Caravan Café**. Additionally, the NRP Community Grants fund supported the **Moon Lantern Festival** and enhancements to the **West Car Park** which is currently in development in collaboration with DFFH and Homes Victoria and discussed in further detail.

### Auspice Support

BANH provides assistance to community groups and networks through auspice support for grant applications. This is a community capacity building approach that ensures community groups have adequate public liability insurance and support to deliver community-led projects including grant writing support and governance. For example, BANH provided auspice support to the following community groups and organisations to apply for the NRP Community Grants fund:

- The Village – Moon Lantern Festival
- Two Square Pegs – Women’s Health and Economic Inclusion
- Sarah Cather – Festival of Women
- Young Assets Foundation – Homework Club
- Mzuri Dance – Migrant Families Strengthening Community Engagement and Arts

All these projects were delivered in 2022 to showcase the diversity of the estate and deliver capacity building opportunities. Notably, the Women’s Health and Economic Inclusion project and the Homework Club attracted additional funding and continue to deliver programs and services to empower public housing residents with the auspice support of BANH.

### Networking & Partnership Development

Over the three years of the project, the BANH CD team became embedded in the local community and built meaningful relationships with a wide range of community members and local organisations. The team were able to build new connections and strengthen existing BANH partnerships to coordinate efforts and enhance outcomes and create a safer, connected, and vibrant community. The team was able to build relationships quickly and effectively with the local community through the trusted and respected reputation that BANH has built over the previous 40 years. BANH’s trusted reputation allowed the team to genuinely connect with the community, build connections, and bring their ideas to life.

A range of meaningful and dynamic relationships were built with public housing residents, providing them opportunities to participate and have their voices heard, presenting a range of development and capacity-building opportunities, and celebrating and showcasing the diversity of the estate. The team wishes to thank the Richmond public housing estate community for embracing us, and allowing us to work with you, the wisdom, creativity, resilience, and passion that the community has showcased and demonstrated are incredibly humbling and inspiring.

As described, the project established a range of collaborative partnerships across the service system, including local businesses and philanthropic organisations. The NRCCBI team would like to sincerely thank and acknowledge the many participating local services and organisations that contributed to the project over the previous three years, we couldn’t have done it without you!



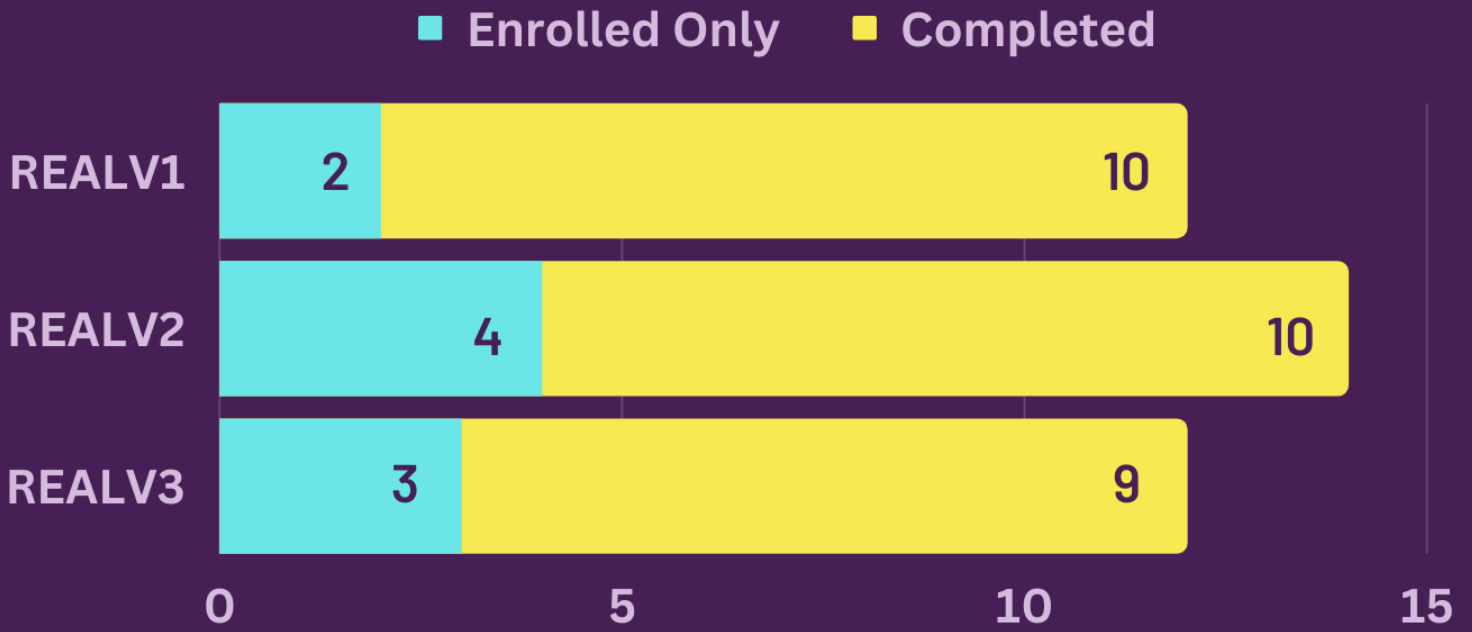
## Lifting Spirits

Review of the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative  
March 2023

The following sections of the report showcase some of the projects and initiatives that were undertaken throughout the project, highlighting the many collaborative partnerships and outcomes achieved. The sections are mapped by the four themes of the NRCCBI community action plan.

# Richmond Estate Action Led (REAL) Program

## Participant Outcomes



## Visiting Services



## REAL Deliverables

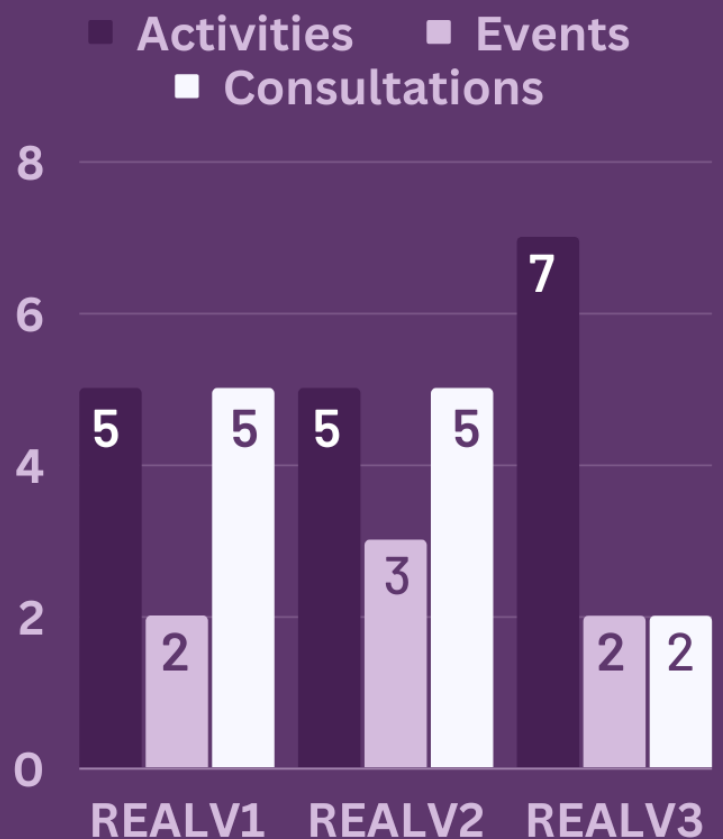


FIGURE 6 RICHMOND ESTATE ACTION-LED PROJECT



# 1. Health, Development & Opportunity

## 1.1. Ensure people get the best possible health and development supports

### Richmond Estate Action-Led program

The Richmond Estate Action-Led (REAL) program was a flagship NRCCBI project designed and delivered in partnership with residents and local organisations including Carringbush Adult Education (Carringbush).

