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Enabling Communities: from the heart of the community

Trish Curtis, Network Coordinator
Upper Murray Regional Neighbourhood House Network



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Today's presentation will cover:

- Neighbourhood House Networks
- Neighbourhood Houses
- The *Enabling Communities* project and how it intersects with the conference theme



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The Network provides:

- PD and networking
- Support for program development
- Governance and operational support
- Advocacy
- Partnership development
- Projects



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What is a Neighbourhood House?

- 400+ spread across Victoria
- Underpinned by sector community development principles
- Diverse range of responsive and dynamic programs, services and projects
- Often working with people who are hard to reach

Emergency food

Literacy & numeracy training

Social events

Exercise programs

Committees & boards of governance

Community meals

Social enterprises

Computer training and support

Computer and internet access

Volunteer support and training

Accredited training

Auspicing community groups

Health and wellbeing programs

Centrelink agencies

Art and craft programs

Childcare and playgroups

After school programs

Enabling Communities: from the heart of the community

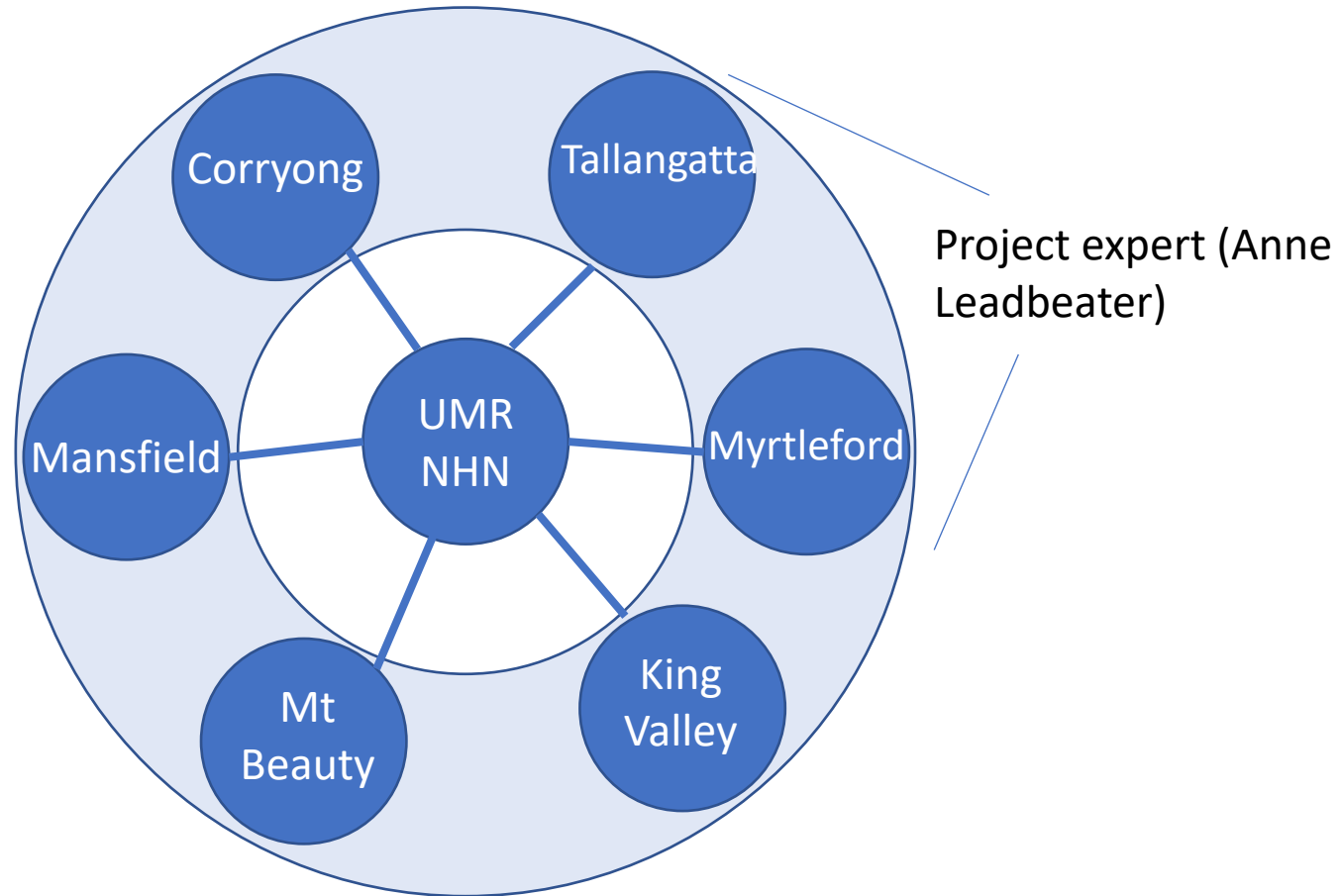
- Victorian Government Mental Health & Wellbeing Bushfire Response Package
- Two year funding
- Model based on previous work
- Staged approach



Project aims:

- Empowering six communities – community led, co-designed
- Building the capacity of participating neighbourhood houses
- Supporting neighbourhood houses to be included in emergency planning

Enabling Communities project



Staged approach:

- Stage 1 – understanding community needs
- Stage 2 – work with the community to develop locally responsive initiatives; develop Recovery Action Plans

Stage 1:

- Community surveys
- Community meetings
- Agency and community workshops
- Community Recovery Committees
- Partnerships
- Agency meetings
- Provision of essential services

Stage 2:

- Corryong Neighbourhood Centre - Connecting young people for fun; youth engagement in recovery
- King Valley Learning Exchange - Food security; access to equipment and supplies; train volunteers to assist in emergencies
- Tallangatta Neighbourhood House – Community events, working with primary/secondary school students on preparedness
- Mansfield Adult and Community Education (MACE) - Community profiling; facilitating communication and collaboration between emergency services and other stakeholders; preparedness communications to community members
- Myrtleford Neighbourhood Centre - Community mapping; development of community action plan for emergencies
- Community Awareness and Preparedness – Mt Beauty Neighbourhood Centre
- Development of Recovery Action Plans - all



Mt Beauty Neighbourhood Centre (MBNC)

Stage 1:

- Lots of leg work!
- Community Resilience workshops – Red Cross
- Community market
- Community radio

Stage 2:

- Formation of the Keep Calm Committee (subcommittee of MBNC)
- Community radio
- Volunteers to assist vulnerable community members
- Fire planning
- Community Resilience Group



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Impact on the Network

- Strategic direction
- New partnerships and relationships
- Greater recognition and understanding of the role of neighbourhood houses



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Challenges

- COVID ☹️ - impact of physical and social distancing; diversion of resources and focus
- Staffing
- Engaging with new organisations
- Navigating and prioritising all the recovery activity



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Evaluation

- Project model
- Project impact – network and community levels



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Conclusions

- Making resilience everyone's business
- Asking what community needs - co-design and community led
- Positioning and resourcing the neighbourhood house



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Thank you!

Trish Curtis, Network Coordinator

Email: umrnhn@bigpond.com

Mobile: 0488 572225



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