

Swinburne University of Technology
Institute for Social Research

**Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub Project:
Final Report
December 2005**



INSTITUTE
FOR SOCIAL
RESEARCH

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Project background	4
Partnerships	4
Lifelong learning	5
Demographic data	6
The story so far: Establishing the Hub	6
History of the project	6
Current status	7
Community needs analysis findings	8
Survey instrument	8
Recruitment process	8
Sample size and reliability	9
Age, gender, language, ethnicity, citizenship and length of residence	9
Household structures	10
Health	11
Educational background	11
Current employment and education	12
Information technology	12
Use of services	13
Abilities	14
Barriers	14
The disengaged	15
Additional needs	15
Conclusion	16
Sustainability	17
Ownership	17
Financial	18
Conclusion	19
Importance of the Hub	19
Evaluating the Hub	19
The future	20
References and Useful Resources	21
Appendix 1: Map of Carlton	22
Appendix 2: Potential funding sources	23
Appendix 3: Hub governance structure	25

Acknowledgements

This report has been prepared as part of a research project for the Carlton Primary School Council into the establishment of a Community Lifelong Learning Hub in Carlton. The author would like to thank Denise Meredyth, Yoland Wadsworth, Liss Ralston and Tania Herbert from Swinburne University's Institute for Social Research for their assistance, advice and encouragement. Thanks are also due to Janine Heley, principal of Carlton Primary School, and Craig Marshall from Melbourne City Council for unfailing support and assistance. The Victorian State Government Office of Housing kindly provided up to the minute demographic data. Many of the project's key stakeholders have been closely involved in the development of the Hub, and the project could not have been completed without their willingly given time, effort and local knowledge. Members of the Hub Advisory Committee also contributed greatly to the development of the governance structures recorded in Appendix 3 of this report. To all who attended Hub meetings and sat on the various guiding committees, many thanks.

Executive Summary

This report constitutes the detailed findings of the research project undertaken by Swinburne University into the establishment of the Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub. The first two sections describe in detail the processes which were undertaken and the steps involved in putting into place the governance structures and regulatory framework by which the Hub could safely, legally and effectively operate. The next section details the primary research which was carried out with residents and other stakeholders in order to ascertain the educational backgrounds, learning needs, opportunities and barriers which affect residents' opportunities to participate in lifelong learning. Key findings of this research indicate:

- Residents are characterised by a very wide range of educational backgrounds, personal circumstances and learning needs.
- Two-thirds of residents were born in countries other than Australia, and more than half of these report that they speak English not well or not at all.
- The predominant household type is a single mother and her children.
- Women have received substantially less formal education than men, whether in Australia or overseas.
- Newly arrived migrants, people from Africa, the Middle East and Vietnam and single mothers all have much higher than average unemployment rates. Many residents in Carlton fall into all three categories.
- A high percentage of residents had used both computers and the internet and many had computers at home, some with home internet connections as well. Nonetheless, more than half of the survey respondents indicated that they would like to receive more training in computer use.
- Carlton is well served by agencies which offer learning opportunities to residents, and these are well patronised. There is still a need for more opportunities, however, as structural barriers continue to inhibit access to existing services.
- Barriers to participation include lack of access to childcare or respite care for dependents, financial concerns, health problems, lack of time, language and literacy difficulties, length of time required to complete a course, lack of knowledge of what is available, lack of prior experience, and disinterest in what is on offer.
- Safety of residents is an ongoing concern, particularly in the light of activities in the area associated with the use of illicit drugs.

Introduction

Project background

The Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub project is an example of one particular attempt to improve outcomes for a disadvantaged community in inner Melbourne. The aim is to establish a centre, based at the local primary school, where a number of activities and programs take place, designed to enhance the learning opportunities and experiences for Carlton residents, in particular, those who dwell on the high rise public housing estates. The school already provides the facilities and infrastructure within which a number of independent organisations offer services to residents. These include the Melbourne City Council's toy library and playgroups, a Chinese language school, Carlton Parkville Youth Services, the Islamic Women's Welfare Council and AMES (Adult Multicultural Education Services) who run a cooking and catering enterprise out of the school's kitchen. The school is also open and available to the community for more informal social events, such as weddings and funerals, which help to cement community relations and enhance connectedness to community, particularly for young people. Yet these services are not coordinated and operate independently, in an ad hoc way, each dealing directly with the school, but generally not directly with each other.

The combination of a high and complex needs community, available infrastructure, an abundance of existing learning services and a dynamic school principal with a vision for education in its widest sense saw the development of the idea of establishing a Lifelong Learning Hub at Carlton Primary School in late 2004. Melbourne City Council backed the school's vision with a grant to enable a research project to be undertaken into learning needs in the Carlton area, in order to establish a Hub which would meet community need, avoid duplication of services and allow for cooperation and collaboration between existing service providers. This report, along with the previous one (distributed in May 2005), constitutes the findings of the research project.

Partnerships

In recent years there has been a shift in policy away from support for small, specialised agencies delivering single services and towards partnerships between government and communities, as well as a local or regional focus for integrated and coordinated services, rather than a separation based on function or type of service (Fine, Pancharatnam and Thompson 2005). This new drive towards place based management, community governance or associationalism has found a firm place in social policy at all levels of government. It seems that the 'partners' on the ground, however, are yet to catch up with the shift.

There are a number of forms which this coordination might take, ranging from co-location of independent services through cooperative links between groups working together some of the time to a higher form of coordination at planning and resourcing level and onto full integration of services into a single unit (Fine, Pancharatnam and Thompson 2005). When the Hub project was first mooted and funding applied for, the level of coordination had not yet been fully decided. There was scope for the existing agencies to articulate their own vision and preferences for working together and for flexibility in the development of the Hub at a level of cooperation which was above mere co-location of services but within which there was scope for differences in the level of integration and commitment to the Hub. Research evidence has shown that the level of integration should in fact be matched to the degree of need amongst clients (Leutz 1999), so in this case it is probable that coordination of services rather than full integration would be the preferred model. Agencies would retain some degree of independence, but would agree to work together to avoid duplication of services. There would be an overall level of planning and organisation, including

foresight and identification of unmet need, as well as a streamlining of referrals and getting clients into appropriate programs (Fine, Pancharatnam and Thompson 2005).

Lifelong learning

Lifelong learning has become something of a policy buzzword to those charged with enabling citizens to participate in the knowledge society. As part of a strategy for enabling communities to address their own learning needs, governments at all levels are beginning to encourage a wider range of options for provision of education, breaking down some reliance on the traditional model of state provided education and training. At the same time schools are being opened up to communities, allowing for better use of community infrastructure and encouraging those who may be disengaged from learning for whatever reason to make use of available facilities and services. As the World Bank (2003, p. xiv) has noted:

A lifelong learning framework encompasses learning throughout the lifecycle, from early childhood through retirement. It encompasses formal learning (schools, training institutions, universities); non-formal learning (structured on-the-job training); and informal learning (skills learned from family members or in the community). It allows people to access learning opportunities as they need them rather than because they have reached a certain age. Lifelong learning is crucial to preparing workers to compete in the global economy. But it is important for other reasons as well. By improving people's ability to function as members of their communities, education and training increase social cohesion, reduce crime, and improve income distribution.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's World Conference on Education for All also articulated a definition of basic learning needs thus:

These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning (UNESCO 1990, art. 1, para. 1).

The Commission of the European Communities (2001, pp. 7, 9) has this definition of lifelong learning: all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspectives...[Lifelong learning] promises a Europe in which citizens have the opportunity and ability to realise...their ambitions and to participate in building a better society. Indeed, a recent OECD report refers to the growing evidence that learning and investment in human capital is associated not just with increased GDP, but also with greater civic participation, higher reported well-being and lower criminality.

It may be seen that lifelong learning not only touches on a broad range of disciplines and competencies, but involves individuals from all age groups and communities from every social and ethnic background. Moreover, it is a policy concern of governments and non-government organisations from around the globe. At the same time, coordination of services and development of partnerships between governments and communities are also high on the agenda. The development of the Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub, then, may be seen as important attempt to align service delivery to disadvantaged communities with broad policy directions endorsed by all levels of government.

