

Local action plan 2022-2023

Paving the Way Forward
Flemington



Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of traditional owners

We are proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the traditional owners of the land on which the Flemington public housing estate stands.

We offer our deepest respect to elders – past, present and emerging.

Acknowledgement of the Flemington public housing community

It has been a great privilege for the Paving the Way Forward team to work closely with so many residents in the Flemington public housing community.

Their courage, knowledge and strength is inspiring.
This work would not have been possible without them.

We extend our gratitude to residents for their willingness and trust in sharing the personal experiences and ideas that have been so important to the success of this work.

Paving the Way Forward acknowledges the longstanding commitment of the many community- and resident-led organisations working alongside residents that will persevere long after this plan is implemented.

Contents

Summary	5	Appendix 1: Frequently asked questions	24
Flemington local action plan 2022-23 overview	6	Appendix 2: 2021 PTWF community-led grant recipients	26
Our community	8	Appendix 3: Empowered renter decision-making models	29
How residents have shaped the plan	10	Appendix 4: Flemington local action plan progress report	30
Focus areas	12		
1. Communication and participation	12		
2. Maintenance and amenity	14		
3. Employment and education	16		
4. Safety, health and wellbeing	18		
5. Community connection and spaces	20		
How the plan will be implemented	22		
Moving forward	23		



Flemington Community Eid Festival, 2022. Photo by Kushitic Productions.

Summary

'It doesn't matter where you're from, you have a community at Flemington. It doesn't matter your religion, cultural background or language, it's your community, it's your home.'

– Rahma, Flemington estate resident

The Flemington public housing estate is 3 km from Melbourne's CBD. It is home to almost 1,500 people from diverse cultural backgrounds. There is a strong sense of community connectedness, mutual support and pride. But the community faces complex challenges to do with unemployment, accessing services and maintenance issues in their homes and on the estate. There is a rich history of community activism at the Flemington estate. But residents have often been left out of decision making about their homes, services and neighbourhood.

In 2021 the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department) set up the Paving the Way Forward (PTWF) initiative. The purpose of the program was to:

- develop a new way of working with residents at the Flemington and North Melbourne public housing estates
- solve local issues
- build on local strengths.

Over the past year, residents and the PTWF team have worked together to develop the *Flemington local action plan 2022–23*.

Residents raised their ideas and shared their experiences. They took part in pop-up coffee conversations, co-design workshops, focus groups and community events. The members of the Flemington Resident Action Group played a vital role in developing solutions and prioritising actions. Many resident leaders also put their ideas into action through the PTWF community grants program (refer to Appendix 2).

The department partnered with cohealth, a not-for-profit community health organisation. Over the last 12 months, cohealth have helped to develop and roll out the plan. In addition, the contribution of community organisations, service providers and local councils has been invaluable. Their partnership in this work shows the power of trust-building and creating a space to share ideas.

This plan transforms the needs, ideas and goals of residents into **five focus areas** and **63 achievable actions**.

These will have positive and lasting effects through **partnerships, targeted funding** and **promotion**. Through a range of services, activities and events, some actions started rolling out in January 2022. Most actions should be in place by mid-2023, and others soon after. Together, the actions in this plan will have a sustained impact by:

- building community capacity
- supporting jobs for residents and self-determination
- developing lasting local partnerships.

The plan highlights the collective voices of the Flemington public housing estate. It conveys the change residents want to see and their vision for the future. It explains immediate-term actions to achieve this vision and allow this community to keep thriving.