The project was designed to engage and build connections with residents by:

- Increasing social connections and engaging Richmond residents to develop resident-led responses to community-based issues
- Building the capacity, skills, and confidence of residents through the development and delivery of community development and engagement activities
- Developing skills and employment pathways through targeted training, education, and up-skilling opportunities
- Enhancing opportunities for public housing residents to be involved in decision-making processes that impact their daily lives
- Connecting participants with local services and organisations

REAL was piloted and initially delivered in 2020 during COVID-19 lockdowns with a group of 12 community members. The group met weekly online via zoom, providing opportunities to enhance digital literacy skills, alongside delivering a range of positive outcomes for public housing residents and the broader community including the establishment of the **African Curriculum Support Program**, and the **International Cooking Project**, which are described below.

Building on the successes of the initial pilot program, the BANH CD team facilitated two additional iterations of the project. In 2021, REAL V2 was delivered with a mix of face-to face and online meetings in partnership with Carringbush and funded by the NRCCBI. In 2022, REAL V3 was able to be delivered entirely face-to-face. The three iterations of the REAL programs were all delivered over a three-month period and participants were remunerated for their participation.

The success of this program directly addresses the aims of the NRCCBI community action plan including making sure that local people get jobs and connecting local people to job opportunities in the local area. The following positive outcomes (Figure 6) were achieved:

- Meaningful employment pathway opportunities including **Community Connectors** within the NRCCBI team as well as external opportunities with the **High-Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR)** team at North Richmond Community Health (NRCH) and **Bicultural Workers** at Yarra City Council (YCC)
- REAL participants designed and delivered **community-led projects**, ensuring local people get involved in solutions to local based issues and projects became embedded in the community
- The REAL V3 group was co-facilitated by Huwieda Idris, who was a participant in REAL V2 and progressed into a role as a **Community Connector** at BANH.





## Lifting Spirits

Review of the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative  
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- Participants developed the skills and confidence to design and deliver community-based projects, forums, and activities such as the development of a **Women's Circle** and delivering a presentation at the **Melbourne Soup Event**
- Participants engaged, facilitated, and promoted the development of community consultations and engagements for the NRP and NRCCBI, such as facilitating focus groups with community members in their preferred language
- A collaborative and strong working relationship with **Carringbush** supported facilitated public speaking sessions, grant writing, referral to support services and co-facilitation of Real V2.
- Connecting group members with local services and organisations including, **Victorian Public Tenants Association (VPTA)**, **NRCH**, **Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC)**, **YCC**
- Group members were linked to employment and training and education organisations including the **Brotherhood of St Laurence**, **Yarra Libraries**, **Carringbush**, and **Hope for the Future**





## Digital Inclusion

The digital divide was an equity issue highlighted throughout the COVID-19 lockdowns. Many people living within the Richmond public housing estate lacked basic access and knowledge to adapt to an online environment. The NRCCBI team commenced a series of endeavours to work with residents and local organisations to reduce equity issues associated with digital inclusion. These included:

- The establishment of the **Digital Inclusion Network** in partnership with Carringbush to coordinate and collaborate with a network of organisations within the City of Yarra to advocate and deliver digital inclusion initiatives
- Obtaining **BeConnected funding** and support from the **NJC CASI funding** to purchase and distribute devices and internet packages to public housing residents in partnership with Carringbush
- Undertaking the **Internet Connections** community consultation to collect base-line data and understand and identify the needs of residents with support from NBN Co
- Participating panellist for the Latrobe University **Addressing Digital and Social Inclusion in Melbourne's Public Housing Webinar** and the Australian Digital Inclusion **Alliance Digital Inclusion and COVID-19 Webinar**
- Establishment of the **Digital Hub** in partnership with Yarra Libraries to increase resident's ability to access and use the internet and helps local people to learn to use devices
- The installation of a **SMART bench** in-between 108 and 110 Elizabeth Street to provide free Wi-Fi and charging access points for devices supported by the Yarra CityLab team
- Delivery of the digital mentor **Train the Trainer** project in partnership with Yarra Libraries, and funded through the Multicultural Digital Inclusion Grant, a Neighbourhood Houses Victoria initiative
- Participating member of the **Smart Public Housing Project Working Group** designed to create a digitally inclusive city for everyone in partnership with the City of Yarra, NBN Co, Yarra Libraries, BANH and Carringbush





# RICHMOND SMART BENCH

**CHARGE YOUR PHONE  
& USE WIFI AT THE SMART BENCH  
ANYTIME  
(BY BASKETBALL COURTS  
BETWEEN 108 &  
110 ELIZABETH ST)**

**Celebrate the launch of the  
Smart Bench in Richmond!  
Thursday 7 April,  
1.00pm-2.00pm  
108-110 Elizabeth Street**

- Join us for drinks, chat, music and games
- Find out how it works





### African Youth Curriculum Support Program

During COVID-19 lockdowns, many local parents and caregivers expressed concerns relating to young people’s development including literacy, numeracy, and communication skills alongside the emotional and mental well-being due to the impacts of COVID-19. In response, a group of local community members partnered with Australian African Community Development Inc. and the BANH CD team to design and deliver the **African Youth Curriculum Support Program**.

The project supported young people from the ages of 6-18 to deliver curriculum support in a safe, inclusive, and culturally appropriate learning environment that aimed to strengthen community connections and enhance parent engagement in all aspects of learning. This project was identified and established primarily through a group of Somali community members involved in the **REAL V1** project. They worked together to apply for grants from the **NRCCBI Small Grants program**, recruited and engaged families and delivered online classes during the lockdowns. The project was delivered and supported by experienced tutors and volunteers from the community and continues to be delivered in a face-to-face environment at the Factory supported by local families and funding from the **YCC Community Grants** program.





## High-Risk Accommodation Response



**HRAR** was developed in response to the pandemic, providing essential support, and critical COVID-19 information and education to ensure the community were safe, connected, and informed. The HRAR project was a highly successful and innovative Victorian Government initiative across Victorian public housing estates. NRCH was the lead organisation in Richmond, employing local public housing residents to deliver innovative measures to work with the local community to keep them safe, informed and reduce the impacts of COVID-19. The NRCH HRAR team has received recognition of their efforts through awards and media exposure due to the high level of vaccination rates and innovative approaches.

From the beginning of the HRAR project, NRCH engaged the BANH CD team one day per week to support and deliver the HRAR program through a variety of measures. This included supporting community engagement strategies, food relief including during the 139 Highett Street lockdown, delivering community events and activities, and mentoring and capacity building of HRAR staff.

As a result, NRCH and BANH established a strategic and collaborative partnership based on mutual goals to work with estate residents and keep them connected and safe. BANH and NRCH fostered concerted and collaborative measures to deliver various other initiatives including the ongoing delivery of the **Twilight Market**, **COVID-19 Vaccine education and arts projects**, and an array of community celebrations, events, and programs such as **Cultural Diversity Week** and **Walk for Family Violence**, as well as supporting the HRAR team in developing and running regular **Tai Chi** and **Zumba classes**.



## 1.2. Increased access to local recreational opportunities for all ages



The BANH CD team supported the development of a range of new free fitness activities for the local community. Many community members spoke about missing Zumba classes that had been previously organised by MiCare in one of the community rooms. Members of REAL applied for NRCCBI grants to support the development of **dance exercise classes, tai chi, walking groups,** and senior arts groups including a **knitting group**. Many of these were latter facilitated and managed by the NRCH HRAR team.

BANH auspiced a range of recreational projects that were funded by the NRP grants and gave support to people who were interested in applying. A resident partnered with Two Square Pegs and created the **Fun, Exercise and Nutrition** program. BANH supported the resident in the early development of the project, including budgeting, finding fitness instructors, a venue and promotion. It was very popular and has become part of the regular NRCH timetable of activities.



Similarly, the BANH CD team supported a resident to establish a **Men's Walking group** focused on improving men's health and social connections. The group met weekly, walking, and sharing the enjoyment of visiting nearby attractions such as the **Melbourne Cricket Ground** and **Collingwood Children's Farm**. The program was led by NRCH and continues to be delivered.

## 1.3. Safer spaces for kids and families to play

### Highett and Lennox Street consultation

The corner of Highett and Lennox Street was identified as a proposed area for enhancement works to improve the amenity of the area and encourage shared use of area for public housing residents and the broader community to connect. The Richmond community was invited to give their feedback and ideas on the design and use of Lennox and Highett Street. The NRCCBI team worked with Homes Victoria and Urban Initiatives, a landscape architecture company to engage residents to understand their needs and prioritise enhancement works. The ideas were categorised into high (\$80,000 to \$140,000), medium (\$40,000 to \$80,000) and low cost (under \$40,000) interventions.