Demographic data

The high rise public housing estates in inner Melbourne and Sydney have created a social environment unique in Australia. In fact, the appearance of high rise tower blocks of apartments for public tenants marked a decisive change in the way Australians viewed housing. The crisis in housing availability after World War II, coupled with the problems of inner city overcrowding and substandard conditions in many properties, led to a major shift in public thinking. Campaigns for slum clearances began to gather momentum, supported by government policy and by charitable groups such as the Brotherhood of St Laurence. New high rise flats were seen to be clean, modern solutions to entrenched problems of poor housing, poor health and childhood neglect (Handfield 1980, p. 170). Protests by residents against the change were largely ignored, at least in the early days of the slum reclamation project. A report by the Housing Commission (1966, p. 18) dismissed out of hand what turned out to be a prescient criticism: 'These flats are the slums of the future'.

Few people nowadays would argue with that statement. Public housing generally, and the high rise towers of the inner city suburbs in particular, have become ghettos of the poor and the marginalised in a society characterised by economic growth and growing affluence. Built to house lower paid workers, they have, over the intervening 50 years, become repositories for the most disadvantaged members of the population, ranging from long-term welfare recipients, including the aged, those suffering mental illness and physical disability, to the newly arrived refugee communities from war torn corners of the globe. There is little to unite these 'slums in the sky' (Housing Commission 1966, p. 18) other than a shared postcode and a profound marginalisation from their surrounding inner suburbs. The very distinctiveness of the public high rise blocks in a landscape of low rise and detached or semi-detached private housing makes them obvious targets for anti-social behaviour and stereotyped reporting, as well as engendering a clear sense of social difference between tenants on these estates and the residents of surrounding communities. Gentrification of inner suburbs has exacerbated such social divisions.

Today the two public housing estates in Carlton (see Appendix 1) are home to more than 2,000 people, of whom approximately one-third were born in Australia, one-third in Africa (predominantly the Horn of Africa countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan) and the rest from across the globe, including approximately 10 per cent from Indochina and significant minorities from southern Europe and the Middle East. The older persons' tower on the Lygon estate houses single people aged over 55 years, whilst the other towers and the walk-up flats are home to sole parent, nuclear and extended families, as well as shared households of unrelated tenants. Residents speak more than 30 languages at home.

The story so far: Establishing the Hub

History of the project

The Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub first came about some eighteen months ago, through a call at a meeting of the Police and Community Consultative Committee for more community spaces and facilities for community use. Carlton Primary School had under-utilised facilities which it offered for formal and informal community use. Several groups were already using these facilities after hours and at weekends, but there were little or no opportunities for them to coordinate or work together, nor was there anyone to keep track of who was using the building or to advise residents about programs and services. At the same time, the school was conscious that it was under-enrolled and that students' achievements could potentially be improved by increasing the learning opportunities available to parents, younger siblings, extended family members, neighbours and friends.

Policy initiatives both in Australia and overseas were driving a trend towards place based consolidation of government and non-government services, and there was an increasing push towards partnerships and cooperative arrangements for service delivery. Thus the concept of a Learning Hub for disadvantaged residents of public housing in Carlton was formed. Melbourne City Council then funded an initial project to coordinate research and undertake community development around the establishment of the Hub.

The project began with a public forum held at the school to which local service providers and community leaders were invited. The aim was to explain the concept to a range of stakeholders and to encourage interest in becoming more involved in the Hub. An invitation was issued at the conclusion of the forum for interested parties to join a reference committee to oversee the development of the Hub. Representatives of eight local service providers volunteered their time and energy to join this committee, which met fortnightly for over four months. Discussions covered a range of topics, including what constitutes lifelong learning, what is a Hub, what other models of Hubs are there and how do they work, what identified needs are there amongst Carlton residents, and how will the Hub complement existing services.

Current status

Whilst there were some interesting and stimulating discussions around the table, by the middle of the year it had become clear that the committee in this form was not an effective agent for overseeing the establishment of such a new and potentially complex model of service delivery. It was resolved to disband the committee and to restructure the governance of the Hub to involve a series of groups and committees with the responsibility of overseeing its development and running. This involved the establishment of a Hub Advisory Committee, an Operations and Management Group and a Hub User Group, each functioning as a sub-committee of the school council for legal and financial purposes. The Advisory Committee is made up of representatives from Carlton Primary School, Melbourne City Council, Carlton Local Agencies Network and the Police Community Consultative Committee, together with a Hub user and an interested outsider. The Operations and Management Group consists of the school principal and one representative each from Melbourne City Council and the Hub users. The Hub User Group is open to representatives of any group or organisation using the school, as well as other interested parties. The full governance structure of the Hub can be seen in Appendix 3.

During the course of the year, funding was also sought and received from Melbourne City Council for a officer to be employed to coordinate services, establish partnerships with service providers and liaise with the community, as well as to continue research into ongoing and changing community learning needs. They will also take over some of the executive duties of the researcher in terms of providing support to the committees which oversee the Hub.

Thus far the Advisory Committee has been working to establish a safe and legal framework within which the Hub can operate. A number of governance issues have been addressed, including establishing insurance coverage for all Hub users, developing policies and procedures for the project officer and volunteers, service providers and community groups who make use of the facilities, setting up a set of financial controls and developing partnerships and other relationships with project stakeholders.

At the same time as the governance issues have been being addressed, use of the school as a Hub has continued to grow. Ten formal groups and numerous informal groups are making use of school facilities for a variety of programs and events.

Community needs analysis findings

The biggest single task to be carried out as part of the research project was to undertake a needs analysis of residents themselves, in order to determine what opportunities could most usefully be provided by the establishment of the Hub. The primary research conducted to support this needs analysis involved two components: a service audit of available and existing learning services in the Carlton area, and a survey of a representative sample of residents. The survey took the form of a four page administered questionnaire which was used in English, Arabic and Vietnamese. The author of this report and one research assistant conducted the interviews with English-speaking respondents, whilst two casual bilingual interviewers were recruited to conduct interviews in community languages. One spoke Vietnamese and the other spoke four African languages, including Arabic, Tigre and Tigrinya. Both were chosen because of past experience as bilingual interviewers on similar projects. It was unfortunate that a Somali-speaking interviewer who had also been recruited decided not to take part at the last minute. However, numerous interviews were conducted with English-speaking Somalis, so that the ethnic mix of respondents does reflect the actual make-up of the local population.

Approximately 100 residents of Carlton were interviewed in this way,¹ the vast majority of whom were residents of the Lygon and Elgin public housing estates.² Participation in the survey was anonymous, and residents were required to sign a consent form to indicate their understanding of the process and willingness to participate. No interviewees were under the age of eighteen.

Survey instrument

The survey questionnaire aims to elicit a variety of information which will be useful for improving service delivery through the Hub. It begins by asking some general information about the respondent's age, gender, residence status, preferred language, educational background, employment situation and computer usage. The second section asks for information about the other members of the respondent's household: relationship, age, education and employment status. There follows a question about the health or disability status of anyone in the household. The final part of the questionnaire asks some questions about current use of local services, barriers to use, what further services would be useful and what barriers would prevent use of new services. There is also an opportunity for respondents to identify whether they would be interested in becoming involved in the Hub or in helping to teach others, as well as a final open ended question calling for comments or information generally about lifelong learning opportunities in Carlton. A fuller description of the survey process and interview schedule can be found in the preliminary report of this project distributed in May 2005.

Recruitment process

Recruitment to the survey occurred through a number of means. Some respondents were approached through their involvement with local agencies, including the drop-in centre at the Church of all Nations (CAN), playgroups run by the Family Resource Centre (FRC) and English classes at the Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre (CNLC). Others were approached on the grounds of the estates or in the foyer of the towers. Finally, many of the interviews conducted with respondents who did not speak English were arranged through word of mouth and the personal networks of the bilingual interviewers.

¹ 97 interviews were completed, so in most cases the number of responses and the percentage of responses is more or less the same.

