

EAGLEHAWK NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL

2002 - 2010 FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



See reverse cover for Long Gully Neighbourhood Renewal Report

A Victorian
Government
initiative



RICHARD WYNNE MP MINISTER FOR HOUSING FOREWORD



Thank you for giving me the opportunity to write on the wonderful success story that is Eaglehawk Neighbourhood Renewal.

Neighbourhood Renewal has been making a positive difference to communities across Victoria since 2001 - creating a landscape for improved economic and social conditions and providing people with opportunities to take advantage of these. Eaglehawk Neighbourhood Renewal results have confirmed that residents are experiencing real, sustainable changes that are transforming their community into a place where people feel a sense of belonging.

This report describes many of the marvellous outcomes Neighbourhood Renewal has achieved in Eaglehawk since 2002. For example, unemployment has decreased and a significant narrowing of the gap with the State average has occurred, and there has been a major decrease in the turnover of public housing tenants.

Community surveys verify that residents can see the transformation Eaglehawk Neighbourhood Renewal has made to their lives. Overall crime numbers against people and property have been reduced leading to improvements in perceptions of safety; literacy and numeracy skills amongst primary and secondary students are improving; and community attitude to government is being reshaped in a positive way because new partnerships are replacing old fashioned bureaucratic practices.

Right from the outset, Eaglehawk residents have been at the heart of change, getting involved in every aspect of Neighbourhood Renewal, setting the agenda, working hard for their communities, devoting countless hours on working groups and committees, and volunteering a large part of their lives to making Neighbourhood Renewal the success it is.

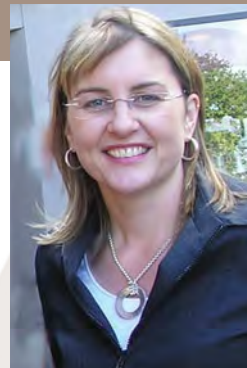
I saw at first hand how hard residents were working to make Neighbourhood Renewal a lasting success when I was invited to the launch of the Bright Street Enterprise Hub. The Hub provides work and training opportunities for the community – 26 jobs have been created to date for local residents through The Hub's activities and facilities. This is a wonderful result that promises long term benefits.

My congratulations go to Eaglehawk residents and all your partners for achieving success over the last eight years, and of course, continuing to succeed in the future. You are managing to turn around your community, transforming it into a place where people have a revitalised sense of belonging, can live with pride, and see a future filled with opportunity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Wynne". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Housing

JACINTA ALLAN'S FOREWORD



The Eaglehawk community has done a wonderful job transforming itself during the Neighbourhood Renewal process.

Evidence of their hard work can be seen in the establishment of the Menshed, Bright Street Enterprise Hub, Jobs Gully, and rejuvenating lives with bushfire recovery projects after the tragic circumstances of February 2009 that struck parts of the area. These outcomes are a sample of the projects that residents in Eaglehawk have driven to completion, which have made their areas better places to live.

Importantly, endeavours to provide Eaglehawk with opportunities will continue beyond the Neighbourhood Renewal initiative. The State Government is determined to support residents to identify priority areas for further improvement and reduce gaps wherever they exist.

I wish everyone the best in their efforts to continue transforming Eaglehawk into a great place to live.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacinta Allan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of "Jacinta" being a large, stylized 'J'.

Jacinta Allan MP
Member for Bendigo East

MESSAGE FROM THE EAGLEHAWK COMMUNITY



My name is Margaret and Eaglehawk is my home.

My friends and neighbours have always been proud of their community in spite of its flaws and problems, but Neighbourhood Renewal has

improved our lives

in ways that people can plainly see like new fences and better street lighting, and in other ways that are more meaningful and personal to the residents.

Since Neighbourhood Renewal began in 2002, many good changes have been made to the area including a rejuvenated playground with new BBQ facilities at the Bright Street Community Park, where families or local groups can gather for social activities; the Bright Street Enterprise Hub has provided us with a meeting place and a source of ongoing income through the catering business; housing in the area has been upgraded with new fencing and landscaping; better street lighting has been installed which has made it safer to go out at night; and crimes in our neighbourhood are not as common as they were.

These physical changes and many others like them have made Eaglehawk a better place to live and raise a family.

Outside these there have been other lasting changes that maybe matter more to people than a new fence or better bus services.