The BANH CD team conducted assertive outreach with the support of the **Community Connectors** around the estate and spoke to approximately 50 people in different locations across the estate. Posters were displayed with QR codes for English, Vietnamese and Chinese online surveys were displayed in all five high-rise towers on the estate. The survey links were distributed in WhatsApp groups, Facebook, and



email. The most popular choices included **shared open spaces**, **improved seating**, and **indigenous artwork** which has been incorporated to the designs of enhancement works currently underway.

### Playground consultation

The BANH CD team collaborated with the DFFH YEP trainees to undertake series of community engagements activities to engage residents surrounding their ideas and perspectives on the playgrounds within the estate. The engagements included focus groups, an online survey, workshops with Richmond West Primary School and observations of playground usage.

On 22 February 2021, a focus group was held at the 108 Elizabeth Street playground, and 10 residents attended. The languages spoken by the group included Vietnamese, Mandarin, Somali, Oromo and Turkish. Many comments in the focus group related to a desire for additional and new playground equipment, a sense of boredom with the current playgrounds, and concerns about safety and cleanliness. Residents also expressed a strong interest in seating, catering for different age groups and outdoor gym equipment. Ideas suggested included 'toddler and pre-teen differentiation areas' and 'areas for parents to socialise', water fountains and access to toilets. A consultation report was developed and provided to Homes Victoria and DFFH to inform the designs of the proposed playgrounds. Notably, residents' ideas and perspectives were included in the concept design undertaken by Urban Initiatives. The new playground at 112 Elizabeth Street opened in October 2022 with the playgrounds at 106 & 108 Elizabeth Street and 139 Highett Street following in January 2023.

### Melbourne Uni consultation

The BANH team partnered with the University of Melbourne Creativity and Wellbeing Research Initiative (CAWRI) to conduct research with Richmond West Primary School students (many of whom reside on the estate) to understand their vision for playgrounds on the estate. This consultation also informed the design and development of the playgrounds on the estate.

### Outdoor Exercise grant

A resident approached the BANH CD team to apply for a NRP Community grant to establish and build a concept for outdoor exercise equipment for the Richmond public housing estate. The BANH CD team supported the resident to develop the grant application and provide auspice support.

The grant was successful and later endorsed and progressed by Home Victoria due to the complexities associated with building on government-owned land. The resident was a member of one the NRP governance groups, providing insight into government processes and participation throughout the whole process. This provided meaningful experience in designing and delivering a community-led project within a complex environment.

## 1.4. Increased local employment and education opportunities

### Community Connectors Program

The BANH CD team established the **Community Connector** program to employ residents to support all aspects of the NRCCBI project delivery and provide employment and training opportunities for residents living on the Richmond public housing estate. In September 2021, five public housing residents were employed on a casual 6-month contract, with three extended by an additional six months. This supported two key objectives of the project, to ensure local people get local jobs, increase social connections and



reach, and to engage residents to develop resident-led responses and initiatives. The community connectors played a vital role in the development of the project and were invaluable in their ability to connect with the Richmond community, deliver innovative and creative projects, and enhance opportunities for diverse voices and connections that contributed to enhancing the vibrancy of the Richmond estate.

The community connectors delivered and contributed to a range of community engagement activities including running **focus groups** in language for the **Greening My Garden consultation** and supporting the delivery of the **Community Safety Workshop** and **Community Safety Campaign**. Additionally, they supported the delivery of programs including the **Caravan Café**, and the **Digital Hub**, and gained experience in delivering and facilitating events and groups such as **Mindful Mondays**, applying for funding to deliver **Christmas Hampers for families**, and **Lantern Making Workshops** for the Moon Lantern Festival.

The community connectors engaged in professional development opportunities such as Bicultural Workforce training delivered by cohealth, attendance at forums and network meetings and barista training. The community connectors have all successfully transitioned to further studies in community services or gained employment with cohealth and DFFH.







### Cultural Catering Program

BANH has managed and operated the **Cultural Catering** program for over 20 years, employing residents to share their cultural cuisines with the broader community. The Cultural Catering is a social enterprise that engages a team of Vietnamese, Timor-Leste, Chinese and Somali chefs that create and share their delicious cuisines with the community. The program provides catering services for events and programs and is a well establish cultural fabric of the estate.

The BANH CD team supported two Somali community members and their extended networks to join the Cultural Catering program and share their delicious Somali cuisine and culture with the broader community. The team provided capacity building support to the Somali chefs to develop, market and promote their products including support to hold markets at the Twilight Market.

The NRCCBI project contributed to the expansion of the social enterprise through promotion and distribution at local events and network meetings including the Richmond Youth Hub events and the NRP reference group meetings.

Furthermore, the NRCCBI program was active in connecting BANH's existing Cultural Catering Program to partner with NRCH to increase the capacity of the cook's training and employment pathways opportunities through their new community catering project and the NRCH cafe.



### Student Placements, Work Experience, YEP Trainees, Volunteers

Over the duration of the project, the BANH CD team supported three community services student placements. Students supported the project by delivering events and programs, including the **Inclusive Breakfast Club**, **Moon Lantern** celebrations, the **Digital Hub** and planting and composting projects at BANH.

During the lockdowns, the team engaged local public housing resident Fatuma Muhudin for a short-term work placement contract, who was instrumental in the delivery of the COVID-19 response initiatives, co-facilitating and supporting REAL V1 and connecting with African families on the estate. Fatuma later received the **City of Yarra Citizen of the Year Award in 2021**.

Furthermore, the team provided support and capacity building for three DFFH YEP participants who supported the delivery of the NRP Community grants consultations and the Playground consultation and administration support to the NRP Reference Group meetings.



The NRCCBI also presented a range of volunteer and capacity-building opportunities for residents and the broader community including the delivery of the **Food Relief program**, the **Caravan Café**, the **Digital Hub**, and the **Twilight Market**. BANH was able to engage and support a range of talented volunteers that improved social connectedness and communication with the community including through translation and interpreting to ensure programs and services were inclusive and accessible. BANH gives our sincere gratitude to the dedicated volunteers who supported many programs and events, with special thanks to Elizabeth Ogilvy, Maria Jong, Lin Dong and Stephen Duff, alongside countless others.



### Training and Development

Throughout the project, a range of training and development opportunities were delivered to build the capacity of residents and support volunteer and employment pathways. These included:

- **Peacemaking circle** training which involved residents and local services to learn and adapting peacemaking principles and practices to the Richmond context
- **First aid** training delivered by Red Cross and supported by Carringbush
- **Multicultural Digital Literacy Train the Trainer** program delivered in collaboration with Yarra Libraries
- Facilitated **public speaking** sessions to build the skills and confidence of REAL group members
- **Project management** and **community engagement** workshops to assist REAL group members to deliver their projects such as grant writing and budgeting
- **Cultural diversity** training and **non-bias communication** training to improve inclusive practice for Community Connectors and REAL members
- **Digital literacy** training at the drop-in sessions at the Factory to improve digital literacy skills
- **Overdose Response** training and **COVID-19 information** sessions including vaccination information sessions in language delivered by NRCH team members
- **Alcohol and other drug** education and information delivered by the Muslim Youth and Family Services

Many of these initiatives provided meaningful capacity building opportunities to improve the skills and confidence of participating residents. This included the ability to design and deliver community-led projects, deliver events and activities, and facilitate and present workshops and forums. Alongside improving awareness and education surrounding complex issues such as the impacts of alcohol and drug use.



## 1.5. Access to cheap and nutritious food every day

### COVID Response Food Relief Program

As the impacts of the pandemic evolved, it became immediately clear that food security and access to culturally appropriate food and household items was an issue concerning residents. In response, the BANH team launched a weekly **Food Relief Program** to provide fresh groceries, household items, and culturally appropriate hot meals to the community in partnership with a broad range of local services and organisations including the **YCC, Yarra Libraries, NRCH, Cultivating Community, Igniting Change and Lentil as Anything**. At the same time, it presented unique opportunities to undertake community engagement, build relationships and distribute important COVID health information to educate and inform the community in partnership with NRCH. **The HRAR** team assisted with the delivery of the program every week, supporting COVID safe measures and practices to keep the community safe.