² A few interviews were conducted with residents of surrounding areas who were living in boarding houses or other marginal forms of accommodation and who were engaged with current activities taking place on the estates themselves.

Sample size and reliability

By its nature, this survey was not a random sample of estate residents, nor could it hope to canvass the full range of opinions and experiences of such a large and diverse population. Instead, it aims to provide a snapshot of the educational background, learning needs and barriers to participation of a representative sample of residents, concentrating on the biggest ethnic grouping, which is the Horn of Africa communities, together with a scattering of other ethnicities and language backgrounds, including a significant proportion of Australian born respondents. As the interviewing was conducted by a team of female interviewers, and because interviewing mainly took place during the day on weekdays, women are significantly over-represented in the responses. Three-quarters of respondents were women, and one-quarter male. This also reflects in part the demographic make-up of the estate population, where sole parent households headed by a single female are over-represented when compared with the average across Melbourne households.

As well as gathering quantitative data on participation rates and previous education, there was space in the questionnaire for more open ended, qualitative responses. This was particularly so when asking about barriers to participation in education and employment. Respondents were also given the opportunity to add comments or raise issues which had not been addressed previously, and some chose to do this.

Age, gender, language, ethnicity, citizenship and length of residence

Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 83, with 67 per cent aged from 25 to 55. Of these, more than half were aged between 36 and 45, reflecting the fact that many of the residents who were available to be interviewed during the day were women with caring responsibilities who are not in the workforce. 87 per cent of respondents were born in countries other than Australia, with only 13 per cent Australian born. Of those born overseas, 68 per cent were born in the African countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Other countries of origin include Vietnam (six), Iraq (four), China, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, Italy, Mauritius and Turkey (one each).

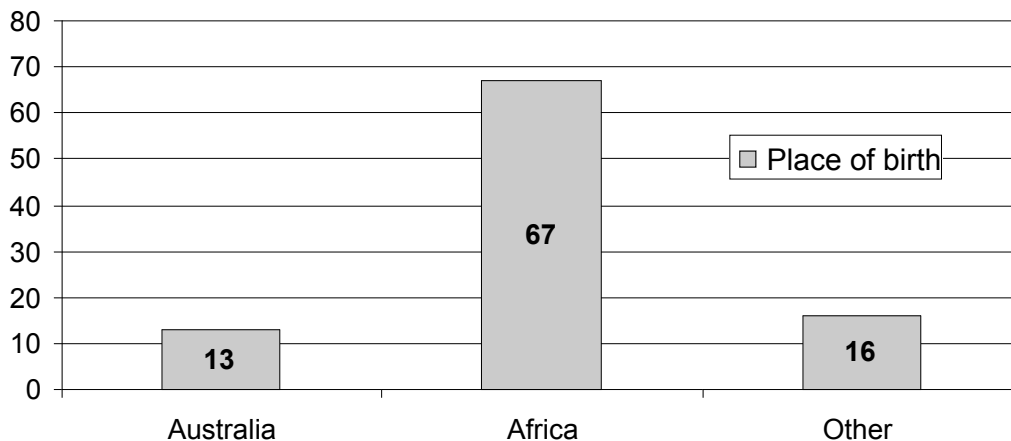


Figure 1: Respondents' place of birth

All of the respondents who were born overseas reported speaking a language other than English at home, reflecting in part the relatively recent arrival in Australia of many in this group. In addition, many of these people spoke more than one language other than English, in some cases up to four African or European languages. The most commonly spoken languages include Somali, Arabic, Tigre, Tigrinya and

Amharic. 44 per cent of those born overseas, however, reported that they spoke English not well or not at all, while only 15 per cent considered that they spoke English very well.

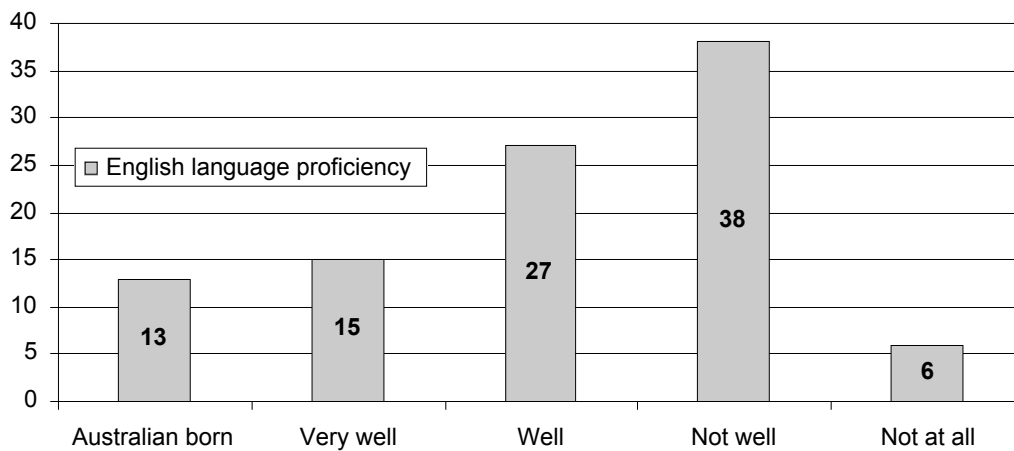


Figure 2: English language proficiency of respondents born overseas

77 per cent of respondents who were born overseas are Australian citizens, 21 per cent permanent residents. Only one was a holder of a temporary protection visa.

The length of time which respondents had lived at their current address in Carlton varied considerably, from five months to 22 years. The mean length of residence was just over five years.

Household structures

7 per cent of respondents lived in a sole person household, all of these in the older persons' tower, a form of stock consisting of one bedroom apartments specifically designated for those aged over 65 and receiving an age pension or those aged from 55 to 65 and receiving a disability pension. The rest of the housing stock on the Lygon and Elgin estates consists of two and three bedroom flats and is designated family accommodation. The most commonly reported household structure (43 per cent) was the sole parent, female headed family with dependent children. A further 27 per cent lived in two parent households with dependent children. Nearly 5 per cent lived in a couple household, the same percentage lived with a single aged parent, and 10 per cent (three households) lived in households which contained extended family such as adult siblings, their partners and children or two cousins sharing. 3 per cent lived with other unrelated adults.

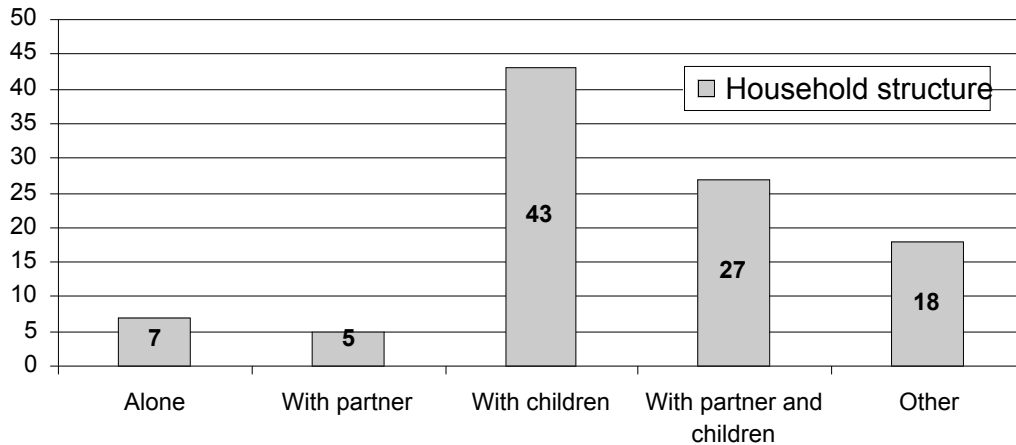


Figure 3: Who respondents live with

Health

29 per cent of respondents reported that they or someone else in their household suffered from a health condition or disability. Some of these could be related to the age of the respondent, with those in the older persons' tower reporting conditions such as diabetes (four), arthritis/rheumatism (two) and eye problems (two). A further four respondents did not cite eye problems as a health condition, but noted it elsewhere in the questionnaire as a reason for choosing not to use a computer. Other self-reported health conditions included childhood asthma, epilepsy, back injury, stroke, heart disease and depression.