As a result of Neighbourhood Renewal many friends and neighbours are simply happier with their lives. I would imagine it's hard to measure happiness, but if a stronger sense of self-worth and a greater feeling of wellbeing count for anything our levels of happiness have never been higher since the project began in 2002.

Neighbourhood Renewal has directly involved so many residents in the decision making of plans and strategies which have changed our lives. This has meant people's opinions and thoughts were listened to and accepted by government. This was a totally new experience that left us feeling empowered, confident and valued. It gave us the strength to believe in ourselves and to show us that our community mattered.

People learned new skills that led to jobs and gained the confidence to take on life rather than sitting on our hands and waiting for help. We learned to help ourselves and become more self-reliant.

These changes are not all that visible to people outside our community, but they mean something important and enduring to us. It has given us a better quality of life.

EVALUATING NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL

“The first principle of Neighbourhood Renewal is about strengthening relationships and building trust.” Shirley

Neighbourhood Renewal brings together the resources and ideas of residents, governments, local businesses and community groups to tackle disadvantage in areas with concentrations of public housing, and then build vibrant communities where people want to live.

Initially, community and local agencies work with government bodies to prepare a local action plan for Neighbourhood Renewal. Thirty eight indicators are used to evaluate and monitor Neighbourhood Renewal’s progress against six key objectives (action plan areas). These are:

- increased community pride and participation
- enhanced housing and environment
- improved employment, learning and local economic activity
- decreased levels of crime and improved personal safety
- better health and wellbeing
- increased access to services and improved government responsiveness

The evaluation process provides residents and government bodies with feedback on the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Renewal, and also identifies which strategies are working and which ones need further investment.

Information is drawn from two sources: community surveys and administrative data, which together supply information about current conditions and provide comparative data to measure change.

Three community surveys were conducted over eight years in Eaglehawk and Long Gully and independently overseen by Victoria University. For each survey around 300 local residents were interviewed face to face and 150 nearby residents were surveyed by telephone. Information from government department records and agencies complemented the survey data; combined, these materials give a picture of how Neighbourhood Renewal is performing.

KEY OUTCOMES

“Government gives us the money. We provide the passion, the commitment and the action.” Denise

Table 1 presents key findings from three community surveys and collated administrative data. For full details on indicators and data sources refer to the *Neighbourhood Renewal Evaluation Report 2008* at www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au

The results of the surveys in Eaglehawk are highly encouraging across many areas and show the positive impacts since 2002.

In general, improvement has occurred on most indicators and more than half show that Neighbourhood Renewal in Eaglehawk has closed the gap compared to the rest of the State.

Eaglehawk residents have noted marked improvements in employment, learning and local economic activity. The trend across the board shows that residents perceive a better local economy is delivering new employment opportunities and improved employment services. Numeracy and literacy skills amongst primary and secondary students are improving and absenteeism is down.

Levels of crime have decreased and improved personal safety has transformed Eaglehawk into a safer place to live. Pride in the neighbourhood is enhanced as more people now feel a stronger sense of belonging.

Stronger bonds of trust and partnership between residents and government bodies have developed – indicators show that the quality and availability of community services has improved during the Neighbourhood Renewal initiative because the community are more aware of these.

There are, however, key priority areas for improvement. Future plans for the community will address the perceptions of pride in the neighbourhood, safety on the streets, improving household incomes, and putting in place strategies to build a healthier community.

Table 1: Key indicators used to evaluate and monitor Neighbourhood Renewal

What Eaglehawk residents say about ...	Room for improvement	No change	Changed for the better
Pride in their neighbourhood			
Feeling a sense of belonging			
Integration and participation in local activities			
Physical environment			
Own housing			
Public housing acceptance rates			
Job opportunities			
Increased employment			
Decreased unemployment			
Household income			
Local employment services			
Local economy			
Local education and training opportunities			
Absenteeism in primary school			
Absenteeism in secondary school			
Literacy and numeracy for primary and secondary students			
Number of residents completing Year 12 or its equivalent			
Further education qualifications			
Feeling safe walking in the street			
Crime and personal safety			
Crime and personal property			
Seeing the neighbourhood as a safe place to live			
Health and wellbeing of the neighbourhood			
Local transport options			
Quality and availability of community services			

PAST...PRESENT...FUTURE...OUR JOURNEY

“This journey has given us choices and opened up opportunities.” Bev

The Eaglehawk community has a sense of identity and community that is unique.