The food relief program ran weekly throughout 2020 with around 80-100 residents attending each session requiring significant coordination of resources, donations and volunteers and participating organisations as well as important COVID safety measures. Despite the challenges of operating during the COVID lockdowns, the food relief program set a solid framework and foundation for the NRCCBI and BANH more broadly, to connect with a diverse number of residents, organisations, and community members. As a result, it created new relationships and strong partnerships with residents and local organisations, opportunities for volunteers, strengthened social connections, increased employment pathways and piloted creative programs such as the **International Cooking Club**. The food relief sessions evolved into the **Twilight Market** with an emphasis of celebrating arts and culture and engaging and empowering the community to participate.







### International Cooking Club

During the lockdowns, the **International Cooking Club** was established by REAL participants and led by Fatuma Muhudin, to deliver creative ways to engage residents and provide food relief to families with school-aged children. Each week, the group would hand deliver packages to over 20 families living on the estate with activities, and recipes with ingredients to make a cultural meal. The group participants shared their cultures and cuisines, sharing different recipes each week and created a WhatsApp group to share photos and have meals together while in isolation.

### Caravan Café

The **Caravan Café** was another initiative of the REAL program, the project was initially designed to deliver training and employment pathway opportunities and to create a safe and welcoming space for people experiencing homelessness to get a free meal and connect with the local community. The project evolved into a community café using a social enterprise model that offered access to low and affordable baked goods, organic produce and a range of cultural hot and cold drinks including Vietnamese coffee.

The Caravan Café was delivered in partnership with **Cultivating Community** and their **Let's Keep Cooking initiative** funded by the NRP Community Grants program. Cultivating Community held weekly High-Rise Baking workshops, utilising their wood-fired pizza oven, to make pizzas, focaccias and other cultural delicacies cooked by local community members including, Turkish pide and Chinese Sweet Buns. Cultivating Community also offered volunteer opportunities for the community and workshops to share their cultures and cuisine.

The Caravan Café also offered training opportunities such as barista training and customer service experience. Alongside, an opportunity for people to come access organic vegetables, sourced from **Cultivating Community market garden**, baked goods from the pizza oven and other cultural meals made by BANH's **Cultural Catering Program** for a gold coin donation.

Most importantly, the Caravan Café became a safe meeting place to connect and provided opportunities for the community to come together and share a meal in a safe environment. The NRCCBI team also partnered with the **Medically Safe Injecting Room (MSIR)** to ensure the space was an inclusive and welcoming environment. MSIR participants could collect tokens from the health service and receive free meals and drinks.





## 1.6. Increased sustainability

Developing solutions to improve sustainability on the estate was frequently requested by residents. This included access to locally grown food, recycling and composting and planting trees and flowers. On a local level, the BANH CD team were able to establish composting at BANH and deliver workshops with community members and the Cultural Catering program to reduce issues associated with food waste. The NRCH Café and other residents also dropped off their food waste at BANH every week.

A group of local organisations established the **Nourishing Our Community** network, co-facilitated by Cultivating Community, NRCH and BANH. The network was successful in obtaining a YCC Community Grant to purchase an industrial worm farm and deliver community education and workshops. The network also assisted collaborative opportunities such as the Caravan Café and High-rise Baking Group and provided opportunities for networking and information exchange related to food projects in and around the estate.

The BANH CD team partnered with the YCC Waste Management team and Richmond Housing to attempt to improve recycling for low and medium-density public housing. The BANH CD team delivered a range of initiatives such as workshops, information and education sessions and engagements at the Twilight Market. Richmond housing and Homes Victoria have made progress in overcoming complex challenges when it comes to improving recycling on the estate, such as behaviour change and the physical infrastructure, and further work is required to achieve a long-term solution to these barriers.

## 2. Safety and Security

### 2.1. To feel confident and empowered to report crime

#### Community Safety Campaign and Crime Stoppers

In July 2022 the NRCCBI team ran a 2-week community safety campaign to improve reporting of crime through promoting Crime Stoppers and conducting outreach to promote other BANH activities.

During outreach, 130 people were engaged while visiting the 5 high-rise towers in Richmond and Cooke Court, Williams Court, Anderson Court, Egan Street and Bromham Place and Richmond West Primary School.



Residents were invited to a Richmond Safety walk on Thurs 28 July, which was attended by 30 people, including residents, Vic Pol, NJC, Housing, DFFH, NRCH and Crime Stoppers.

The walk was followed by a community lunch with a Crime Stoppers presentation which 60 people attended. A resident said, “it was really helpful to know more about Crime Stoppers – how and when to contact them.” As a result, the following data was collected:

- 93% of people said they now know how to call Crime Stoppers
- 93% of people trust that they do not have to give their name to Crime Stoppers
- 93% of people said they now understand more about Crime Stoppers
- 79% of people said they are now more likely to report a crime to Crime Stoppers





## 2.2. Reduce unauthorised entries to residential buildings

The BANH CD team assisted in community engagement strategies by promoting and distributing surveys and informing residents regarding the **High-Rise Foyers Re-design** consultation, funded under the Housing Building Works package. Additionally, the team recruited and supported residents to attend and participate in focus groups for the **Richmond Security Review**.

## 2.3. Improve safety in the car park

### West Car Park Engagement

During January - March 2022, the BANH team in partnership with residents and local services collaborated to design and deliver place-making and engagement opportunities in and around the west car park. A series of engagements including the **Pop-up Laneway Market** were delivered to understand and improve longstanding concerns associated with safety and amenity in and around the perimeter of the west car park. Residents have expressed concerns relating to the safety and accessibility of the car park associated with maintenance and cleanliness and security related to drug activity and vandalism.

Based on the community feedback and previous government documents and consultations, the BANH CD team submitted the **North Richmond West Car Park Engagement** report to DFFH with a series of recommendations and approaches proposing:

1. To improve lighting in and around the west car park
2. To improve spatial conditions on the ground floor of the West Car Park including pigeon deterrents and installations of bins
3. To increase natural surveillance and a sense of community safety through the activation and creation of a welcoming environment

### Pop-up Laneway Market

In February 2022, a pop-up laneway market was held on the eastern pathway of the west car park. Place-making strategies such as the **Laneway Market** were delivered to creatively engage the community. The market involved setting up an 'outdoor living room' concept, that temporarily installed couches, rugs, lamp shades, and artwork to create a welcoming environment for community members to connect and chat. The following activities were delivered during the event:

- Engagement activities such as 'Dotmocracy' and 'Mind Mapping' so the community could vote on a selection of interventions and suggest their ideas to create change
- Informal conversations and brainstorming with community connectors and BANH staff
- Creative artwork and chalkboard activities insert picture
- Planting native and flowering plants along the pathway with Cultivating Community
- A series of markets and stalls from partnering organisations including Yarra Libraries, Two Square Pegs and NRCH
- Food served by the Cultural Catering program and NRCH

The pop-up laneway market was held between 3:00 pm-5:00 pm to attract school-aged children and their families on their journey home from school, creating opportunities for young people to contribute to the conversation. Many suggestions and ideas from the community were incorporated and have been delivered including the Creative Pathway project.





### Creative Pathway

In May 2002, BANH engaged artist Drez and three public housing residents to install the creative pathway along the eastern side of the west car park which was funded through NRCCBI brokerage.

The pathway was designed as a place-making initiative and to enhance the amenity of the area which has been popular with school-aged children on their journey home from school. Positive community feedback has indicated an increase in feelings of safety and pride.



### West Car Park Revitalisation project

In July 2022, as a part of the NRP Community Projects, DFFH awarded BANH with a short-term contract to undertake enhancement and improvement works in the west park in collaboration with DFFH and Homes Victoria. This project began shortly after the official completion of the NRCCBI. The project has delivered further community engagement projects to continue to involve and empower residents. At the time of writing this project had implemented a range of interventions including pigeon deterrents, community arts murals and delivered a secondary Laneway Market. The project is due for completion in early 2023.