Educational background

The educational background of respondents varied widely, from nine who had never received any schooling at all, through to seven who were completing or had completed postgraduate degrees or diplomas. Approximately 25 per cent only had a primary school education, and this included some older Australian born residents as well as those who grew up in other countries. 16 per cent had some secondary education and 30 per cent had completed high school either in Australia or overseas. When these figures were examined more closely, however, a striking difference in educational attainment according to gender could be discerned.

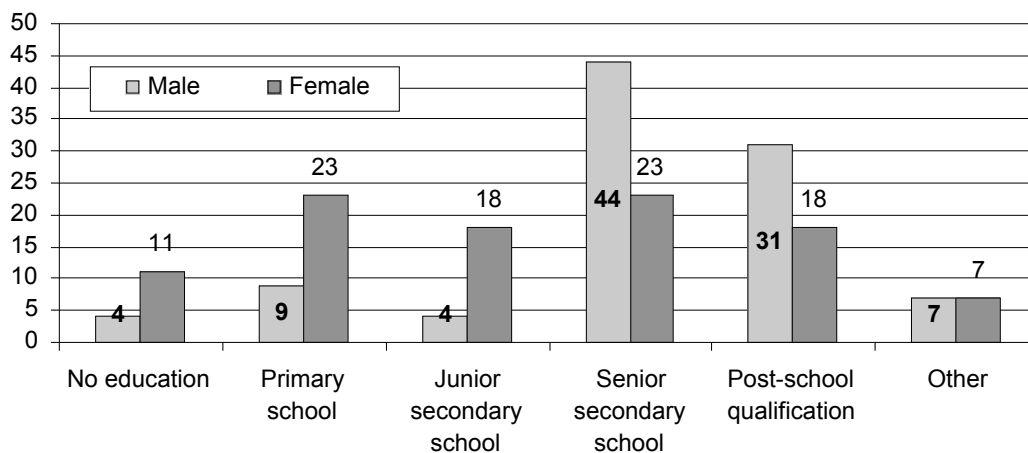


Figure 4: Educational attainment by gender

It can be seen that men have significantly higher levels of education than women. Three-quarters of male respondents have completed secondary education, with almost one-third going on to complete a post-school qualification (undergraduate or postgraduate degree or diploma). In contrast, less than half of female respondents had completed high school, with 11 per cent having no formal education at all, and almost one-quarter only completing primary school. All those who reported having no education were of African origin (Eritrean, Ethiopian or Somali), and all but one (an 83 year old man) were women. Unsurprisingly, eight of these reported that they spoke English not well (three) or not at all (five). Approximately half were aged over 50 years and half under 50, with the youngest being 26 years old. A further two respondents, both of African origin and aged over 60, reported that they received education only at Koran school.

Current employment and education

15 per cent of respondents were enrolled in full-time education, and a further 29 per cent in part-time study. Three of these were completing their secondary education, eight were enrolled in university level studies and 29 were undertaking adult or community education, some at certificate level. By far the largest number of these were migrants undertaking English language courses, either at the CNLC, AMES, Council of Adult Education or elsewhere. Other choices include interpreting and translating, childcare, web site design/IT and nursing. One respondent was enrolled in a short course in internet research and another was undertaking work related training.

Among those with primary school aged children, 20 out of 27 chose to send their child or children to Carlton Primary School. For those who chose to send their children elsewhere, two did so for geographical reasons, that is, the child spent more time living elsewhere than in Carlton (for example, with another parent) and the rest had chosen private schooling either at the local Catholic school (two Vietnamese respondents) and the rest to Islamic schools in neighbouring suburbs.

More than 85 per cent of respondents were not working and only 14 per cent had looked for work in the last four weeks, including some of those who were currently working part-time or casually. Just 12 per cent lived in a household where another person worked full-time, with a further 14 per cent living in a household with another person who worked part-time. Thus it can be seen that the majority of respondents live and raise their children in a jobless household. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that although Australia is currently enjoying its lowest rate of unemployment for 28 years, newly arrived migrants, people from Africa, the Middle East and Vietnam and single mothers all have much higher unemployment rates (Parliament of Australia 2005). Many Carlton residents fall into all three of those categories.

Information technology

Eight questions on the questionnaire addressed issues relating to the use of new information technologies, particularly computers and the internet. A surprisingly high percentage of respondents had used both computers (69 per cent of respondents) and the internet (64 per cent), and many had computers at home (59 per cent), some with home internet connections as well (42 per cent). Computer ownership was definitely related to the presence of school aged children in the household, especially if they were senior secondary students. However, two respondents specifically did *not* want their children to be using a computer at home and they did not have one for that reason. Many also made use of computers outside the home, most frequently at school or college (25 per cent of computer users), the CNLC (21 per cent), library (17 per cent) or workplace (9 per cent).

The major barrier to computer use among respondents was a lack of knowledge of the technology. Comments such as 'I don't like them', 'Don't know how to use it', 'Don't understand them' and 'Unable to use it' were common responses to the question about anything which puts you off using the computer. One respondent noted: 'It's very hard to do – you write your name – it takes an hour!' For older people there was often a lack of literacy, especially in English but also in their first language, and ill health, with several reporting an inability to look at the screen due to eye problems or epilepsy. Affordability was another problem, with some respondents noting that the cost of a computer put it beyond their reach. One said that although she had a computer at home, it was too old and she no longer used it. Others said that they simply did not have the time to spend mastering a new skill when they were already busy with other things.

58 per cent of respondents saw a need for more computer courses in the area, and 54 per cent said they would enrol in one if it was available. This was higher than for any other course (such as English language, vocational education, work skills, health and parenting and creative arts.)

Use of services

Whilst it may seem at first glance as if the area surrounding the public housing estates is well supplied with a range of services and supports, residents' views about service availability varied considerably. Favourable comments included 'I feel as if I'm well looked after. Thanks to [community health worker]', 'It's much better than we would have in Vietnam' and 'Plenty of support if people wish to avail themselves of it'. Others observed 'There are never enough health, education or employment services and childcare is too expensive', 'We're well provided for – but there could be more. There is unlimited need' and 'I think there are enough services available but my husband thinks there shouldn't be any.'

Respondents were also asked about their use of specific services and opportunities in the local area. 90 per cent used at least one service in Carlton, with 39 per cent using one or two services and a further 32 per cent making use of three to five services. These include local church programs, the neighbourhood house, health and parenting services and places of worship.

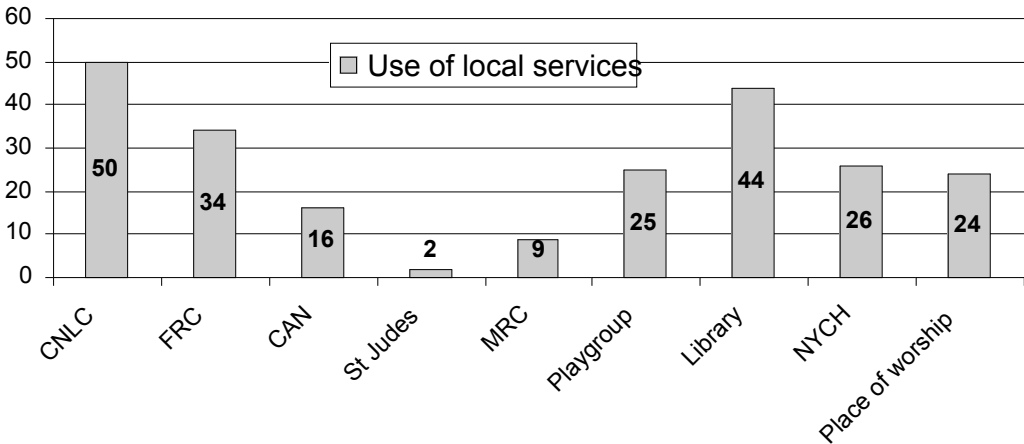


Figure 5: Percentage of respondents making use of selected services

The above table shows the percentage of respondents who make use of some of the services available in the Carlton area. Almost 50 per cent of respondents were past or current users of the CNLC. Its importance as a provider of English language classes can be clearly seen when the users of the centre

are compared on the grounds of language ability. Roughly one-quarter of those who were born in Australia or who reported that they spoke English very well made use of CNLC's services, compared with more than three-quarters of those who reported that they spoke English not well and 67 per cent of those who reported that they spoke English not at all. In contrast, 44 per cent of respondents used the local library, and this was more or less constant across all English language ability groups. Almost 10 per cent used the Migrant Resource Centre (MRC), with almost all of those being people who spoke English well or very well. Only one MRC user spoke English not well, and none of those who reported speaking no English used the service. However, those who spoke little or no English themselves reported higher than average use of youth services or homework support by their children (nearly 20 per cent, compared with 14 per cent on average).