Flemington local action plan 2022-23 overview

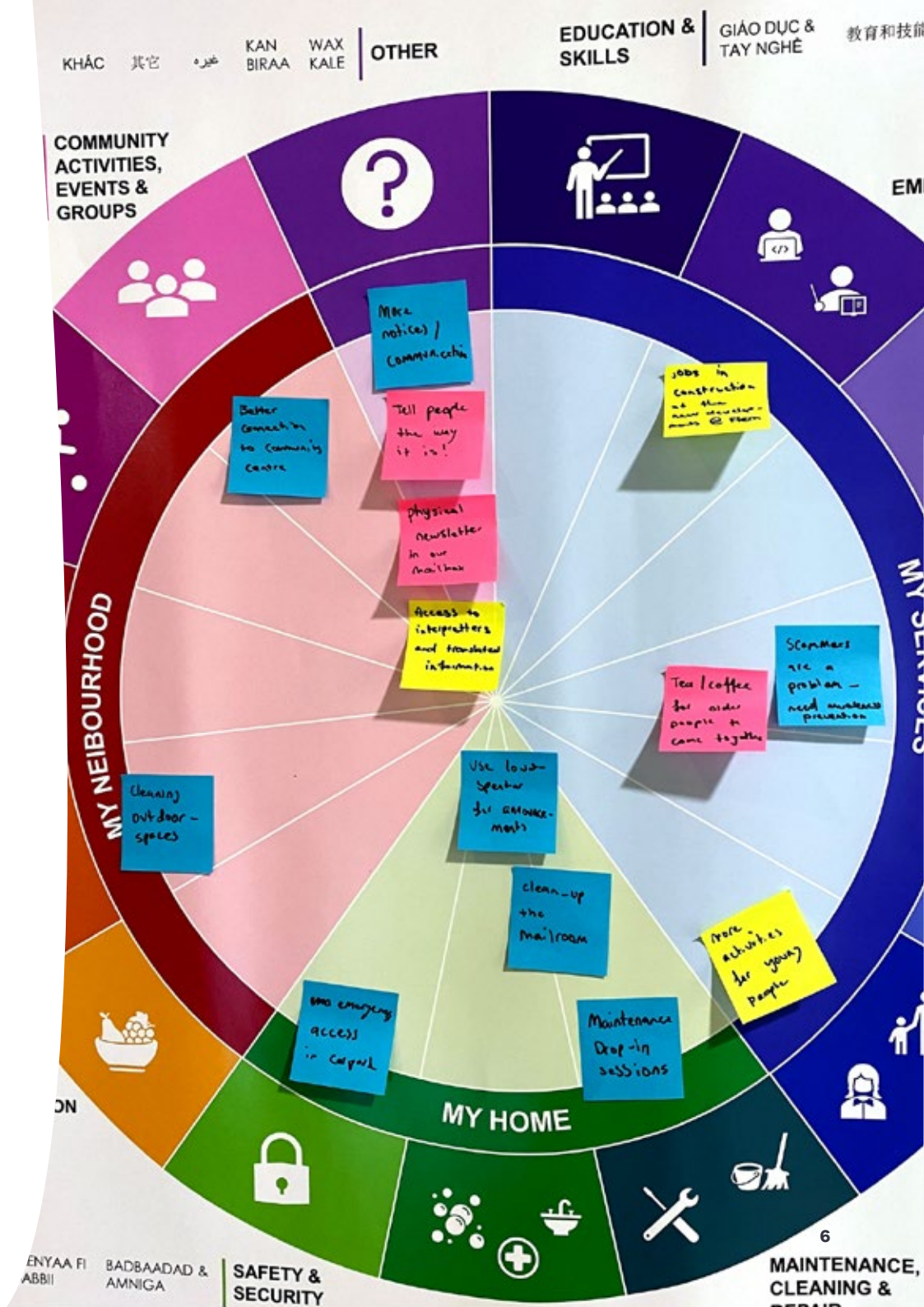
This plan transforms the needs, ideas and goals of residents into



The actions set out in this plan are based on community feedback from 2021-22.

Under each focus area, the plan outlines:

- **What we heard** from residents about the issues they experience
- **What residents want** to see change, their ideas and aspirations
- **What we will achieve** in this focus area
- **What we will do** to address these aspirations, needs and issues. Many of these ideas have been co-developed with residents, and are being delivered in partnership with residents, community organisations, the local council and other partners.