## 2.4. Improved safety in the laundries, foyers, and stairwells

### Laundry Consultation

The BANH CD team investigated residents' perceptions and experiences of communal laundries and drying rooms for residents living in the high-rise towers on the Richmond public housing estate. The team undertook a series of engagements including an online survey, focus groups, observation, and documentation to understand the issues associated with the communal areas. The overall aims of the study were:

- To investigate residents' experiences and perceptions associated with usage and satisfaction with communal spaces of high-rise towers at the Richmond public housing estate.
- To identify and explore residents' concerns and opportunities associated with maintenance, access and usage of communal spaces including laundries and drying rooms.
- To understand the impacts of public housing high-rise upgrades on the use of communal spaces and identify wider use of communal spaces.
- To identify current ownership of and/or barriers to individual ownership of washing machines and dryers.

Responses demonstrated that there were many key issues related to safety and amenity around communal facilities from residents' perspectives. These included the need for improved maintenance, cleaning, and reporting processes, alongside the social aspects and environment of the laundries, including better supervision, creating welcoming spaces, clarifying roles and responsibilities of the landlord, improved communication between residents and the landlord and community education.

As an immediate response, Homes Victoria invested in upgrades to the locks of every communal laundry and drying room to ensure only residents from each floor could access the laundry. A departmental facilities management pilot commencing in early 2023 is an additional response to some of the themes raised.

## 2.5. Improve safety – especially after dark

### Café Conversations

BANH and NJC have a long history of working together on a range of initiatives including hosting 'Cafe Conversations' with the community to discuss locally relevant topics in an informal setting. One of the first community engagement activities in early 2020 the BANH CD team held was a **Cafe Conversation** with eight community members in a local café on Victoria Street, Richmond. It was an opportunity to meet and get to know residents and hear about what was important to them.

In 2022, BANH and the NJC hosted a series of Cafe Conversations in a range of locations, including an Iftar event at The Factory, visiting The Drum's youth group, 'coffee with a cop' at a Twilight Market to discuss safety concerns within Richmond. This included the attendance of the Richmond Police sergeant, at one of the Twilight Markets, who chatted with community members to hear their safety concerns. The engagements captured a broad range of perspectives, and the results of the Cafe Conversations were presented at the **North Richmond Public Housing Estate Community Safety Dinner** by the NJC.

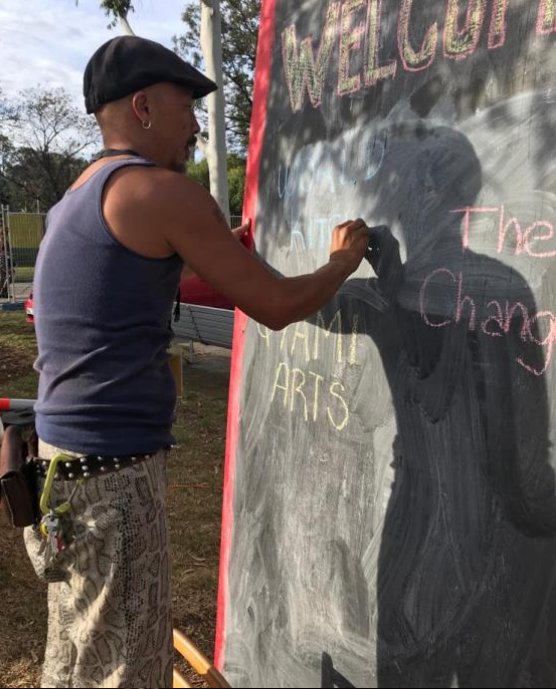


### North Richmond Public Housing Estate Community Safety Dinner

On 26 May 2022, the NRCCBI team held a **Community Safety Forum** focussing on safety within the Richmond public housing estate with over 60 community representatives attending. The event was designed and delivered with community members including Penelope Drummond, Melenoa Halaholo and the NRCBBI community connectors to ensure the event was community-led. The community safety forum was delivered using a Q&A format where community members had opportunities to ask questions to senior DFFH, Victoria Police and Richmond Housing representatives. The event was supported by numerous community members to support interpreting and translations, cultural catering, and childcare. A range of outcomes resulted from the event including the Community Safety Campaign, NRCCBI Safety grants and the promotion and engagement with Crime Stoppers to improve reporting of crime.

### Installation of lighting

Throughout the duration of the project, lighting was commonly identified as a key concern for residents. In response, DFFH invested in the installation of lighting poles across the housing estate to improve night-time safety. The BANH CD team engaged residents to understand where and what areas of the estate they felt unsafe and provided support to DFFH to advise of lighting locations and promote the installation of lighting.



### 3. Pride and Participation

#### 3.1. To celebrate the community regularly through festivals and events

##### Twilight Market

In 2021 and 2022, the food relief program evolved into a highly successful monthly twilight market delivered in partnership with a diverse range of other agencies and community members including NRCH, Yarra Libraries, and Cultivating Community. These markets provide unique opportunities to connect the public housing community with the broader community, local artists and performers, government bodies and local services and organisations including the Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Stoppers, and Victoria Police. In 2022, the Abbots Yard venue in Victoria Street hosted the winter editions of the markets to create an inclusive environment for the community funded by the Yarra City Council Economic Development Department.

The Twilight Market developed an inclusive model that presented opportunities for residents to build connections and business skills. Alongside showcasing the vibrancy and diversity of the estate through entertainment, activities and stalls for other agencies and local businesses. The twilight market became a vehicle to meet many of the aims of the NRCCBI including:

- **Making North Richmond a safe and enjoyable place to be.** The markets bring together local public and non-public housing residents and local agencies and businesses in a fun, safe community event. The events are an opportunity to meet and connect with neighbours, make friends, and feel proud of the North Richmond community.





- **Helping people in North Richmond to be healthy, happy, and active.** The markets are a celebration of the local community and an opportunity for connection, something which has been essential to the mental health and happiness of the community over the last few years. The markets often feature arts and cultural performances including music, interactive art, dance classes and tai chi, helping local people stay active.
- **Making sure that local people get jobs –** Markets have built the capacity of residents and created pathways to employment and supported business development. Many local community members volunteered, and some were employed to work with NRCCBI to plan and deliver each market including set-up, event management and coordination. Other residents have created social enterprises and small businesses, such as **Sunrise Kitchen Catering**, using the markets as an opportunity to test and refine their product and their business.



### North Richmond Small Grants Program

The NRCCBI supported residents with grant writing and project design and delivery through the **North Richmond Small Grants Program**. Residents and local agencies were provided with opportunities to apply for \$1000 community grants to deliver community-led projects and activities. The NRCCBI small grants program distributed a total of \$32,930 over the project period, 36 projects were developed and delivered by community groups and individuals to benefit the local community.

Highlights include the vibrant and joyful **Richmond Has Talent** contest featuring the talents of young and old residents who performed at one of the 2021 Twilight Markets. Other highlights include cultural and social events such as **Iftar and Ramadan celebrations**, the **Chinese Cultural Dance Celebration**, and **International Women's Day** events and creative arts and dance projects including **the Factory Music Night**, **Social Distancing Portraits** and **Afro dance** project. Social entrepreneurs showcased their skills through the **Free Haircuts** project, the establishment of the **Caravan Café** and the **Community Mask Making** project in which a group of Vietnamese-Australian residents sewed masks for the community and donated them to people attending the food relief markets in the early days of the pandemic in 2020.



### 3.2. Use arts to make strong statements about the local community

The NRCCBI team has led a range of **creative arts projects** in collaboration with the local community. Creative arts projects presented many opportunities for residents to showcase their skills and passions while highlighting the vibrancy and diversity of the estate and providing residents with voices. Projects included:



#### Isolation Portraits

A photo and storytelling series of public housing residents during the COVID-19 lockdowns. The series was captured by photographer Bri Hammond to share and highlight participants experiences and resilience during the lockdowns.



#### Alone Together

Podcast developed in partnership with producer Annaliese Redlich which presented the lives of four public housing residents and their experiences of lockdown. The four participants were REALv2 members and assisted in planning, developing and promoting an online listening party, to launch the podcast on 21 September 2021 with over 30 attendees.



#### COVID-19 creative messaging and information

Including a series of paste-ups featuring photos of residents sharing health messaging around COVID-19 and vaccines and artwork designed by primary school-aged children in partnership with NRCH.



#### 106 Foyer Installation

BANH collaborated with artist Paula Mahoney to transform the foyer of 106 with bright and colourful paste-ups of drawings by residents and a community mural in multiple languages asking people not to feed the pigeons.