Approximately one-quarter of respondents used the North Yarra Community Health Centre (NYCH), and this figure held true both for those born in Australia and those born overseas. Two preferred to see a doctor who spoke their language and therefore travelled to Footscray for that purpose. Similarly, several preferred to travel to other suburbs to access culturally appropriate services, to socialise with friends or relatives, or to attend places of worship (church, mosque or temple).

Other services which were mentioned include AMES, Carlton Baths, Royal Women's Hospital, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital and the senior citizens' centre.

Abilities

The questionnaire also asked if respondents had any skills which they would be interested in teaching to others. 25 per cent answered yes to this question, noting a range of skills and abilities which they were willing to share. These ranged from religious instruction and Arabic language and interpreting, through to music, cooking, handicrafts, computer skills and first aid. Parenting skills, life skills and communication skills were also mentioned by several respondents. 35 per cent also said they would be willing to help organise a class or activity, indicating that there may be a large pool of untapped talent and potential amongst the unemployed and underemployed residents of the estates.

Barriers

There can be little doubt that the overwhelming barrier to participation in any opportunities which living in Carlton may bring to the women living there is the lack of affordable, appropriate and accessible childcare. More than 44 per cent of respondents saw this a barrier to their participation in either education or employment. To a lesser extent, there is clearly also a need for respite care for women who are looking after, not only their own children and in some cases grandchildren, but also sick, disabled or aged relatives, whether children, husbands, parents or in-laws. Lack of proficiency or confidence with written and spoken English is another barrier which may in many cases be attributed back to lack of childcare which inhibits parents, especially mothers, from attending language classes.

Age is also a factor which inhibits the participation of both men and women, with many indicating that they were 'too old to learn'. This was most often the case when the questions were concerning barriers to the use of new technology, but also reflected a belief that learning was something which occurred in a classroom with a teacher and required an ongoing commitment to attend regular classes.

Other barriers to participation include financial concerns, health problems, lack of time due to other commitments, language and literacy difficulties, length of time required to complete a course, lack of

knowledge of what is available, lack of prior experience and disinterest in what is on offer. Three respondents would not attend if it was a mixed gender class, that is, open to both males and females.

The disengaged

Part of the difficulty with any survey is the bias introduced by the choice as to whether to respond or not. The fact that most respondents to this survey were women reflects in part the demographic structure of the estate population, but also reflects women's greater use of and participation in services and programs through which they might be recruited to the survey. As well, most of those who responded were not working and were therefore either at home, in public places on the estates or attending programs when they were interviewed. Many estate residents who work, study or are physically isolated at home could not be contacted for an interview. Many others chose not to respond for a variety of personal reasons, some of which may have to do with being 'over-researched' as residents of public housing. One group noticeable by their absence from the survey were young and middle aged men. Secondary research has suggested that this group may be at high risk of social exclusion, especially those of African origin and refugee background (Capital City Local Learning and Employment Network 2005, p. 5; Kinnaird 2005). Gaining access to appropriate employment is clearly one of the major issues for this group, alongside a certain reluctance to engage in training or other educational pathways and a general disengagement from local services which are seen to be 'women's business' and to be predominantly run by and for women. The one service which does seem to attract men is the drop-in centre at the Church of All Nations,. However, this has a predominantly Anglo-Saxon or European clientele and is not made use of by the African community.

Additional concerns

As well as conducting the resident survey, numerous formal and informal interviews and meetings were held with a variety of people and organisations to try to ascertain some further information regarding community need. There are many government funded and not-for-profit organisations charged with providing services for Carlton residents, especially those on low incomes and the socially excluded. Ongoing discussions with a number of these organisations over the course of the year elicited useful information regarding some issues which were not specifically addressed by the survey. As was also found in the resident interviews, access to appropriate and affordable childcare is the major issue for women in Carlton. This includes long day care, occasional care and pre-school programs. Safety is another issue which was frequently mentioned, both by residents and service providers, with fear of physical violence and verbal abuse being a deterrent to attending programs located away from the estate, especially for those without private means of transport. As one respondent said, 'Classes need to be close to home, if they are held at night. I don't want to go far in the dark'.

The growing number of African youth, particularly teenaged and young adult males who are disengaged from school, other formal education and the workforce, was seen by many as a problem which was rapidly increasing in both number and severity of consequences. There is currently an over-representation of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the juvenile justice system (Ethnic Communities Council WA Youth Committee 2001), and the structural factors which influence the development of the African community in Melbourne are only likely to exacerbate this trend. Such factors include: family breakdown; dislocation, trauma and uncertainty associated with refugee status; housing instability; lack of appropriate role models; unfamiliarity with educational or employment opportunities or possibilities; interrupted schooling; language, literacy and numeracy problems; and racism and discrimination on religious, cultural or ethnic grounds.

Many not-for-profit organisations which are located in Carlton and which provide services to low income or socially disadvantaged residents noted that there was high demand, long waiting lists or lack of space, resources or facilities. An example of this could be the community gardens, which provide small allotments for public tenants and for which there is a long waiting list and a low turnover. Many service providers also saw funding cuts or uncertainty over future funding as restricting their ability to meet current and projected future demand.

A number of respondents to the resident survey also raised issues which had not been specifically addressed in the questionnaire, but which were of concern to them or their families, for example:

'We need a place, a café maybe, for families to gather.'

'The playground – there's a lot of things to be done – it's just for the big kids. Something for the little children, like two years old.'

'An opportunity for kids to learn Arabic on weekends. Need more kindergarten places, particularly for new arrivals.'

'More classes close to the estate.'

'We need a Centrelink office in Carlton. We have to travel too far and most people don't have a car.'

'I'm interested in driving lessons. I need language help to pass the test then I could work on a farm and not need to rely on Centrelink.'

'We need an Aldi supermarket because it's much cheaper, and we need halal meat at the Safeway supermarket in Carlton.'

'Racism prevents us from getting a job because we are wearing the hijab, no-one will employ us.'

'There are kids and teenagers making trouble – need more sports and activities for them.'

'They don't have night-time classes.'

One resident articulately summed up a number of issues which he felt were barriers to participation for a number of residents: 'There's discrimination against single dads. We need courses for single dads/men in anger management, parenting. Trips are useful, like fishing, movies rather than classes. People think "I'm not good enough" to do classes – they need to be practically based in the real world. There does need to be something because people get bored. But it needs to be quality recreational skills. Not too formal, too long or too expensive. Money is a major issue. Not "courses" but things that can help people. Leave "back to work" stuff to Centrelink – people won't work if they don't want to.'

A major issue for residents in high rise public housing across Melbourne is the problem of illicit drug use, and this is reflected at Carlton also in the following comments:

'Too many druggies.'

'Not enough education or information for drug users.'

'Drugs and criminals – need more education. More services for elderly. Everyone in public housing is a druggie or a criminal. They need education in everything.'

'Definitely need some drug counselling on the estate – lot of drug addicts that could benefit from it. Sex education for the kids (12+).'

'Too much drugs – we're scared.'