Local actions

- Establish resident action group
- Involvement in designing resident decision-making models
- Education sessions on how government works
- New communication channels
- Promote housing officer roles
- Community grants, leadership and governance training
- Local council participation
- Youth leadership development
- Consultation between residents and stakeholders
- Youth podcasting
- Feedback and suggestion box

Communication and participation

Our goal

- Residents are more confident to take part in decision making
- Residents are involved in the key decisions that affect their home, neighbourhood and services
- Residents take part in and own solutions for the issues they see as the most pressing

Maintenance and amenity

Our goal

- Residents know more about tenancy and neighbourhood management
- Property and tenancy management responds to residents' needs

Local actions

- Maintenance and housing education series
- Welcome pack for new renters
- Regular estate walk-arounds
- Simplify housing information
- Secure carparking system
- Abandoned vehicle removal
- Improve adherence to parking rules
- Install bins and remove litter
- Housing and renters conference
- Community safety audit
- Improve lighting and safety
- Improve digital experience for maintenance requests

Local actions

- Improve community room access
- Community facilities upgrades
- Upgrade playgrounds near 120 Racecourse Road
- Outdoor seating and shade
- Improve basketball court
- Youth hub
- Support resident creativity
- Secure bike parking
- Promote multicultural and other community grants
- PTWF community grants program
- Community celebration days
- Intergenerational storytelling
- Food security project
- Community art
- Community group networking
- Community outings
- Kids cooking classes

Community connection and spaces

Our goal

- Shared spaces are better managed to the benefit of residents
- Residents build social and community connections, creating stronger communities



Safety, health and wellbeing

Our goal

- There is better communication between services
- Residents and services work together to meet the needs of residents
- Residents can get the right service at the right time

Local actions

- Health outreach programs
- Mental health program
- Health and wellbeing activities
- Health information sessions
- Support for older people
- Access to sports programs for kids
- Map and promote local services
- Services fair
- Women's health and safety awareness
- Culturally appropriate swimming
- Community safety forum
- Legal education and support
- Youth hub and programs for youth
- After-school activities for children
- Toddler playgroup
- Support for parents
- Financial literacy workshops

Employment and education

Our goal

- Residents can more easily get the support they need to find work and training
- Residents have access to more job opportunities in the local area that match their career goals, available hours, accessibility and cultural needs

Local actions

- Engage, map and identify employment priorities
- Small business and entrepreneurship support
- Develop and implement a targeted employment plan
- Promote employment access
- Support employment initiatives for residents
- Help young people find their first job

Our community

The Flemington public housing estate is home to a diverse multicultural community who live within the four high-rise towers. There are almost 1,500 people living across the 716 properties in the Flemington estate.

We are diverse

Almost 60 per cent of the residents come from culturally diverse backgrounds. Ethiopia, Somalia and Vietnam are the top three countries of birth after Australia.

We are home to both young and old

About a third (33 per cent) of all households on the Flemington estate include children or young people. About 15 per cent of households include at least one person who is over the age of 65.

Many of us have lived here for a long time

Over half (57 per cent) of all residents have lived in the Flemington estate for six or more years.

We are close to many services and public transport

The Flemington estate is 3 km from the CBD, close to several health and community services. Public transport is easily accessible from the estate.



What residents say ...



'You're never alone in Flemington. There's a lot of love and kindness. We encourage each other. If you have a problem, people will ask you if you need help.'

'Flemington is a place of peace. Everyone is like a family. I don't feel like a migrant when I am in Flemington. We are all united regardless of our cultural background and we do our best to support each other.'



'Flemington residents are all committed to making a better life for themselves by focusing on their education or employment.'



How residents have shaped the plan

The plan has been developed with residents and the community. More than 100 Flemington residents have taken part. PTWF strove to hear from as many residents as possible, offering support to help residents take part and organising a range of activities.

Community conversations and events



PTWF has hosted many community conversations, focus groups and events. These events included community BBQs, online forums, in-person focus groups and pop-up conversations in the foyers of each building. These events aimed to discuss the strengths, needs and opportunities of the residents. The feedback and ideas gathered through these activities helped shape the plan.

Resident action groups

More than 70 residents have taken part in PTWF resident action groups. The groups are led by residents, local community partners and the PTWF team.

Between October 2021 and January 2022, there were five groups, each focusing on an opportunity area. These opportunity areas were highlighted through community engagement in early 2021.

They were:

- COVID Response
- Communications
- Maintenance
- Community Spaces
- Flemington Redevelopment and Carpark.

Both Flemington and North Melbourne residents participated in these groups.