#### Solar Light Installation

BANH partnered with Visionary Images to develop concepts and create the design for artistic lighting in the west car park in partnership with residents and MSIR and their participants. A series of pop-up engagements were undertaken to engage MSIR clients.



#### Arts for Richmond Collective

BANH re-established the **ARC – Arts for Richmond Collective** – arts committee. Made up of residents and representatives from agencies including NRCH, Yarra Youth Hub and Yarra City Arts. ARC works to develop ongoing creative outcomes for the Richmond community and is currently developing concepts for a Richmond Mural and an arts trail for the neighbourhood.





### 3.3. To make sure the whole community has access to good quality community rooms

All community room on the estate were closed during COVID-19 restrictions.

During the lockdowns, The Factory on Belgium Avenue, (managed by BANH) became an essential place to meet, hosting food relief sessions and providing a space to manage the crisis response to COVID-19 outbreaks including emergency food relief. Once COVID-19 restrictions were eased, the Factory was able to offer community groups access, alongside a range of supported COVID-19 safe measures and protocols. The Factory became a hub for community groups and organisations to connect, learn and celebrate. Many community groups and activities including the **Chinese Opera**, **Friday Lunch Chorus**, **Vocal Boogie**, **African Youth Curriculum Support** program, **Oromo Women's Group**, **Mah-jong**, **Social Table Tennis**, and **Melbourne East Timorese Activity Centre** were able to connect at the Factory. Alongside many organisations including Carringbush, Yarra Libraries and the Brotherhood of St Lawrence delivering education and training opportunities.

Access to community space was an essential platform for these activities. In early 2021, DFFH commenced upgrade works at two key community facilities on the estate to provide high-quality facilities to continue this work into the future.

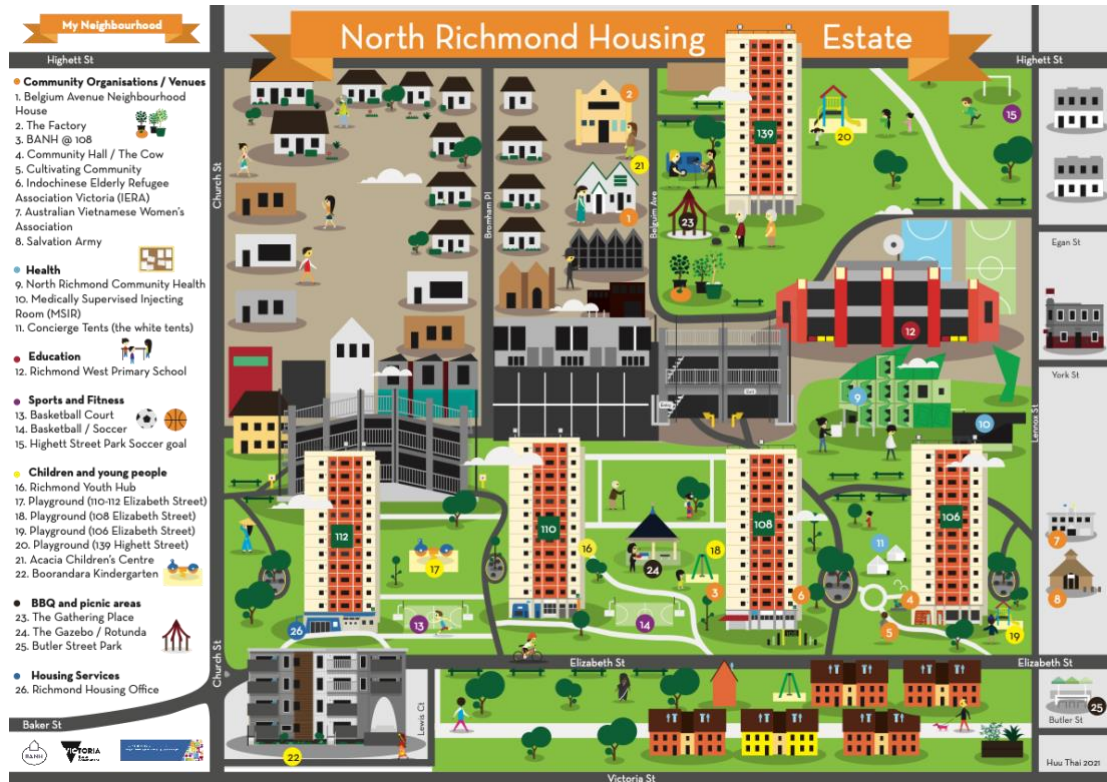
### 3.4. Increased awareness of what North Richmond has to offer the community

The NRCCBI team worked with residents and community organisations to celebrate the cultural diversity of the estate through a range of events including **Chinese New Year** celebrations, **Lunar New Year** celebrations including lantern making and Ramadan and Iftar dinners. The Village delivered the **Moon Lantern Festival** in partnership with BANH and supported by DFFH & PBS 106.7FM to showcase the talents and cultures of the estate community including cultural performances and dance and the World Kitchen.

Many activities and events were held on the estate to engage residents, celebrate cultural events, and hold important acknowledgment days including **International Women's Day**, **Refugee Week** and **NAIDOC** week. NRCH and BANH collaborated on many of these events and jointly designed and distributed a weekly calendar of events to promote activities and events to the estate community.

The NRCCBI team also contributed to regular newsletters including the LINK, a quarterly newsletter distributed across Collingwood and Richmond housing estates and the NRP newsletter to inform and update the community on activities and milestones. Furthermore, the NRCCBI team supported a local resident named Huu to design an updated **Map of the Richmond estate** and the surrounding area, see Figure 7.

FIGURE 7 MAP OF RICHMOND PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATE



### 3.5. To celebrate Aboriginal culture

Throughout the project, a range of events and initiatives were delivered to improve the inclusion of Aboriginal voices and celebrate Aboriginal culture. This included recognition of dates such as **NAIDOC** and **Sorry Day** delivered in partnership with NRCH and fire ceremonies at the Twilight Markets. The Neon Solar project worked with Aboriginal people to ensure artwork designed for the project was culturally relevant and incorporated Aboriginal symbols for a meeting place and language for welcome. Furthermore, 42% of the responses to the **Food for Thought II** consultation were from Aboriginal people, who contributed to discussions around the sense of belonging and safety and amenity of the area.

To acknowledge Aboriginal culture and arts, the Highett Lennox Street green space development incorporates a Yarning Circle alongside indigenous planting and an Aboriginal Mural is currently being designed with the community to be installed in early 2023 between 106 and 108 Elizabeth Street.





## 4. Amenity and Neighbourhood

### 4.1. Improved collective response to drug use and its impacts

#### Food For Thought II Consultation

Many consultations throughout the project focused on engaging residents and local stakeholders with limited inclusion and understanding of people who access services at the Medically Supervised Injecting Room (MSIR) and Needle and Syringe Program at NRCH. To better understand the experiences and perceptions of people who inject drugs (PWID), the MSIR team partnered with other NRCH programs, BANH, NJC and Harm Reduction Victoria to deliver the Food for Thought II Consultation. This work built on the successes of the first Food for Thought Consultation in 2017, this time with a focus on safety and amenity within the North Richmond Precinct.

On 28 June 2021, MSIR/NSP clients were invited to attend a BBQ and participate in a world café consultation to discuss their ideas, concerns and opportunities associated with safety and amenity in the area (Cogger, Sibly & Clark, 2021). The consultation provided a welcoming and inclusive space for over 40 participants to discuss safety and amenity, their sense of belonging, and what types of activities they would like to be involved in pre-and post-accessing the service. The consultation was the first of its kind to discuss safety and amenity in the Richmond area with PWID, which resulted in a range of outcomes including involving PWID in discussions about decisions that impact their daily lives, and new collaborative partnerships (Cogger, Sibly & Clark, 2021). The findings from the consultation were presented by MSIR representatives Nico Clark and Shelley Cogger at the NRP Safety, Amenity and Neighbourhood reference group and informed the development of other projects including the west car park engagement and the solar light project.