Conclusion

The single most striking finding from this survey was the sheer diversity in the respondents' past experiences and current and future needs. It is clear that any attempt to improve services must take very careful note of the target clientele, and tailor programs directly for small population segments, rather than attempting to cater to everyone. Perhaps the strongest message for the Hub is that there is great strength

and depth of experience in the estate population, and that allowing opportunities for self-directed learning may be just as valuable as establishing formal classes to address specific educational needs. Lifelong learning must embrace opportunities for informal and non-formal learning as well as the more formal educational needs. Many respondents were clearly disengaged from the formal educational system, yet expressed strong interest in learning new skills or participating in new experiences, albeit using language which demonstrated their interest in learning but disinterest in 'education'.

Attempts to overcome barriers to participation must take into account issues of health and disability which can limit access and ability to participate. Safety is a concern for some, especially those who are interested in participating in activities held in the evenings and those who need to travel to access services. The burden of caring which goes on in families and falls mainly on women, even those who are not currently rearing young children, is an under-recognised barrier, particularly for older women with aged husbands or parents requiring ongoing care. The lack of access to childcare and pre-school programs is a major issue for many families, particularly those who are more recently arrived and who find themselves at the bottom of the waiting lists for services.

Another major barrier is the low level of many residents' English language skills and a corresponding low level of literacy in either English or another language. This compounds the difficulty of accessing information relating to appropriate and available services. There can be little doubt that word of mouth, relying as it does on high levels of interpersonal trust and shared language background, is of critical importance in engaging some sections of the community. This raises an interesting issue about the role of community leaders in acting as liaisons between community groups and service providers. Whilst they have a critical role to play in the dissemination of information within oral language communities, they also wield great power as gatekeepers. It can be easy to forget that even within small communities there can be subtle and complex networks of relationships, power and influence which can both bind members together strongly and also work powerfully to exclude non-members. Such networks are rarely visible or articulated either by members or outsiders, but they can exert a subtle and long-lasting influence. It is vitally important that service providers and educators continue to work towards engaging the hard to reach through a variety of channels, whilst at the same time not undermining traditional community power structures and roles. Such a balancing act is never easy, and requires a long-term commitment to working with all sectors of the community.

Sustainability

Ownership

There can be little doubt that raising people's hopes and interest in a project through consultation, invitation to public meetings and dissemination of advance information, only to dash those hopes when a project falls through, is not only disappointing and demoralising to the community, but also makes it more difficult both for other projects which are ongoing and for the development of future activities. It is therefore crucial that the Hub project continues to be supported and resourced, not just through its establishment phase, but into the future as well. This does not just mean that governments should continue to put money into it, but it requires engagement with the project from across the spectrum of public, private and not-for-profit agencies as well as from the community itself. In turn, this requires that the Hub is indeed meeting its users' needs, is valued and trusted by residents, is aligned with operating practises of member organisations and is seen and recognised by the wider community as an integral part of the Carlton landscape.

Part of the original vision for the Hub was a vibrant and dynamic community centre which would invite and encourage members of the wider school community to connect with the school and with the educational opportunities which exist in Carlton. The aim was both to enhance individual access to lifelong learning and to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students who are at risk of being left behind in mainstream education and ultimately disengaging from formal learning altogether. Carlton Primary School has been proactive over the past two years in opening up the school and its facilities to the community by allowing service providers to make use of its facilities (such as the AMES cooking and catering enterprise using the school kitchen) and by allowing residents to make use of facilities for self-directed learning (such as the African women using the school technology room). At its simplest, the Hub is merely a guiding structure designed to support and encourage exactly these types of ventures, linking community need, service availability and physical infrastructure through a coordinated structure which provides a platform for administrative, legal and financial oversight.

There is, however, great scope for the Hub to become much more than this. By engaging with the wider Carlton community, encouraging residents of all ages to become involved and opening the door for cross-cultural dialogue, the Hub has the potential to become the new village square. Learning can encompass many things, not limited to classrooms and courses. Fostering cultural pride and community safety through the transmission of social skills in real life settings is as important for younger members of newly arrived communities as is the improvement of older long-term residents' English language and Australian social skills. The establishment of the Learning Hub is a wonderful opportunity to really improve outcomes for some of Melbourne's most disadvantaged and socially isolated citizens.

In order for these things to happen, there needs to be a strong two-way relationship between the Hub and the community, based on respect and open communication. If the Hub does not meet residents' needs, then it is doomed to fail, no matter how bright and shiny its promises. Establishing structures which allow for genuine input from the community and the flexibility to respond adequately are essential for its survival in any meaningful or useful way. In addition, the Hub will require a long-term commitment from its members to contribute to its running, in-kind support from individual volunteers, public and private organisations and community groups, and a management structure which accepts the responsibility for directing, overseeing and guiding its operations.

Financial

Nonetheless, such a project does require ongoing funding to keep its doors open. It is not feasible to expect a social enterprise of this type to generate sufficient income on its own to support all of its financial needs, although some generation of income (for example, through hire fees for facilities) would be advantageous. Sources of support for projects like this which have a social justice aim are many and varied. A list of possible funders is attached in Appendix 2, though this is by no means exhaustive and is subject to change without notice. The Hub is indeed fortunate to have secured funding for a project officer for the next two years, thanks to a Melbourne City Council grant. This will cover by far the largest operating cost of the Hub, given that other potential expenses are covered in-kind by the school and other organisations. Beyond that, it will be important for the Advisory Committee to establish a funding strategy, in conjunction with the project officer. Part of the committee's strategic role will be to advise on appropriate sources of funding and to guide the project officer, as well as individuals or community groups, to apply for funding to meet their individual needs under the Hub umbrella. There is little doubt, however, that the more in-kind support that the Hub can muster, whether through local business partnerships, volunteer arrangements with universities, corporations and the public, or indirect support

through various levels of government, the better placed it will be both to continue operating and to attract new funding for future expansion.

Conclusion

Importance of the Hub

The combination of a series of factors makes the establishment of a Lifelong Learning Hub a matter of great importance in Carlton. The first, and most significant, is the needs of the communities which are resident on the public housing estates. These are communities characterised by extreme poverty, disadvantage and social isolation. Many are recently arrived in Australia, often with limited English, lack of family support and having faced the trauma and dislocation of being refugees. Many have had little or no experience of formal or secular education in their home country. Others, while born in Australia, face equally great barriers to full participation in social and civic life through ill health, age, substance abuse or family breakdown. Many of these are also disengaged from the education system, leading to an intergenerational transmission, not just of poverty, but of early school leaving, limited skills and unemployment. For Carlton Primary School to really make a difference for its students and improve the quality of their educational experience, there needs to be a whole-of-community approach to education and learning. This requires the school to open itself to the community and to be flexible and responsive in meeting community needs.

At the same time, Carlton is well supplied with organisations whose aim is to enhance learning across the lifespan: from playgroups and pre-school education, to youth services, homework support, adult language and literacy, parenting and senior citizens' centres; from health and recreation to leisure activities and camps; from legal aid, migration and financial advice to employment services. Yet the research has shown that many residents do not know about these services, are unable to access them for a variety of reasons or feel that what is available does not meet their needs. Using the school infrastructure to support and empower people to make better use of the services, make them more accessible and responsive and give residents the opportunity to have a say in their running is a golden opportunity to build on the hidden strengths of the estate communities and allow people to make a genuine difference in their own lives and in the lives of those people them.

Evaluating the Hub

Ongoing research and evaluation of the performance of the Hub will be critical both for those who oversee its running and for those participating in its events and activities. Whilst this research project is able to establish some baseline data from which the Hub can be launched, it should by no means be considered to be a definitive statement for now and all time. Needs change, circumstances change, the redevelopment of the estates remains a very real possibility, and the effect of the opening of the Hub on the provision of opportunities will be seen over the next few years and beyond. Many effects and opportunities which occur through this type of initiative are very difficult to measure: they may be small, subtle and intangible to outsiders, but this does not mean that they are not valuable. Whilst the project officer will need to keep careful records of the more tangible effects, such as increasing enrolment numbers, positive student feedback forms, and greater use of facilities by community groups, less obvious effects should not be overlooked. Enhanced individual and community capacity, an increased sense of safety and confidence, and the value of increasing participation in real decision making can be difficult to measure, but will be critical in assessing the real effects of the Hub's establishment. It will be essential for the Advisory Committee to commit to ongoing assessment and evaluation of the Hub's effectiveness in meeting the self-identified needs of the residents of Carlton.