In March 2022, the Flemington Resident Action Group was established. This group includes more than 30 dedicated residents who are supporting this plan, building on the ideas and initiatives developed by the 2021 resident action groups.

The Flemington Resident Action Group will continue to meet monthly until June 2023. PTWF will report to this group on progress against this plan.

Youth workshops



In March and April 2022, PTWF hosted two workshops with young people from the Flemington estate. Thirty residents aged between 15 and 28 took part in these workshops. The groups were split by gender – one workshop for males and one for females. Participants shared their views on key issues affecting them and other young people on the estate. The young people's views have shaped the priorities for the PTWF program. Many of their ideas have been included in this plan.

Employment co-design workshops



In April and May 2022, 30 employment stakeholders took part in three co-design workshops. This group included state and local government representatives, community-led organisations and public housing residents. These workshops helped inform a shared vision and strategy to improve job opportunities for residents. This vision and strategy are summarised under the 'Employment and education' focus area in this plan.

Community grants

In July 2021, PTWF invited community organisations, groups and residents to apply for grants to deliver projects that help create healthy, happy neighbourhoods. Twenty-six community-led projects were funded, including:

- \$10,000 for a pop-up after-school play program to help children recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and remote learning
- \$4,750 for the Resident Skills Development Project to offer residents nationally recognised training, credentials and valuable work experience
- \$4,400 for a digital literacy course for refugee and asylum seeker women to provide students with practical skills to confidently live, learn and work.

These grants allowed community members to put their ideas into action and start to deliver activities that align with the focus areas in the plan. A full list of the awarded grants is included in Appendix 2.





Focus areas

1. Communication and participation

What we heard



'There is a lack of transparency and trust between residents and the department.'

'We need more opportunities to express what we want and need and participate in decision making.'

'A barrier to good communication is cultural differences and language. Sometimes even if there is an interpreter, there isn't respect and understanding.'

What residents want

- To be listened to, respected and heard
- More opportunities to be involved in decisions on their tenancies and communities
- Better communication between Homes Victoria and residents (concise, simple and available in multiple languages)
- More information available in community languages and better access to interpreters
- More opportunities to give feedback to the local housing office and Homes Victoria
- To build and develop community leadership and grant-writing skills
- Support to run community projects and turn ideas into actions
- Opportunities for young people and older people to have a voice
- A better relationship with their local council and state government departments
- Consultation opportunities into urban redevelopments near the estate
- Regular updates on how their feedback has been actioned

What we will achieve

- Residents are more confident to take part in decision making
- Residents are involved in the key decisions that affect their home, neighbourhood and services
- Residents take part in and own solutions for the issues they see as the most pressing

How we will do it

Local actions	What will be done
Establish resident action group	Establish a Flemington Resident Action Group in 2022 to follow on from the first series of action groups in 2021; this group will help develop and oversee the plan's rollout
Involvement in designing resident decision-making models	Flemington Resident Action Group's involvement in the statewide design of the 'empowered renters decision-making models' for Homes Victoria (refer to Appendix 3 for more)
Education session on how government works	Community education sessions to develop an understanding of how government works
New communication channels	Test different ways to communicate with residents such as SMS, new community notice boards, email newsletter and WhatsApp
Promote housing officer roles	Support targeted recruitment efforts to enable residents to be employed in housing officer and other roles in the department
Community grants, leadership and governance training	Training for individuals and community groups on how to start and run a community organisation and turn ideas into action
Local council participation	Facilitate opportunities for residents to engage with local government projects (e.g. new Flemington Community Hub)
Youth leadership development	Help young people to govern the new Flemington youth space and offer youth leadership development
Consultation between residents and stakeholders	Help organise community consultations between residents and others
Youth podcasting	Podcast training for young people
Feedback and suggestion box	Trial a feedback and suggestion box at the outreach office at 120 Racecourse Road



Who will do it:

Residents, PTWF, Flemington Resident Action Group, cohealth, resident- and community-led organisations, the department, Moonee Valley City Council, Homes Victoria, Moonee Valley Legal Service, training and education providers

Funding:

PTWF local action plan funding
 Co-contributions: community organisations and partners, other government funding, PTWF community grants, Moonee Valley City Council



2. Maintenance and amenity

What we heard



'There is a lack of accountability with cleaners – some don't do a good job.'