### 4.2. Improved experiences of Housing, security, and maintenance services

The BANH CD team played a role in improving outcomes for residents, including advocating on their behalf, informing, and educating them about the reporting process and streamlining access to services where possible. Collaboration with the Victorian Public Tenants Association also helped to facilitate referrals and access to support. The team collaborated with a range of DFFH departments and contractors, including the Richmond Housing management team to identify priorities and work together to enhance outcomes for public housing residents. The team also supported DFFH and Homes Victoria consultations to ensure residents' voices were considered including the **Richmond Security Review** and **Richmond community room upgrades**.

In October 2022 DFFH announced that it would fund a pilot program relating to contracted services in Richmond in 2023. The Precinct Facilities Management pilot will provide coordination across the department's local maintenance, security, cleaning, and gardening response at the estate. The pilot will also include a Handy Person service that provides an on-site resource to address small jobs and support renters to address home repair issues themselves. Both these inclusions respond to issues raised by residents during the NRCCBI.



### 4.3. Improved levels of cleanliness inside and outside residential blocks

Residents provided feedback on the quality and frequency of cleaning and instances of common areas being impacted by drug and alcohol paraphernalia. The NRCCBI team and DFFH worked with residents to address these reports and improve cleaning services. DFFH contracts out its cleaning services for all indoor common areas including foyers, lifts, stairwells, and community rooms, as well as the maintenance of outdoor areas. An improvement in these services was observed with residents reporting an increase in cleaning during lockdowns.

#### Laundry grant

Members of REAL V3 applied for a **NRCCBI Community Safety** grant to work with residents to improve cleanliness in communal laundries. Participants facilitated a workshop to design messaging that would go in a poster in multiple languages to display in the laundries. A resident applied for a Community Safety grant to promote cleaner and safer laundries and a graphic design volunteer helped develop and create posters for display.

### 4.4. Increased community ownership and activity in green spaces and parks

#### Greening Our Garden consultation

Between August - September 2021, the BANH CD team hosted a series of engagements including three **focus groups facilitated by the community connectors** in community languages to inform and consult the community about landscaping improvements on the Richmond public housing estate. The team collaborated with landscape architects Urban Initiatives, DFFH and Homes Victoria to undertake the consultations and inform the design of the proposed works. The consultation focused on asking residents about what was important to help make their backyard feel like home, and somewhere they want to meet with friends and family. An online and face-to-face survey was also developed and shared with the wider community to get their perspectives, with a total of 84 respondents. Residents' priorities included improved playgrounds, planting trees, seating and social areas, and community gardens. Community members were also provided with opportunities to inform the location of the proposed futsal pitch, gym equipment and the design of the East-West pathway. The **Greening Our Garden** consultations informed the design of enhancement works including new playgrounds and outdoor gym equipment which are due for completion in early 2023.



### The Gathering Place

The NRCCBI delivered a range of place-making initiatives to meet the aims of the NRCCBI action plan including making North Richmond a safe and enjoyable place to be. The BANH CD team worked with residents and partners to beautify and develop designs for a reimagined greenspace at the Gathering Place.

The Gathering Place has become a safe community space for the community to connect and celebrate the diversity of the estate. BANH and their partners hosted a series of engagements and events throughout the project including the Twilight Market, the Caravan Café, and NAIDOC events.







## Conclusion

The successful delivery and implementation of the NRCCBI alongside significant investment in public housing infrastructure and facilities demonstrate a positive shift towards improving outcomes for people living in public housing. Additionally, it recognises the role of locally based organisations and government working together to support people living in public housing. This was achieved through strategies such as providing additional support to establish and sustain tenancies, supporting connections across the service system to address health and well-being, and the recognition of the importance of engaging residents in meaningful dialogue and participatory approaches.

During the three-year pilot, the NRCCBI team built meaningful relationships with the local community and developed strong partnerships with a range of local organisations and businesses as well as with the Richmond Housing team. Through these partnerships, many programs and initiatives lead to genuine community outcomes as described throughout the report, which were relevant to local community needs and interests and planted seeds of change. While there were many outcomes, community development is a long-term process that requires ongoing collaboration and government support and resources.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude and admiration for the public housing residents that live on the Richmond Public Housing Estate, thank you for embracing us and trusting us to work with you. The participatory approaches and contributions of residents, community members and organisations were of monumental value. Demonstrating genuine engagement and collaboration, and continually illustrated optimism and resilience, particularly within the context of living in a challenging and dynamic environment.



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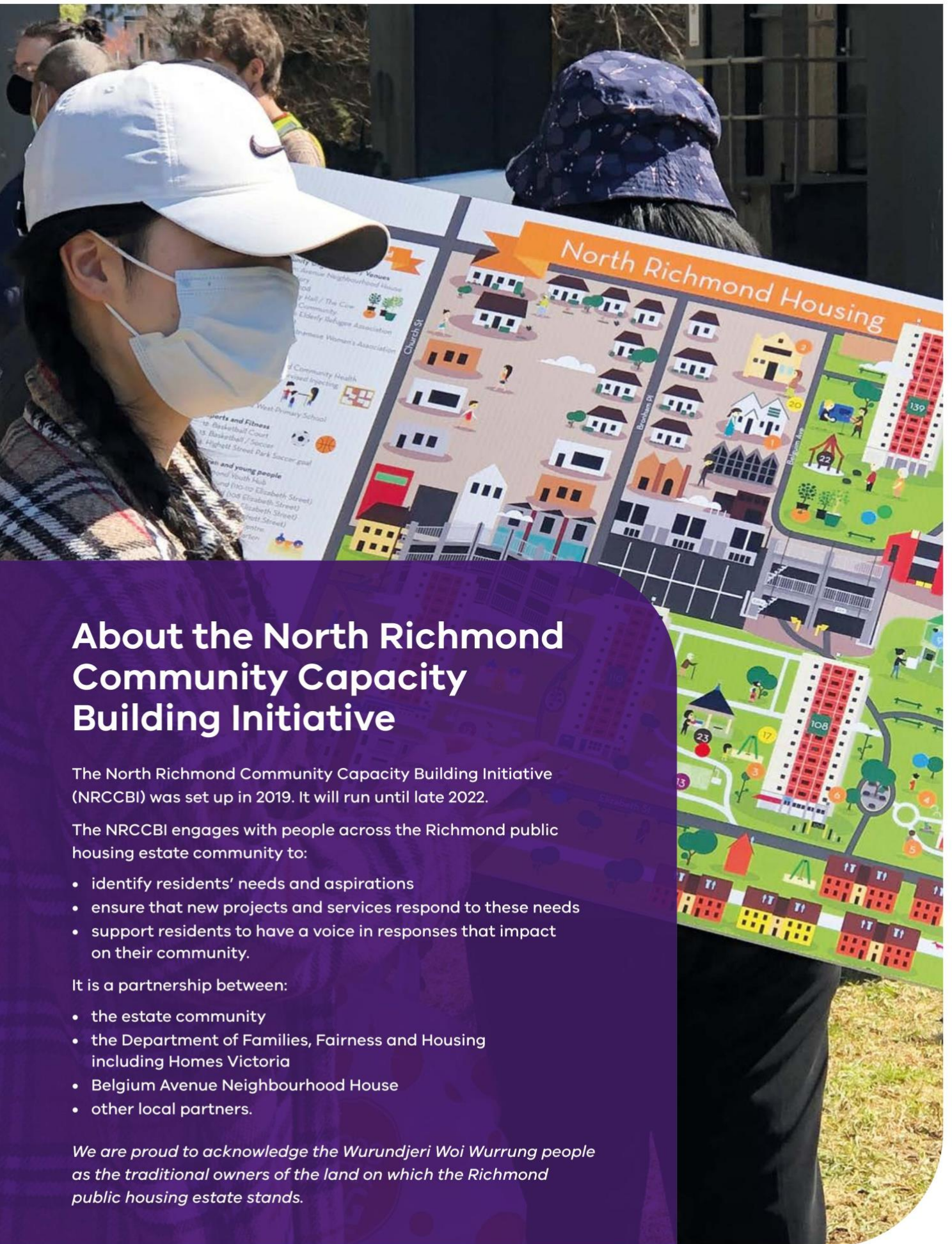
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# Community action plan 2021–22

## North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative





## About the North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative

The North Richmond Community Capacity Building Initiative (NRCCBI) was set up in 2019. It will run until late 2022.

The NRCCBI engages with people across the Richmond public housing estate community to:

- identify residents' needs and aspirations
- ensure that new projects and services respond to these needs
- support residents to have a voice in responses that impact on their community.

