

## **NECCHI Submission to the Victorian Government Inquiry into Community Action on Climate Change**

### **Submission by Newlands and East Coburg Community Hubs Inc (NECCHI)**

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#### **Provided to:**

The Committee Manager  
Legislative Assembly, Environment and Planning Committee  
Parliament House, Spring Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

### **Introduction**

The Newlands and East Coburg Community Hubs Inc (NECCHI) manages two of the neighbourhood houses in Coburg, in East Coburg and in Newlands. These houses aim to support people in the local community to participate, connect, contribute and take action with the aims of building resilience and cohesion of our neighbourhoods, as well as supporting the well-being of individual community members.

One issue we seek to support our community to take action on is responding to climate change. Faced with the looming climate emergency and little federal government leadership on this issue, NECCHI is taking bold steps to support its communities to take action of their own on this issue where they are able to so.

Welcome State Government inquiry into community action on climate change and encourage the government to support and amplify efforts of the Victorian people.

The main focus of our efforts is the development of neighbourhood climate change action plans (NCCAP) for each of our houses. This will incorporate quickly working towards zero net carbon neighbourhood house operations, supporting community actions and leverage existing state and local government initiatives at the neighbourhood level. In taking this step NECCHI aims to contribute to leadership efforts in the neighbourhood houses sector in supporting community action on climate change and welcomes the opportunity to share its achievements and lessons learned with the sector and all levels of government so successes can be further scaled.

Neighbourhood houses are well connected to their communities and therefore in an ideal situation to reach many residents, diverse groups and hard to reach members of our community. We welcome opportunities to partner with other organisations, programs and levels of government so that community action on climate change is truly collaborative and effective, and reaches all members of our community.

### **Climate change mitigation**

The table below reflects the intended scope of actions in our NCCAP to be developed this year. These initial directions will be tested with our community and stakeholders before being incorporated into NECCHI's operational plans. We acknowledge that many elements of the systems causing climate change are outside our community's control, that is why our local action on climate change will be complemented with advocacy to change these broader system where reform is needed.

<b>NECCHI action</b>	<b>Elements</b>	<b>How State Government could assist</b>
<b>Develop neighbourhood climate change action plans (NCCAP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an action plan collaboratively with committee of governance, staff, volunteers, community, partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect neighbourhood houses leading work on community climate action with each other</li> </ul>
<b>Declare a climate emergency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NECCHI will declare a climate emergency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declare a climate emergency</li> </ul>
<b>Neighbourhood house zero net emissions operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider all elements of NECCHI's operations and identify and prioritise actions to reduce carbon emissions and areas impacted by climate change, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Energy and water use and infrastructure</li> <li>- Room rental, catering &amp; events</li> <li>- Materials / procurement and engaging local sustainable businesses</li> <li>- Waste</li> <li>- Sustainable transport to houses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding support/grant funding</li> <li>• Asset upgrades</li> <li>• Best practice guidance and support e.g. Sustainability Victoria and other relevant state government programs and resources</li> </ul>
<b>Neighbourhood house climate action program and events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a range of programs and events to engage the community with climate change and climate change action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide houses with information on available programs and resources which could be promoted / leveraged</li> </ul>
<b>A platform for community groups and leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore a range of ways to support groups and local leaders already taking action on climate change, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promotional support</li> <li>- Discounted room rental</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Community education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach diverse groups through infusing climate education into a range of programs, operations and communications to reach diverse and hard to reach groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide access to relevant education resources</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a simple but effective evaluation program to capture the impact of the NCCAP implementation</li> </ul>	
<b>Advocate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities for advocacy, including for example opportunities for public submissions available to NECCHI and the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information about opportunities for public submissions and consultation related to climate change and the environment</li> </ul>

## **Climate change adaptation**

NECCHI is aware that effects of climate change are already being felt, including through health impacts, weather systems, disaster risk and recovery, impacts on ecosystems and water, as well as farming systems and the broader economy. While the majority of our efforts are on mitigation, we would welcome advice on critical adaptation issues which NECCHI and our communities will need to plan ahead for.