

Community building policy

Building community capacity is the one of the key foundations for the sustainable, long-term growth of North Coast Community Housing (NCCH).

The combined influence of NCCH's commitment, resources and skills will be deployed to further build on community strengths, address problems and present opportunities for our clients to improve their lives.

Our commitment

NCCH will ensure that its commitment to the ongoing involvement in and the building of its communities (of interest, culture or geography) will be recognised through:

- The stated aims of the organisation, including its Constitution, Rules and strategic planning processes and documents;
- Developing relevant policies and procedures, across all areas of NCCH's tenancy management responsibilities, that embed the principles of community engagement and involvement;
- Position descriptions for relevant staff including objectives relating to community involvement and the establishment of links with key community stakeholders and ensuring that staff performance review processes recognise achievements in this area; and
- Training and development plans for staff including knowledge and skills development in areas such as client referrals, building community networks, local community development activities, etc.
- Regularly consulting with the community on our direction, goals, policies and in reviewing our performance
- Participating in and developing strategies that promote the positive outcomes being achieved by social housing providers and local community service agencies.

NCCH will recognise that it does not have to control or own every initiative or involvement, but may often play a smaller supportive role, as to how each activity may fit with our expertise or our other areas of relative priority.

Advocacy and contribution to the development of the social housing sector

NCCH will actively participate in the development of social housing and social housing policy at Local, State and Federal levels.

Opportunities to be utilised will include:

- Ensuring that NCCH use its position to maximize the acquisition of social housing assets for the north coast region of NSW through competitive tendering for social housing assets and through its financing of social housing property developments
- Making contributions to local area housing-related forums as convened by stakeholders

- Being actively engaged in co-operation with other local housing providers and other stakeholders in specific programs such as property transfers, community renewal strategies, etc.
- Making contributions to NSW Federation of Housing Associations ("the Federation") seminars and conferences and working with the Federation on project working parties, delegations and special project steering committees
- Using opportunities to remain up-to-date with current social housing developments, such as ensuring NCCH receives regular correspondence from groups with broader housing interests (Shelter NSW, National Community Housing Forum, etc) and attendance at housing information forums and conferences
- using unique Company skills and resources to sponsor special housing projects, pilots, community development initiatives and/or policy development projects
- provision of direct advice and assistance to other community housing providers

Community involvement and planning

NCCH, as a key member of the local non-profit sector, will participate in and contribute to the continued development of communities throughout the region. Wherever possible, contributions will include:

- participation in local community service planning projects
- attendance at local community agency network meetings in order to provide social housing information, develop an understanding of current trends or issues being experienced in our communities and to begin to foster collaborations with other agencies on mutually beneficial initiatives;
- provision of advice and assistance to other groups, where requested, eg housing policy, organisational management, tenancy and housing issues
- where appropriate, support the development of housing and housing-related projects by other community agencies
- seek the involvement of community agencies through the offer of them undertaking funded projects and consultancies on behalf of NCCH
- participate in the planning processes of other organisations

As part of its annual planning processes, NCCH will develop a plan for its work in community engagement and will document all activities and achievements.

Community development and tenant involvement

NCCH recognises that it has a unique opportunity for building community capacity through its commitment to tenant involvement, in relation to those tenants residing in medium-density housing ("complexes") or in areas with a generally higher concentration of social housing properties.

Opportunities include (but are not limited to):

Community building

- Involving tenants in the physical improvement of their homes or the complex of dwellings managed by NCCH
- Supporting the establishment of social groups in the larger complexes order to break down isolation and to foster tenant involvement
- Working with and supporting tenant groups to advocate for local area quality of life improvements, eg better availability of community services, improved public transportation services, improved neighbourhood safety, etc.
- Assisting tenants with access to local employment, training and educational opportunities

Annual planning

NCCH will develop an annual Community Projects Plan (CPP), This plan will outline a range of projects that seek to improve tenants lives and strengthen our communities.

The Plan will seek to deliver on the commitments and policies outlines in this framework. In particular, the projects will seek to deliver:

- Tenancies and marginalised (or vulnerable) neighbourhoods functioning in a more sustainable manner
- Quality of life outcomes for communities of interest, e.g. older people, Aboriginal tenants, etc,
- A reduction in social isolation by assisting tenants to become more connected to their communities
- An increase in the employability of tenants through increased access to education, training and employment opportunities;
- Support for families to stay together;
- An increase in the overall health and wellbeing of tenants
- Assist social housing tenants to enter pathways to more independent and suitable housing options

Use of Company Policies

NCCH will freely distribute copies of its policies and procedures to other non-profit organisations providing that source acknowledgment is given by any group reprinting all or parts of these policies.

INFORMATION	
Title	Community Building Policy Statement
Section	Housing Services
National Regulatory Code Evidence Guideline	Performance Outcome 3: Community engagement
National Community Housing Standard	Standard 4.2 Building community capacity
Last review	30 September 2015
Next review	30 September 2017
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