Eaglehawk came into being when gold was discovered here in 1852. The area was simply named by men who saw eagle hawks flying overhead. The town grew and prospered during the gold rush days until fortunes ran dry and people moved on. The renewal area is home to approximately 1300 residents, many of whom live in public housing (approximately 50 per cent).

The area has seen more than its share of unemployment, high rates of crime particularly amongst the youth of the area, community services diminish over time and the pride that many

showed for the community evaporated as people left for greener pastures and more opportunities elsewhere.

Long time residents of Eaglehawk believed there was a better future possible so they embraced the potential of Neighbourhood Renewal when it arrived. They knew change was possible but it was up to the residents to make it happen.

The story of how these people fought hard and long to turn around their community is told in the following pages.



PRIDE AND PARTICIPATION

Objective: to overcome social, political and economic exclusion that negatively affects community participation, belonging and pride.

“Neighbourhood Renewal has given a voice to our community.” Denise

Building pride and participation in the Eaglehawk neighbourhood started by developing a clear and loud voice. Residents joined committees, got involved in the decision making, formed alliances with government departments and agencies, and helped to guide the direction of Neighbourhood Renewal so that it gave genuine meaning to their community.

As a stronger sense of ownership and participation developed, residents were more than willing to get their hands dirty to get the job done and good results have come. Sixty nine per cent of people now feel a sense of belonging in their community; turnover of public housing tenants has decreased by nine per cent equaling the State average; and 28 per cent of residents are willing to interact and participate in community activities and events. However, increasing residents' pride in the neighbourhood and improving perceptions of the area as a good place to live are future targets.



Bright Street Community Park has new play equipment, rebound wall, landscaping, lighting and BBQs

“Five local people got together on a committee at the community house, meeting regularly and working for five years to turn a paddock into a park. The park was built by the community in one weekend! We started work at 7.00am on Saturday and finished on the Sunday evening. We worked by car headlights to get it finished. The people worked together to build the whole park with such dedication - laying turf, concreting and putting the play equipment together. A core group of fifteen did the work. This was a wonderful achievement with all of us working together. I still feel proud every time I walk by the park and see kids playing and families having BBQs.” Margaret



Bright Street Enterprise Hub

“Our Enterprise Hub is another name for a thriving centre in our neighbourhood. The Hub and catering facility provide training opportunities for the community and alternative education pathways for local youth.

“It’s really serving a vital community purpose. The Hub has generated 26 jobs for the local community and five jobs for people outside the Neighbourhood Renewal area. The computer room offers free internet access and training pathways for young people.

“The Hub is owned and operated by Bendigo Access Employment, which is a community based, not for profit organisation. An advisory committee consisting of community members and Launching Pad assist The Hub in planning programs that meet the community’s needs. Our strong relationship with the Eaglehawk Community House ensures we have the support we need to carry on with the good work at The Hub.” Janet



Community newsletter

"I work up to 15 hours a week as a volunteer worker at the Eaglehawk Community House. I like working on the newsletter as it creates more opportunities for communication within the community. It tells us what's going on with Neighbourhood Renewal and in our neighbourhood. The newsletter is delivered with the Bendigo weekly newspaper every two months and I know many people read it. Working on the newsletter has provided me with lots of networks here. I like being able to help others and lead others in the right direction. I have made many friendships and learnt many new skills which have given me confidence in my life that I never had."
Melissa

Eaglehawk Cultural Festival

"We've been really proud of the Eaglehawk Cultural Festival, which the community helped to organise, and then we've held each year since 2005. Up to 600 people attended the 2007 event. Each year there is huge range of activities for the whole family to participate in and be entertained. The organising committee was supported by so many groups and organisations from around Bendigo. We formed a partnership with Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts Festival in 2008 to ensure we keep on going beyond 2010. The Cultural Festival has been driven by the Eaglehawk Neighbourhood Renewal community and we will continue to manage and organise the festival."
Denise

Other successes

- Launching Pad Website established
- Bright Street Community Arts Project where an artist was employed to work with local residents in the design, construction and installation of three cone-shaped sculptures at the Bright Street Community Park
- Resident Community Worker Partnership between Bendigo Access Employment, St Luke's, Long Gully Neighbourhood Centre and Bendigo Community Health Services to offer a 12 month traineeship to undertake a Cert II in Community Services
- Family Fun Days established
- Community Cricket in Oswald Street established



HOUSING AND THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Objective: to improve run down housing, degraded physical environments and a lack of good quality accessible infrastructure.