The future

The future of the Hub looks very promising. With commitment and support from the City of Melbourne, Carlton Primary School, not-for-profit organisations and community groups, the need for the Hub is obvious. It provides an excellent opportunity for a range of organisations and groups committed to working in partnership with the residents of Carlton to make use of facilities and services which are sorely needed but too often locked away from the community outside of school hours.

References

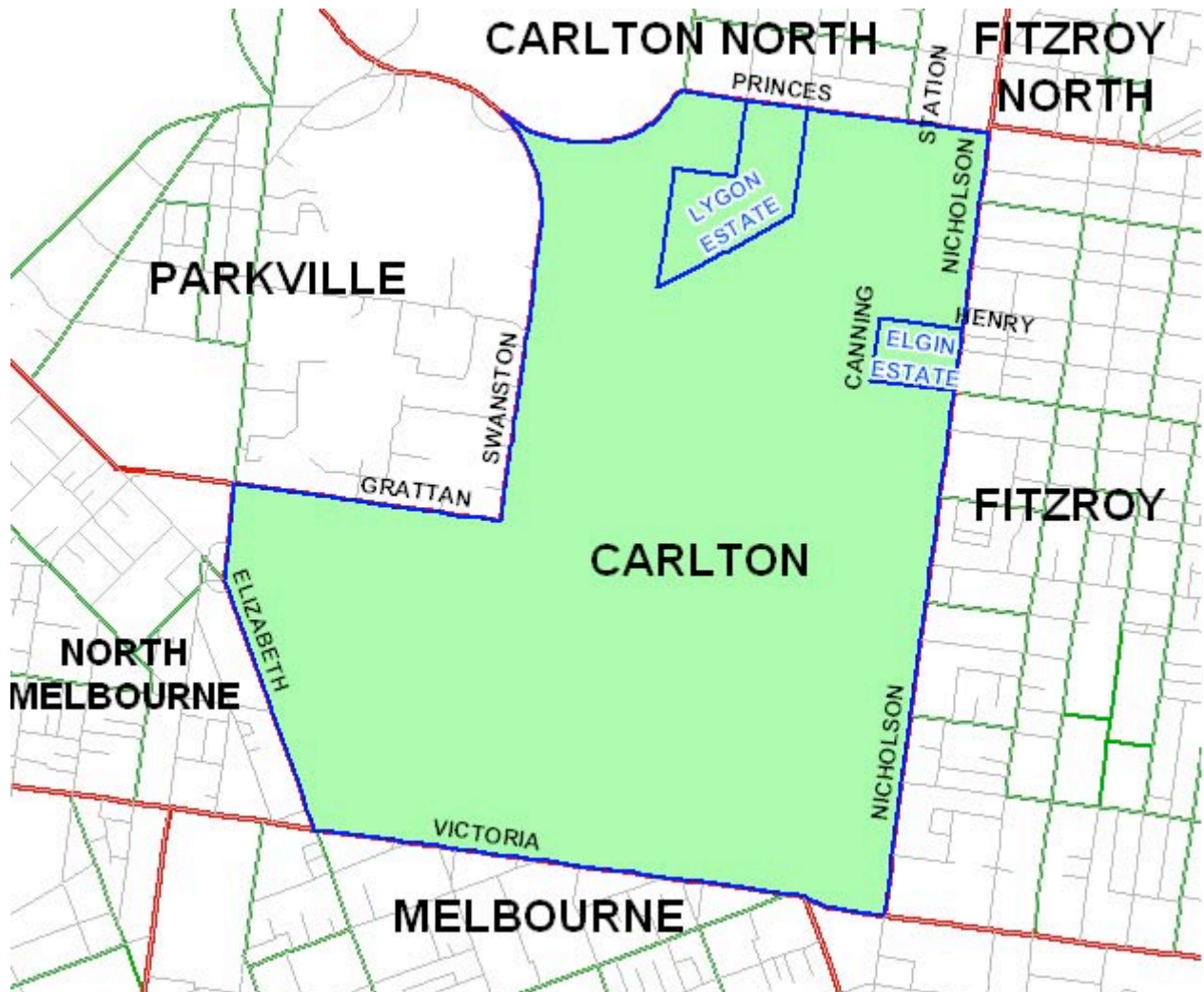
- Capital City Local Learning and Employment Network, 2005, *Annual Report 2004/2005*, Melbourne.
- Commission of the European Communities, 2001, *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/III/life/communication/com_en.pdf>.
- Ethnic Communities Council WA Youth Committee, 2001, *Perth Youth Forum Against Racism Report: Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance: Issues for Young People in Western Australia*, Perth, <http://www.hreoc.gov.au/worldconference/consultations/perth_youth.html#pol>
- Fine, M., Pancharatnam, K. and Thompson, C., 2005, *Coordinated and Integrated Human Service Delivery Models*, Report no. 1/05, Social Policy Research Centre, University of NSW, Sydney, <http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/reports/SPRCReport1_05.pdf>.
- Handfield, J., 1980, *Friends and Brothers: A Life of Gerard Kennedy Tucker, Founder of the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Community Aid Abroad*, Hyland House, Melbourne.
- Hindess, B., 2002, 'Deficit by design', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 61, no. 1, pp. 30-8.
- Housing Commission, 1966, *The Enemy Within Our Gates*, Melbourne.
- Kinnaird, S., 2005, *Horn of Africa Men and Settlement Services in Carlton*, professional intern report, Monash University.
- Leutz, W., 1999, 'Five laws for integrating medical and social services: Lessons from the United States and United Kingdom', *Milbank Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 1, pp. 77-110.
- Parliament of Australia, 2005, *High Unemployment at a Time of Low Unemployment*, Parliamentary Library Research Note no. 15 (2005-06), Department of Parliamentary Services, Canberra, <<http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rn/2005-06/06rn15.pdf>>.
- UNESCO, 1990, *World Declaration on Education for All*, <http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/background/jomtien_declaration.shtml>.
- World Bank, 2003, *Lifelong Learning in the Global Knowledge Economy: Challenges for Developing Countries*, World Bank, Washington, DC, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079984605/lifelonglearning_GKE.pdf>.

Useful Resources

Governance and Management website
<<http://www.governance.com.au/index.htm>>

Our Community website
<<http://www.ourcommunity.com.au>>

Appendix 1 Map of Carlton



This map shows the location of the two public housing estates in the suburb of Carlton. The comparisons mentioned in the text are between the 'Lygon estate', the 'Elgin estate' and the 'rest of Carlton'. The 'rest of Carlton' figures exclude those for the two estates.