It is a partnership between:

- the estate community
- the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing including Homes Victoria
- Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
- other local partners.

*We are proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional owners of the land on which the Richmond public housing estate stands.*

# How residents are taking part

The NRCCBI supports local public housing residents to take part in many ways.

## North Richmond Precinct Community Committee (and its three reference groups)

These groups include residents, business, local government, community agencies and Victorian Government departments. They influence long-term planning for the estate and the North Richmond Precinct. The involvement of public housing residents is vital to their success.

## Yarra Resident Voice Group

This group is for residents from the Richmond, Collingwood and Fitzroy public housing estates and senior housing managers. It has been set up to hear what Yarra public housing communities want. The aim is to respond to the issues residents have with their homes and services.

## Resident Estate Action Led (REAL) program

This program works with Richmond public housing residents. Residents come up with their own projects and activities and make them happen.

## North Richmond Masterplan

Over the next 12 months Homes Victoria will work on a long-term plan for the public housing estate. The voices of the estate community will be central to its directions.



## About this community action plan

The actions in this community action plan are based on community feedback from 2020 and 2021.

The plan summarises the:

- things we have heard the community say
- areas that the community sees as the highest priorities
- early actions and responses underway in the community
- key partners that will work with the community to deliver this work.

This action plan is a living document. Residents can continue to identify new ideas that can make a difference.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact since early 2020. Early actions in the plan have included getting food to people who need it, more cleaning and jobs for residents. These actions have kept the community COVID-safe, healthy and strong.

As we recover from the pandemic, we will continue to work with the community to deliver the actions in this plan.

# The community action plan



## Health, development and opportunity

### What's good and what needs to improve

- The health centre provides lots of activities and help, but once a month isn't enough – weekly activities like physical therapies would be better.
- The health centre raises awareness and is very helpful.
- Being able to get out of the house, having a commitment and a routine – that's been awesome.
- Coming to food security sessions is great – people can get help to get through lockdown.
- Wi-Fi and internet can be used via a phone – but it's not a computer.
- People's mental health worsened in the pandemic.
- How can someone socially distance in a 4 sqm lift?
- You get best results when you employ local people – they understand the community.
- Kids need more homework classes – when they get past grade 5 to 6 it's very hard to help them at home.
- More play equipment – there are so many people living here.
- Have outdoor exercise equipment for adults.



### What residents want

- Ensure people get the best possible health and development supports
- Increased access to local recreational opportunities for all ages
- Safer spaces for kids and families to play
- Increased local employment and education opportunities
- Access to cheap and nutritious food everyday
- Increased sustainability.

### Initial actions – January 2021 to September 2022

- Provide a program of activities for young people from the new youth hub
- Establish new mental health support services for the community
- Explore the development of a Futsal pitch for young people
- Support existing homework clubs
- Link local people – including young people – to jobs
- Increase residents' ability to access and use the internet
- Deliver a community leadership program
- Employ local people to provide up-to-date health advice about COVID-19
- Employ public housing residents in different roles on the estate
- Install outdoor gym equipment to encourage healthy exercise for adults and seniors
- Develop and trial a model to allow recycling in the high-rise towers
- Establish homework club for senior students
- Develop a cooking program to promote nutrition

### WHAT OTHER IDEAS DO YOU HAVE?

Email: [engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au)

### Who helps to get this done

- Public housing residents
- Richmond Housing
- Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
- Homes Victoria
- City of Yarra
- North Richmond Community Health
- Richmond West Primary School
- Carringbush Adult Education
- Cultivating Community
- Jesuit Social Services
- St Vincent's Hospital
- Brotherhood of St. Laurence
- Hope for the Future
- Track C Consulting



## Safety and security

- There's a lot to celebrate here – but the default is to go for the bad news... sells papers
- Security needs to improve. People go in and out as they please – it is not safe.
- There doesn't appear to be a way of reporting anonymously.
- Have more lighting, too many dark corners.
- Think before opening the door – 'drug people' sometimes knock.
- Car park busy and people inject, can't get out of car alone
- Visitors have to be careful, after 40 years you learn how to cope
- Can feel scary after dark, you never know who is behind you

- To feel confident and empowered to report crime
- Reduced unauthorised entries to residential building
- Improved safety in the car parks
- Improved safety in the laundries, foyers and stairwells
- Improve feelings of safety – especially after dark

- Promote ways to confidently report crime
- Redesign the foyers of buildings to reduce unauthorised entries
- Upgrade the lighting across the estate
- Develop an approach to improve car park safety
- Develop and trial new ways to increase safety and cleanliness in laundries
- Establish a safe cross-estate pathway between Lennox and Church Streets
- Increase security guard presence in foyers and across the estate

### WHAT OTHER IDEAS DO YOU HAVE?

Email: [engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au)

- Public housing residents
- Richmond Housing
- Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
- Homes Victoria
- Victoria Police
- City of Yarra
- Neighbourhood Justice Centre
- North Richmond Community Health



## Pride and participation

- It's multicultural and makes people feel like part of a community
- The culture and the community. It's friendly and diverse
- Great location in relation to the city, general amenities and schools
- There used to be picnics and outdoor activities – now everything has stopped
- Moon Lantern (festival) brought all cultures across the community together – people came from all over the place to join in!
- Make more group activities and celebrations. Get to know different cultures
- It's not just Vietnamese and Chinese. We all mix and have lives together, people need to know all cultures

- To celebrate the community regularly through festivals and events
- Use arts to make strong statements about the local community
- To make sure the whole community has access to good quality community rooms
- Increased awareness on what North Richmond has to offer the community
- To celebrate Aboriginal culture

- Provide small grants and support for residents to run community events
- Deliver the Richmond Estate Action Lead (REAL) program to build resident capacity
- Hold a Moon Lantern festival for the whole community
- Hold a Festival for Women
- Hold a monthly twilight market to bring community together
- Install artistic lighting at the west car park.
- Upgrade the community rooms at 106 and 110 Elizabeth Street
- Circulate a regular newsletter that informs the community about events and initiatives
- Take local control of TV monitors in common areas and use them to share information
- Hold a NAIDOC event in 2022

### WHAT OTHER IDEAS DO YOU HAVE?

Email: [engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au)

- Public housing residents
- Richmond Housing
- Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
- City of Yarra
- Homes Victoria
- North Richmond Community Health
- Neighbourhood Justice Centre
- Carringbush Adult Education
- Cultivating Community



## Amenity and neighbourhood

- Bright colours would make it nice and comfortable
- Would love to see beautiful gardens and space to grow vegetables like back home
- The injecting room is ok, but lots of drug sellers
- The key change makes a big difference – can feel confident to go to laundry because nobody else can access
- People using needles or fighting in front of kids is not comfortable – it's very scary
- Collecting needles should be done more frequently
- People complain about what is wrong. The same problems but Housing doesn't move. But stop paying your rent, and a letter lands the next day
- Maintenance can make you wait all day – sometimes they leave a card instead of knocking and claim that there was no answer

- Improved collective response to drug use and its impacts
- Improved experiences of Housing, security and maintenance services
- Improved levels of cleanliness inside and outside residential blocks
- Increased community ownership and activity in green spaces and parks
- Encourage respectful behaviours between residents and respond appropriately to anti-social behaviours
- Clear, accessible information about people's rights and responsibilities around local services

- Review needle collection services across the estate
- Clear information available about roles and responsibilities of security and maintenance services
- Improve the quality of feedback on Housing's customer service
- Promote the health and safety of all residents and the wider community around drug related activity on the estate
- Increase levels of cleaning to respond to COVID-19
- Update the equipment and surfaces at playgrounds to increase usage
- Involve residents in the long-term planning and vision for the estate

### WHAT OTHER IDEAS DO YOU HAVE?

Email: [engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au)

- Public housing residents
- Richmond Housing
- Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
- Homes Victoria
- Department of Health
- City of Yarra
- North Richmond Community Health
- Richmond West Primary School
- Cultivating Community
- Yarra Drug & Health Forum





For more information please contact the NRCCBI team at [engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:engagenorthrichmond@dffh.vic.gov.au) or call the Richmond Housing Office on 9417 5174.



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# Lifting Spirits

MARCH 2023

Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House