“The story of NR is about people and how they see their area improving and how they experience the changes in others, themselves and their area in general, particularly improvement in their streets.” Brian

The pleasure that people feel for both their homes and their streets when they are both well-appointed and cared for will more often than not extend into their personal sense of happiness.

The residents of Eaglehawk could see that well-functioning homes and neighbourhoods supported their efforts to have a better place to live and they were ready to work hard to achieve this through Neighbourhood Renewal. Results have shown that 93 per cent of people now accept public housing offers in the neighbourhood exceeding the State average and vacancy rates are lower than the State average.

The future is about increasing residents' satisfaction levels with their house or unit and building a more positive view of the physical environment by residents.



Jobs Gully Natural Features Reserve

“This part of the local area had become really rundown and neglected before Neighbourhood Renewal started. It made me sad because I felt that if we could get it right it was such a nice place to visit.

“We felt something was happening when Parks Vic constructed a fence around the perimeter of the reserve to prevent trail bike riders spoiling residents' quiet enjoyment of the reserve. Weeds were removed and 2500 native plant species were supplied by Sandhurst Nurseries. Planting started with a coordinated community planting group of about 20 people who worked really hard to restore the area. Signs have been erected to inform visitors to the reserve about natural vegetation species.

“A gravel walking track has been prepared and a walk bridge has been constructed. Recently, The Friends of Jobs Gully Reserve group have got back together to preserve the reserve on an ongoing basis. And the police have said they will monitor the area to keep it in good condition.” Lindsay



Fencing upgrades and housing refurbishments undertaken

“As a part of the housing works, residents were given new fences and some old buildings were knocked down in Truscott Avenue. I really felt that progress began when this all started, and the quality fences started to improve people's sense of safety, privacy and pride about their homes and gardens. Local people got employed on the fencing work so new skills were learned and retained too.

“Many houses were renovated by painting, new kitchens and bathrooms were added lifting peoples spirits and giving people more pride because the houses looked and felt much better. When the inside of your house looks nice it makes you feel better.” Amelia



California Gully Reserve

The City of Greater Bendigo undertook improvement works at California Gully. These involved the removal of the fence which surrounded the site, removal of a dilapidated shed, signage and goal posts replaced, minor adjustments to the building and also allocated \$35,000 to construct a children's play space. Help was sought from the Golden Gully Cricket Club which fully funded the insertion of concrete cricket pitch. California Gully Clubroom extension works are planned for the clubrooms including kiosk, toilets, meeting room and veranda/shade area, play space and cricket nets.

Other successes

- Street landscaping where the City of Greater Bendigo undertook an extensive nature strip planting program
- Bus stop in Eaglehawk Road was replaced by VicRoads because it had poor disabled and pram access



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Objective: to transform health inequalities and reduce the burden of disease.

“Just getting to know and being able to talk to a health professional has given us enormous confidence in dealing with our health and emotional issues.” Janet

The physical and mental health of a community determines to a large degree the happiness of its residents. The residents of Eaglehawk and Long Gully, in partnership with local and State governments and local agencies, are working together to improve access to local health services and to target programs for residents.

The aim in the future is to identify a list of priority health issues for the neighbourhood and including these in the Community Plan and improving relations with relevant health providers.

Menshed (and Tool Library)

“After the committee found the funds to adapt the existing shed at the Bright Street Enterprise Hub into the Eaglehawk Menshed blokes around the neighbourhood had somewhere to go and do stuff. It was pretty much the shed of our dreams and made blokes who had little to do feel they belonged again. It’s important for men to feel they have a purpose in life and have a chance to contribute otherwise it’s really soul destroying to have nothing to do in life.