'I have made requests to have stuff fixed – no one has come yet ... I know it's hard because of lockdowns but I would like a timeframe.'

'Responses are inconsistent – when you are late on rent, communication is immediate, but if you ask about maintenance, you get no response.'

What residents want

- Faster responses to maintenance and repair requests and regular progress updates
- Better performance standards and accountability for contractors on the estate
- A safe and accessible car parking system
- A mobile app for maintenance requests
- Better cleaning on the estate
- To install bins and clean up the rubbish and litter around the estate
- Shorter Housing Call Centre wait times and clear escalation points
- A safety and accessibility audit
- Transparency on how decisions are made that affect them
- Removal of abandoned vehicles from the estate
- Better customer service and more trust with the local housing office
- To stop residents parking in the designated emergency services and disabled parking spaces
- Better lighting and security on the estate
- Better maintenance of trees and gardens
- To be able to communicate with the local housing office via SMS and WhatsApp
- To have appropriate heating and cooling and to understand the application process

What we will achieve

- Residents know more about tenancy and neighbourhood management
- Property and tenancy management responds to residents' needs

How we'll do it

Local actions	What will be done
Maintenance and housing education series	Hold an education series on property maintenance (including repairs) and other housing matters for residents
Welcome pack for new renters	Develop a new welcome pack for new residents moving into the estate
Regular estate walk-arounds	Organise regular estate walk-arounds with local housing office and residents
Simplify housing information	Simplify housing information and improve its readability
Secure carparking system	Help implement a secure carparking system to ensure the car park is renter only
Abandoned vehicle removal	Remove abandoned vehicles from the estate
Improve adherence to parking rules	Introduce strategies for following parking rules
Install bins and remove litter	Install new bins on the grounds and improve waste collection
Housing and renters conference	Trial a housing and renters conference with the local housing office, Homes Victoria and residents
Community safety audit	Undertake a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design assessment with residents
Improve lighting and safety	Improve lighting on the estate and implement other safety recommendations (e.g. trim bushes and trees, improve pathways and signage)
Improve digital experience for maintenance requests	Review the user experience to find ways to be more user-friendly and allow residents to view and follow up on their maintenance request progress Pilot the maintenance reporting app currently being developed



Who will do it:

Residents, PTWF, Flemington Resident Action Group, resident- and community-led organisations, the department, Homes Victoria, Victorian Public Tenants Association, Moonee Valley City Council, Victoria Police

Funding:

PTWF local action plan funding, other government funding, currently seeking possibilities



3. Employment and education

What we heard



'Coordination needs to be done to navigate this highly saturated market.'

'My aim is to help my daughter and my son learn more because education is very important to the people in the future.'

'I need to know there is support available to help me in preparing my application, especially if I am unclear what to do.'

What residents want

- Better coordination between the department, local job agencies, the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, the Department of Education and Training and targeted job services to maximise job opportunities for residents
- More understanding and awareness of education, training and employment systems
- Better job-readiness skills
- Job opportunities that match people's skills and career goals – qualifications and experience (including overseas) are considered more in eligibility criteria
- The ability to undertake job-specific education and training
- Better pathways into jobs including more (paid) work experience, networking and volunteer opportunities
- Support for small businesses and entrepreneurs
- More targeted support for young people, women, parents and people with disability
- More opportunities for residents to be employed by government agencies (in particular Homes Victoria)
- Strong relationships with local employers, particularly those roles that offer people their first job and often provide the foundation for a positive work pathway
- Appropriate evaluation of funded job programs to ensure they reflect the needs of residents, job opportunities and market conditions
- Changes to other services that support pathways to paid work – for example, childcare costs and hours that align more with employer expectations and the needs of residents, especially for women and parents

What we will achieve

- Residents have increased awareness and access to the support they need to find work and training
- Residents have access to more employment pathways and job opportunities in the local area which match their career aspirations, available hours, and cultural needs

