



# Want to make a contribution to our community?

## Join your local Committee of Governance.

### Who we are

The Sussex Neighbourhood House is a community based and managed, not for profit organisation which supports, engages, connects and excites our community through lifelong learning, social activities and responding to community needs.

It is overseen by local people who serve on a Committee of Governance (CoG). We look for volunteers to lend their experience, knowledge and expertise to our committee, and to represent the diverse interests of our community.

### Why get involved?

Sussex Neighbourhood House has been serving the community since 1991. Our central goal is to:

- Provide a broad range of sustainable programs and services that meet the needs of our community;

We aim to achieve this goal through:

1. Effective and sustainable governance;
2. Supporting the management to lead the House's operation and community development.
3. Effective collaboration, and effective and efficient use of resources;

We are guided in our work by the following values:

- We value diversity, accessibility and inclusiveness
- We value knowing our community
- We value supporting and empowering each other
- We value learning for everyone
- We value community ownership and involvement
- We value environmental sustainability

There is great value for our community in having a thriving neighbourhood house.

Studies have shown the main benefits for people participating in neighbourhood houses are:

- Spending time with people.
- Meeting new people/making friends.
- Improving personal wellbeing/confidence.
- Developing a new interest/activity.
- Improving health.
- Helping one's community.
- Improving one's job skills.



**Neighbourhood Houses**  
The heart of our community



# What are Neighbourhood Houses?

Our House is one of 371 currently funded by the Victorian Government through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program.

Neighbourhood Houses bring people together to connect, learn and contribute in their local community through social, educational, recreational and support activities, using a unique community development approach.

Community development is about enabling communities to identify and address their own needs. It starts from the assumption that communities have existing strengths and assets that make them part of the solution. Community development practice is about doing with, rather than doing for.

Neighbourhood Houses welcome people from all walks of life. This inclusive approach creates opportunities for individuals and groups to enrich their lives through connections they might not otherwise make.

## Who we need?

We are seeking people who have the expertise to assist in different aspects of good governance of our organisation. You may have marketing or financial skills, experience in the community services sector, or you may have a background that enables you to bring a well-informed community perspective to the CoG's planning and decision making.

A key ingredient for CoG members is a passion to provide strategic direction and to help us stay on track to achieve our goals. We welcome people interested in contributing to their community, and a willingness to 'learn on the job' if you are new to a governance role.

Serving on a CoG is a great way to apply your skills and offer your time to a really worthwhile cause. It's also an excellent way to develop new skills and broaden your networks.

If you are interested in nominating to serve on our CoG then contact:

Claire Martin, Chairperson



(Our Community Choir performing in the community)

## What are Committees of Governance in the Neighbourhood House sector?

They represent the local community and are responsible for ensuring the house serves its community as intended. In our case this is the **Pascoe Vale and surrounding areas**.

CoG's have five broad functions:

- **Plan** – guide the house's strategic directions by setting goals and priorities
- **Direct** – provide direction where appropriate to ensure the organisation is managed effectively
- **Engage** – bring a wider Community perspective to the services provided and pursue partnerships with stakeholders
- **Oversee** – ensure the house meets its legislative, contractual and financial obligations
- **Support** – support the house's management team and CoG colleagues to fulfil their responsibilities.

Each house has a Strategic Plan which the CoG develops in consultation with the organisation's Manager and staff. The CoG is responsible for making sure the organisation adheres to the aims and objectives of the Strategic Plan.





- an ability to exercise good judgement about the right questions to ask, the right outcomes to focus on, and the right people to engage with.
- a motivation to develop your knowledge, technical skills and governance capabilities in the role.

Serving on a CoG can be very rewarding. It creates opportunities to work with others with a shared sense of purpose and a willingness to take collective responsibility. For individuals, it is a way to learn more about providing direction and leadership, and to ensure that public funds are used to improve outcomes for the community.

We would be pleased to provide more information on the role and contribution of the CoG, and to assist new members in understanding and exercising their CoG responsibilities.

## What sort of people serve on a CoG?

CoG roles are voluntary. There are usually between three and twelve members and not all are expected to have the same skills and experience when they join. However, all are expected to contribute fully and to value the contribution of others.

The CoG meets on the third Monday evening of each month. There will be reading for each meeting and some additional work between committee meetings. We have no sub-committees!

Each CoG has office-holders including a Chair, Treasurer and/or Secretary, or you can participate as a general member. We are particularly keen to attract CoG members who have some grounding in any of the following:

Community Education & Community Development	Governance
Financial Management	Community Engagement
Marketing and Communications	Legal obligations of not-for-profit organisations
Risk Management	Human Resources

Other important attributes for CoG members are:

- an interest in, or knowledge of, community development, skills development and community education.
- a willingness to contribute to discussions and initiatives to improve and promote our community locally.

## When and where does our Learn Local CoG meet?

When: The third Monday of each month at 6.30 pm.

Where: Sussex Neighbourhood House,  
7 Prospect St. Pascoe Vale Vic.

*\*\* meeting online due to COVID-19 while restrictions in place.*

## How to express interest in joining a CoG?

We are seeking expressions of interest from all members of the community, irrespective of age, background, etc.

If you would like to find out more or lodge an expression of interest, please ring the office:

**Sussex Neighbourhood House Inc.**

**7 Prospect St**

**Pascoe Vale 3044**

**Phone: 9354 2210**

**Email: [enquiries@sussexnh.org.au](mailto:enquiries@sussexnh.org.au)**