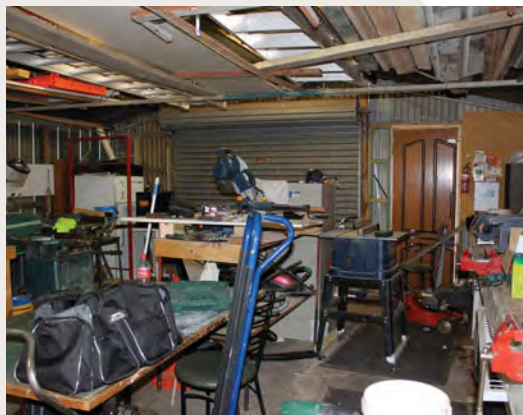
“Then we got the funding to employ a part time coordinator and undertook a feasibility study to develop a business plan for a social enterprise. This became the Tool Library.

“The Tool Library is run by volunteers and provides tools to the local community on a low cost basis to lift pride in the neighbourhood. We purchased tools like lawn mowers, whipper snippers, drills and bits. Being a place where men come to get tools means we get to talk shop, exchange ideas and help each other out.” Neil

Wise Older Women (WOW)

When the neighbourhood needs a lift of comedy, break dancing rappers or performers extraordinaire then call Wise Older Women (WOW). The WOW performing group consists of 40 older (and wiser!) women who had an idea to develop a circus of fun. The City of Greater Bendigo Community Grants Program funded the initiative.

“We just wanted to show the neighbourhood, and the world, that age doesn’t matter when you’re prepared to give something a go. The group is high-energy and loads of fun, and we think we put a smile on the faces of people when they see a bunch of grannies strut their stuff. The young people of the area really get into our rap routine and we feel we’re making new connections and relationships.” Pat



Hands on Health

Local professional health workers (i.e counsellors, masseurs, chiropractors) donate their services free of charge monthly to residents at the Bright Street Enterprise Hub. This program supports the strategy to promote health and wellbeing in Eaglehawk.

Positive Body Image

Funded by the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), this ten week 'body image' program for young males and females aged 12 to 18 commenced in June 2009 and was a great success in advising young people on healthy nutrition and how to avoid the adverse pressures associated with the often false and misleading images of womanhood portrayed in advertising and modelling magazines.



Other successes

- Sustainability Street is a three year community strengthening project with a focus on ecological sustainability
- Cervical Cancer Awareness Program is a social marketing campaign to increase the number of young women who take up the free vaccination
- Maternal and Child Health Program enhanced
- Community kitchens at the Hub
- Phoenix Mental Health Support Group
- Wellbeing and Health Group
- Get Active Program for women over 50 engaging in health and wellbeing activities
- Colgate Dental Hygiene Packs where 550 junior toothbrush packs were distributed through the Neighbourhood Centre and the Maternal and Child Health Service
- Story Time Playgroup for young mums to focus on early literacy
- Weekly music group for young people at the Bright Street Enterprise Hub



EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Objective: to reverse poor educational attainment, high rates of unemployment and low levels of economic activity.

“I have seen people’s skills and capacity develop. I have seen many changes in people’s personal development. So many opportunities have been unearthed during the Neighbourhood Renewal process because people have found out what they can do and what they are capable of. For many residents, knowledge has become power.” Janet

Unemployment levels had increased, training opportunities had shrunk and education retention rates had fallen in Eaglehawk before Neighbourhood Renewal arrived. Changing this situation has been an essential focus of Neighbourhood Renewal.

Local school-community partnerships that achieve sustained improvement in student participation in education and training have been embraced. Absenteeism in primary and secondary schools has declined significantly and numeracy and literacy skills are on the rise since Neighbourhood Renewal began.

More than 140 jobs have been created in Eaglehawk and Long Gully and significant improvements have been seen in training services that provide a transition to paid employment. The employment rate now exceeds the State average, unemployment has decreased faster than the State average and the quality and availability of local employment services have increased. Sixty five per cent of residents believe there are more education and training opportunities and 42 per cent of people believe there are more job opportunities.

Future plans involve improving Year 12 completion rates and arresting and reducing the widening gap for average household income.

Bright Street Enterprise Hub

The Bright Street Enterprise Hub is providing vocational training opportunities in hospitality and retail. Twenty six jobs including traineeships have been created to date.