How we'll do it

Local actions	What will be done
Engage, map and identify job priorities	Engage residents, local services, community groups, community leaders and state/local government to better understand the job needs and goals of residents Map jobs and skills services operating nearby, and identify priorities to deliver these as part of this local action plan
Small business and entrepreneurship support	Organise ways for current and aspiring business owners to get basic business skills and support with business processes
Develop and implement a targeted employment plan*	Develop and roll out a targeted employment plan, uniquely informed by and designed for residents to maximise opportunities for job and education pathways (refer to Appendix 1 – FAQs)
Promote job access	Promote and increase access to existing services and opportunities by hosting community events to build connections between residents and local services/employers, co-locating services or hosting drop-in sessions in places accessed by community Promote local job, skills and training opportunities through community channels
Support job initiatives for residents	Support job initiatives that are based on previous and future engagement Fill gaps in existing services and programs Expand existing programs with positive job and training outcomes for residents
Help young people find their first job	Implement First Jobs Project - a community-based program that is designed to help young people find their first job

* The Target Employment Plan will be informed by further engagement and will provide supplementary information and actions.



Who will do it:

Residents, PTWF, resident- and community-led organisations, the department, Homes Victoria, Moonee Valley City Council, City of Melbourne, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, Department of Education and Training, Victorian Skills Authority, training providers, Jobs Victoria, Flemington Works, local employers, industry and private sector stakeholders, Brotherhood of St Laurence

Funding:

PTWF local action plan funding, other government funding, PTWF community grants, targeted employment funds

Photo by Kushitic Productions



4. Safety, health and wellbeing

What we heard



'It's good when services meet you where you are, like the Health Concierges'

'A hub where you can find all the services on offer [would be helpful]. There's so much going on but there's no one place to go if you have issues.'

'I want to see more young people involved in sports and more equipment so that we can see more kids reach their potential. We see a lot of kids go down the wrong path so this could help keep them away from that.'

What residents want

- To be aware of the supports and services available to them
- Information on aged care services, carer supports and the NDIS
- More health and wellbeing activities on the estate
- Services located on the estate (for example, employment, housing, legal and family support)
- Culturally appropriate mental health support
- Access to affordable recreational facilities
- More activities for older people (for example, gentle exercise and social activities)
- Activities for parents to connect and support with challenging child and young people's behaviour
- After-school activities for children
- Intergenerational activities
- Activities for young people
- Culturally appropriate physical activities for women
- Legal help and advice
- Better relationships and connection with emergency services
- Women's-only swimming and culturally appropriate swimming lessons
- Financial and budgeting help
- Support for newly arrived refugees and migrants

What we will achieve

- There is better communication between services
- Residents and services work together to meet the needs of residents.
- Residents can get the right service at the right time

How we'll do it

Local actions	What will be done
Health outreach program	Organise medical and dental outreach programs on the estate
Mental health program	Design a culturally appropriate mental health program and connect with programs to address the stigma of mental health
Health and wellbeing activities	Free and low-cost activities to support residents' health and well-being
Health information sessions	Hold health seminars and information sessions
Support for older people	Drop-in and information sessions for older people to support access to relevant services and build social connection
Access to sports programs for kids	Support access to local sports programs for kids
Map and promote local services	Develop a local service map to help residents find services, and improve residents' awareness about local services
Services fair	Hold a services fair – a day to get to know services in the area
Women's health and safety awareness	Information sessions and workshops to increase awareness of women's health and safety
Culturally appropriate swimming	Increase opportunities for culturally appropriate swimming and lessons
Community safety forum	Hold a forum about community safety with residents and partners at the estate
Legal education and support	Connect residents to local legal services for support and to understand their rights and responsibilities
Youth hub and programs for youth	Programs after school and on Saturdays for youth Establish the Flemington youth hub
After-school activities for children	Pop-up playground and free after-school activities for children
Toddler playgroup	Community-led playgroup held on the estate
Support for parents	Culturally appropriate parenting workshops and opportunities to network with education support services
Financial literacy workshops	Financial literacy, budgeting, tax and benefits workshops



Who will do it:

Residents, PTWF, Flemington Resident Action Group, cohealth, resident- and community-led organisations, Moonee Valley City Council, the department, the Department of Health, Family Safety Victoria, Drummond Street Services, Victoria Police, the Venny, Talowadaag, Cultivating Community, Moonee Valley Legal Service, the Huddle, Ubuntu Project, Moonee Valley Family Violence Network

Funding:

PTWF local action plan funding, other government funding

Co-contributions: community organisations and PTWF, PTWF community grants, currently seeking other possibilities



5. Community connection and spaces

What we heard



'We need to improve the safety of the playgrounds'

'Residents should be given priority use of community rooms'

'We need more benches and chairs in outside spaces.'