Appendix 2 Potential funding sources

Commonwealth government

Department of Family and Community Services – Stronger Families, Stronger Communities, Local Answers Grants

<<http://www.facs.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/aboutfacs/programs/sfsc-sfcs.htm>>

Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs – Living in Harmony grants

<<http://www.harmony.gov.au/grants/index.htm>>

Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts – Festivals Australia grants

<http://www.dcita.gov.au/arts/arts/festivals_australia>

State government

Department for Victorian Communities –

Multicultural Educational Programs

Strengthening Multicultural Communities Program

Community Program – Multicultural Festivals and Events Program

Multicultural Organisational Support Program

Community Support – Strengthening Communities

<http://www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au/ProgramDetail.asp?YX2_id=YX2_12&YX1_id=YX1_02>

'Go for your life' Physical Activity Grants

<http://www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au/ProgramDetail.asp?YX2_id=YX2_16&YX1_id=YX1_02>

Youth Participation and Access Program

National Youth Week 2005 Grants

FReeZA

<http://www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au/ProgramDetail.asp?YX2_id=YX2_13&YX1_id=YX1_02>

Community Jobs Program

<[http://www.business.vic.gov.au/CA256E36001D1550/BP/C31A2D9BB4CD11B0CA256E7D0045D563?OpenDocument&LVL2=\[Grants%20and%20Programs%20Wizard\]&WPZ=\[D64D3D48443506F9CA25707500199E95](http://www.business.vic.gov.au/CA256E36001D1550/BP/C31A2D9BB4CD11B0CA256E7D0045D563?OpenDocument&LVL2=[Grants%20and%20Programs%20Wizard]&WPZ=[D64D3D48443506F9CA25707500199E95)>

Victorian Multicultural Commission

<<http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants/index.htm>>

Department of Infrastructure – My Connected Community

<<http://www.skills.net.au/>>

VicHealth – Community Arts Participation

<<http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/default.asp?artid=699&tid=488&level=3>>

Philanthropic Trusts

Artists for Kids Culture

<<http://www.akc.org.au/>>

Victorian Women's Trust

<<http://www.vwt.org.au/grants/vwtgranting.php>>

ANZ Charitable Trusts

<<http://www.anz.com.au/australia/charitabletrusts/guidelines.asp>>

Foundation for Young Australians

<<http://www.youngaustralians.org/>>

Reichstein Foundation

<<http://www.reichstein.org.au/>>

R. E. Ross Trust

<<http://www.rosstrust.org.au/>>

BHP Billiton Corporate Community Programs

<<http://www.bhpbilliton.com/bb/sustainableDevelopment/community/supportGuidelines.jsp>>

Telematics Trust

<<http://www.telematics.org.au/>>

Lord Mayor's Fund

<<http://www.lordmayorsfund.org.au>>

Local business partnerships

Carlton Traders' Association

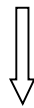
Appendix 3 Hub governance structure

The Hub is governed by a series of committees, as represented in the diagram below:

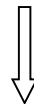
Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub

Accountability Structure

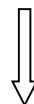
Carlton Primary School Council



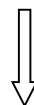
Learning Hub Advisory Committee - Operations and Management Group
(meet-quarterly) (meet monthly)



Learning Hub User Group
(meet monthly)



Learning Hub Users



Wider Community

Carlton Life Long Learning Hub Project

Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Membership

The Advisory Committee will be made up of:

- A partner representative from Carlton Primary School Council
- A partner representative from Melbourne City Council
- A representative from an agency represented on the initial Reference Group
- Two nominated representatives from organisations with expertise in the project's focus
- An elected representative from the Learning Hub Users Group.

The Project Officer employed by the school council to work on the project will attend and provide information to Advisory Committee members.

Other members may be coopted by the Advisory Committee where it is deemed necessary.

As part of their role managing the project the partners (MCC and CPS) will also provide organisational and executive support to the Advisory Committee.

Roles

The Advisory Committee will make recommendations concerning:

- Provision of information for the benefit of the project
- Provision of feedback and advice regarding the project
- Identification of opportunities that add value to the project
- Identification of recommendations or changes needed to improve implementation of the project
- Definition of any policy, research agenda and criteria for evaluation of the project
- Possible variations to the project
- The implementation of an effective internal and external communications and publicity strategy for the benefit of the project
- Initiate and maintain partnerships with other agencies, businesses and interested bodies
- Annual review of the functioning of the Hub in terms of its missions and goals
- Guidelines for use and membership of the Hub

Operational guidelines

Meetings of the Advisory Committee will be held-quarterly, or as deemed necessary and will be chaired by each member in turn.

The Advisory Committee will make decisions by consensus. If necessary an external facilitator will be used to work through issues to reach consensus.

Should a member of the Advisory Committee choose to resign his/her position, s/he must nominate an appropriate replacement member.

The Advisory Committee will oversee the preparation of accurate and responsible financial reports for the Hub.

Carlton Life Long Learning Hub Project

Operations and Management Group Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Operations and Management Group will work as a sub-committee of the project's Advisory Committee and will be chaired by the principal of Carlton Primary School. The O & M Group will employ, support and direct the project worker. As well the O & M Group will be responsible to the Advisory Committee for all reporting requirements including those pertaining to the financial management of the project.

Membership

- The Carlton Primary School Principal (chair)
- A representative from the Melbourne City Council
- A nominated representative of the Advisory Committee

Roles

The Operations and Management Group will:

- Implementation according to the project proposal
- Oversee the employment of a project worker on the basis of the 'consultants brief for research services', Annexure B, Project Contract
- Provide operational support, advice and direction to the project worker
- The project worker is accountable to the Advisory Committee, through the Operations and Management Group
- Provide financial accountability for project funds, including provision of annual audited financial reports
- Advise the Advisory Committee on future funding submissions and new funding sources
- Executive support, coordination of and participation in the Advisory Committee
- Provide project documentation
- Provide overall coordination of project evaluation and where appropriate research

Operational guidelines

The Operations and Management Group will meet monthly.

Executive Support to the Operations and Management Group will be provided by the project worker.

Carlton Life Long Learning Hub Project

Learning Hub User Group Terms of Reference

Membership

The Learning Hub User Group will open to all organisations and individuals who use the Learning Hub on a regular or casual basis and who have signed the Hub membership form, agreeing to the conditions of use of the Hub. Attendance at User Group meetings is invited from all Hub members as well as potential users and other interested parties. Only signed members of the Hub will be entitled to vote on User Group decisions. Other members may be coopted by the Learning Hub User Group where it is deemed necessary.

The User Group will elect a chair at the first meeting of each year, and that person will be responsible for chairing User Group meetings for that calendar year.

The Project Officer employed by the school council to work on the project will attend (*ex officio*) and provide information to Learning Hub User Group members. The Project Officer will also provide executive support to the User Group, for example by preparing agendas and recording minutes for each meeting.

Interpreters may be available to support attendance at User Group meetings if required.

Roles

The Learning Hub User Group will:

- Provide information, feedback and recommendations to the Advisory Committee for the benefit of the project
- Construct a Charter for Hub users regarding a shared vision for the use of the space
- Assist in the management of the facility
- Negotiate use of space and resources
- Identify areas of unmet need in client groups, including new services if appropriate
- Suggest possible variations to the project
- Evaluate their own services for effectiveness, delivery and client response
- Report on issues of potential concern particularly as they relate to the strategic vision

Operational guidelines

Meetings of the Learning Hub User Group will be held monthly on Friday mornings at 9.30am, at Carlton Primary School. The Learning Hub User Group will make decisions by consensus. If necessary an external facilitator will be used to work through issues to reach consensus.

Vision statement

Learning has no boundaries. Learners can now learn at home or at school. Learning has become an ongoing process that does not end in the classroom. It has no borders because everyday situations pose opportunities to experience learning. Life long learning is vital in our technologically developing world.

Elizabeth Ferguson, *Learning Theories and Curriculum*
November 2, 2004

The Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub has been established to provide opportunities for lifelong learning to all residents of the Carlton area, with particular focus on those who are disadvantaged, disempowered or socially excluded in some way. Carlton Primary School has the facilities and the willingness to oversee the Hub project. We see the need to provide for the whole community everyday when we work with the children of this community, and we understand the necessity of skilling the 'whole' school community so that our students have better opportunities in the future. The establishment of the Hub provides new learning opportunities based on real community need.

This vision statement has been developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders who have an interest in the establishment of the Hub. It will be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to reflect Carlton Community Lifelong Learning Hub's vision, mission and goals.

- **Vision:**

That individuals and groups within the Carlton community, determining and participating in Hub activities, will have enhanced capacity as life long learners.

- **Mission:**

To provide high quality, accessible opportunities for lifelong learning to all residents of the Carlton area in an affordable, safe, supportive and culturally sensitive manner.

- **Goals:**

To increase the participation of residents in the Carlton area in lifelong learning activities.

To work in partnership with learning service providers in the coordination of learning activities in the Carlton area.

To improve school outcomes for Carlton Primary School students through enhancing the learning opportunities available to all members of the student's family and household and to students outside of school hours.

To encourage cross-cultural dialogue and strengthen the Carlton community.