“My job at the shop came about by Neighbourhood Renewal setting up the Hub. I got the job through the Kids’ Hub Club. I make coffees and prepare food for the customers that come in from the area. I also do catering for larger groups of people now. I’ve received a chance to learn how to run a shop and built up my skills for dealing with people and money – the job has given me a Cert II in Hospitality. It’s made me more confident as a person and has made me believe that I can achieve whatever I set out to do in life. For example, the job has helped me with the confidence to finish Year 10.” Zachary

Kids’ Hub Club

Funding was secured through the City of Greater Bendigo, and additional funding was received through Launching Pad to provide programs once a week for 23 students with a focus on literacy and numeracy. The Kids’ Hub Club provides a place for young people to come in after school and finish their homework if the situation at home is not favorable for study. Free internet access is available at a bank of computers located in an annex of the Hub, where young people can research their homework or just enjoy a quiet moment alone.



Other training and employment successes

- A pathway to employment and personal achievement is provided through a range of traineeships, courses and programs. Twelve residents from across Eaglehawk and Long Gully have undergone training in Cert II Childcare Services in order to gain employment in family day care or at a childcare centre
- Mum's on The Move is a course run for young mothers to build self-esteem and provide pathways to employment. Many of these women had left school before Year 10 and some had never had paid employment. It has been a good success with all the women gaining confidence and developing new skills
- Several leadership courses have been rolled out under renewal that provides residents with information, referral and leadership skills. Several participants have undertaken further training
- WORKS – is a youth pathways program that has aimed to case manage twenty 16-22 year olds into employment or training. Participants engage in a range of activities from personal development, using computers, improving literacy and numeracy. Results have been encouraging with most of the young people finding jobs or re-engaging with mainstream education
- School Engagement Project has worked with families and students to keep students in school



CRIME AND SAFETY

Objective: to tackle high crime rates, a lack of engagement with police, and unsafe degraded environments.

“I know all my neighbours now and I’ve found out that they’re friendly. A lot of them I didn’t know at all before renewal started.” John (Year 9 student)

So much work has been done to improve safety and the results show progress is being made: crime against property is better than the State average; crime against people is now at the same rate as the rest of the State; overall crime has decreased by 39 per cent almost double the State figure.

Thirty one per cent of residents say the neighbourhood is a safer place to live so people are now more willing to get involved in community life.



Neighbourhood Watch

“It’s fair to say that we had people living in the area who would not leave their homes for more than 20 minutes at a time for fear of damage being done to their property. Their children didn’t feel safe playing in their own yards and if we had events in the local park, someone had to clean up the mess beforehand.

“Neighbourhood Watch has helped to reduce crime in the area because the residents have started looking out for each other and the police are listening to us and our concerns. We’ve got a really good relationship going on now.” Bev

Community Safety Day

This was a fun and informative day held in the Bright Street Park for both Eaglehawk and Long Gully communities, with safety services providing information to the public and entertainment for the children.

The Safety Day provided a positive focus to engage local residents and strengthen communities in discussions with safety providers about what safety concerns mattered to them. The day was an excellent way to inform and involve local people and engage with organisations such as Victoria Police and Fire Brigade. In the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of a day in the park, dialogue between residents and safety service providers enabled them to identify key issues, discuss priorities, and plan future directions for improving community outcomes.

Crime and Safety Information Sessions

Monthly sessions by a Crime Prevention Officer have been held in both Eaglehawk and Long Gully since April 2009. The project is aimed at residents to inform them about the variety of strategies and techniques they can use to lessen crime and anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood.

Other successes

- Community Safety Audit completed by residents
- Developed Incident Report Form guided by Victoria Police

ACCESS TO SERVICES AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS

Objective: to improve access to services and government responsiveness.

“Neighbourhood Renewal has proven that agencies having a human face, listening to the communities needs and working within the communities worked better than non-personal contact. It has built trust in government agencies that are located in the two communities.” Denise W

Before the arrival of Neighbourhood Renewal, residents in Eaglehawk had seen a steady decline in the maintenance of local infrastructure, local health and other services drift away and support mechanisms evaporate. This situation led to a feeling of being disenfranchised by local and State governments, where residents of Eaglehawk felt unsupported.

Neighbourhood Renewal brought new hope and new alliances with government bodies. It introduced a joined-up, place-based approach embedded in the way services, State and local governments worked in the area. For the first time in years, residents became engaged and empowered to influence government priority setting, service delivery and resource allocation. The results show that 68 per cent of local residents believe the quality and availability of services has improved since Neighbourhood Renewal.