What residents want

- A safe and interactive space for young people to gather and socialise
- Better gardens, playgrounds and outdoor furniture, and more shade
- Priority access to community rooms on the estate
- Upgrade and refresh the community rooms on the estate
- More community spaces to gather and socialise
- Access to a community kitchen and opportunities to cook, connect and share recipes
- Fix the basketball court and increase activities and programs for young people
- Safe and secure bike parking
- A creative hub and skills development in the creative industries
- Support for community events and activities for community connection
- Networking opportunities for local community groups
- Access to free wi-fi
- A quiet place to study on the estate
- Excursions, regular outings and camps
- Opportunities to celebrate the diverse cultures of people who live on the estate
- Driving education programs and subsidised lessons to help people learn how to drive
- Access to free and affordable English language classes
- A place and programs for women to come together and connect
- Opportunities for older and younger generations to celebrate culture and share stories

What we will achieve

- Shared spaces are better managed to the benefit of residents
- Residents build social and community connections, creating stronger communities

How we'll do it

Local actions	What will be done
Improve community room access	Improve the process for booking community rooms
Community facilities upgrades	Develop options to improve community facilities
Playground upgrade	Upgrade playgrounds near 120 Racecourse Road
Outdoor seating and shade	Install seating and a shaded area to gather outside
Improve basketball court	Seek opportunities to improve the basketball facilities on and near the estate
Youth hub	Work with Moonee Valley to set up a youth hub and promote activities for young people, highlighting local role models for young people
Support resident creativity	Secure more space for creative collaboration Increase access to creative equipment Run creative industries skills development courses
Secure bike parking	Test the feasibility of secure bike parking on the estate
Promote multicultural and other grants	Link residents to annual grants that fund multicultural events and community
PTWF community grants program	PTWF-funded small grants to resident-led and community organisations to turn their ideas into action (refer to Appendix 2 for the list of recipients)
Community celebration days	Support community celebration days including cultural days such as Eid and Lunar New Year
Intergenerational storytelling	Create opportunities for older and younger people to come together and share stories and culture
Food security project	Set up a community pantry on the estate
Community art	Co-design a community art project with residents
Community leaders networking	Organise a local community leaders networking group
Community outings	Support community excursions and regular outings
Kids cooking classes	Cooking classes for kids



Who will do it:

Residents, PTWF, Flemington Resident Action Group, cohealth, resident- and community-led organisations, Homes Victoria, Moonee Valley City Council, the department, Cultivating Community, the Huddle, Ubuntu Project, Flemington and North Melbourne community leaders network

Funding:

PTWF local action plan funding, other government funding

Co-contributions: community organisations and PTWF, PTWF community grants, currently seeking other possibilities

How the plan will be implemented

Resident empowerment and self-determination

To truly see improvements for people living at the Flemington public housing estate, residents and resident-led organisations need to be given the opportunity to lead. PTWF is dedicated to working alongside residents and resident-led organisations and building community capacity. PTWF is a facilitator and convener, building partnerships with the community sector and engaging residents in decision making about the future of their community.

The plan has already started rolling out, and PTWF will continue to support it in the following ways.

Partnerships



- PTWF is partnering with residents, community organisations, service providers and other stakeholders to link residents with services and programs that benefit and support this plan
- PTWF continues to encourage and support residents to get involved and build strong relationships, to ensure these partnerships and connections carry on into the future

Funding



The plan will be funded in the following ways:

- **PTWF local action plan funding** – \$500,000 to help deliver the plan at Flemington
- **Other government funding** – funding from the department and/or other state government departments
- **Co-contributions: community organisations and PTWF** – where PTWF and a community organisation have agreed to contribute jointly for initiatives
- **PTWF community grants** – grants funds from the PTWF grants program currently in progress
- **Currently seeking possibilities** – PTWF will work with government to source other funding
- **Targeted employment funds** – \$1.5 million over four years for job, education and training pathways

Promotion



- Some ideas raised by residents will need a sustained long-term focus and the cooperation and support of many partners to implement
- PTWF will work with government to identify possible funds and promote currently unfunded resident priorities and actions for investment
- PTWF promotes opportunities with community organisations



Moving forward

The Victorian government recognises the importance of a purposeful and unified effort that allows for partnership and innovation. This has helped foster trust and build strong relationships at every step.