Neighbourhood Renewal successes

- The Welfare to Work Forums are information sessions for residents held by Welfare Rights Unit on legislative changes that will affect welfare recipients
- The Community Access Project was initiated by residents to provide local access to services, such as maternal and child health, family and children's services, advocacy and rights, mental health, women's health, therapists and counseling
- Maintaining a school holiday program for primary school aged children, four times per year
- 'Money Minded' Short Course is an eight week course on money matters, budgeting, contracts and finances that commenced in April 2009, facilitated by a Financial Counselor
- 'Communities for Children' is a four year project to improve health and wellbeing of 0-5 year olds, across five areas of Bendigo (including Long Gully and Eaglehawk). Activities include: Mother Goose Program, which is a mother/child bonding program (15 families); Music N Stuff (10 families) and; Community Kitchen (5 families)
- Neighbourhood Party Trailer provides a trailer fitted with an esky, BBQ, chairs, tables and gazebo as a mobile party package

EAGLEHAWK AND LONG GULLY 'OUR PLAN, OUR FUTURE 2010-2012'

"The future starts right now." Kathryn

Eight years after the Eaglehawk and Long Gully Neighbourhood Renewal projects started, residents are looking to write the next chapter in their story.

'Our Plan, Our Future 2010-2012' is the vision for our community which identifies any unfinished projects from earlier plans and also includes new actions that have been identified as new priorities by the community.

Key priorities for the next two years will include:

- Safety and Community Engagement
- Community Assets and Local Plans
- Healthy People Healthy Communities
- Education, Employment and Training

Tributes must go to the City of Greater Bendigo for the invaluable role it has played (and will continue to play) in the implementation of the government's Mainstreaming strategy, which aims to sustain the benefits of Neighbourhood Renewal by embedding the three key elements of Neighbourhood Renewal - joined up government, place management and community governance - into the planning and funding processes of local government.

Mainstreaming has meant a major shift for Neighbourhood Renewal during the past 18 months as Council facilitated the process (with Neighbourhood Renewal support). The Mainstreaming Plan 2009 was developed in consultation with local agencies and community members; a governance structure was established and the Mainstreaming Steering Committee was formed.

Decision making on identifying key priority areas for future investment will be the responsibility of the City of Greater Bendigo and linked to local requirements and priorities. This will ensure that stronger bonds develop between the Neighbourhood Renewal community, agencies, local and State governments as everyone works toward reducing the gap between disadvantaged communities and the rest of the State.

The Eaglehawk and Long Gully Mainstreaming Steering Committee thank everyone who has participated in Neighbourhood Renewal and invites everyone in the community to get involved in the future.

"The Mainstreaming Plan 2009 which has been overseen by the Steering Committee makes us feel confident about the future. As the old saying goes, those who don't have a plan, plan to fail." Bev

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

The journey of Neighbourhood Renewal has been a long one and so much of lasting value has been learned along the way. New friendships have been forged, openness and hope nurtured in the community, further education and employment opportunities presented, trust in government improved, and confidence in a better future has been established.

The people best placed to express how they feel about Neighbourhood Renewal are the residents of Eaglehawk and Long Gully.

“Neighbourhood Renewal has been very positive for my community. The various projects and changes to our area like new fences and better street lighting have given people pride in their area and made us feel more secure.

“Communication between the community and government and service providers has been greatly improved and has helped people like me to get involved. Personally I was a very shy person. Only in the last three years have I found the confidence to speak up and my confidence is growing. I have had the opportunity to join groups which has improved my confidence year by year. I am learning new things all of the time and prepared to take opportunities when they come along. I would say to people get involved! I am always encouraging people to spread the word about Neighbourhood Renewal, what it is and what it can offer your community.” Margaret

“We have started building new relationships and increasing awareness within the local government areas. We have increased pride in our communities. We want to be known in our own right. We have learned to be patient with government and understand that their ways are sometimes slow but they do get across the line.” Karen

“Neighbourhood Renewal has been very positive for my community. The various projects and changes to our area like new fences and better street lighting have given people pride in their area and made us feel more secure.

“We have started meeting new people who we wouldn’t have had the opportunity to mix with before and forming alliances with them. As a community we have been supported by Neighbourhood Renewal to speak up, learn new skills, be confident of ourselves, and go hard at the future.” Carol

For information on this report or
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Or visit the website:
www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au