Although programs come and go, the plan builds pathways that ensure this work will continue. It will do this by embedding its lessons into government processes, setting up community-led projects and empowering residents through knowledge. The structures set in place by this plan will allow residents to continue to work closely with government on various decisions and opportunities that affect them.

This significant work between residents, government and community partners will see the many shared ideas and approaches continue to lead to better outcomes and pave the way forward for a better future.

Appendix 1: Frequently asked questions

What is Paving the Way Forward?

Paving the Way Forward (PTWF) is an initiative of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (the department). Since 2021, the PTWF team has been working with Flemington and North Melbourne public housing residents, local government and delivery partners to ensure residents have input into the decisions affecting their homes, neighbourhoods and services. PTWF in Flemington is delivered in partnership with cohealth.

So far, the program has:

- organised community engagement activities to understand community needs, priorities and goals
- supported 24 community-led projects with the Community Grants Program
- worked with residents and partners to develop and start delivering the *Flemington local action plan*
- involved residents in decisions that affect them through resident action groups.

How can residents be involved in the future?

PTWF will continue working with residents and partners to get the outcomes listed in this plan. There will be opportunities for residents to take part, give feedback and hold us accountable for delivering these actions.

Sign up to our newsletter and WhatsApp group

Find out what's happening in the community and receive updates on the plan through the PTWF email newsletter and WhatsApp group. [Email the PTWF team](mailto:pavingthewayforwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <pavingthewayforwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au> to sign up.

Join the Flemington Resident Action Group

Become a member of the Flemington Resident Action Group. Meetings are held monthly to report on progress. They offer an opportunity for all residents to share information and give feedback and ideas.

Take part in or lead an activity

The activities, services and events outlined in the plan are designed with and for Flemington public housing estate residents. Opportunities to take part will be advertised via posters, flyers, text messages and the PTWF newsletter and WhatsApp group. There will be opportunities to join health and wellbeing activities, attend service information sessions, and much more.

Also, if you would like to help run an activity or develop your own idea for a project that aligns with this plan, [email the PTWF team](mailto:pavingthewayforwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <pavingthewayforwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

Take part in the evaluation

PTWF will be evaluated to understand how well the program has achieved its aims. Over the next 12 months, residents will have opportunities to have input into this evaluation.

Talk to a team member

For more information about Paving the Way Forward or to discuss any aspects of this plan, [email the PTWF team](mailto:pavingthewayforwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <pavingthewayforwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

What was the role of the community partner (cohealth) in developing the Flemington local action plan?

The Flemington community partner, cohealth, was first funded under PTWF for 12 months to help the community to develop the *Flemington local action plan 2022–23*. cohealth also helped deliver community engagement activities, capacity building and co-designed initiatives with estate residents. This period ends on 30 November 2022. From then, the plan will continue to roll out through the broader PTWF program. PTWF will keep building on the important work of the community partner and other organisations involved in the estate's broader service network. The department's PTWF teams (the Community Engagement team and Housing Transformation team) will stay the primary contacts for the PTWF program and plan.

What will happen after 30 June 2023?

The PTWF program will move to its next phase from 30 June 2023. Some elements of the plan will continue after this date including helping to create local job and education pathways for residents on the North Melbourne and Flemington public housing estates. This phase will run until 30 June 2025 as part of the targeted employment action plan currently being developed.

What will happen to the Flemington Resident Action Group?

The Flemington Resident Action Group is set to run until 30 June 2023. The PTWF Community Engagement team will continue to handle the administration of the groups until then. Importantly, the action group will continue to be co-chaired by residents. Work is underway to develop empowered renter decision-making models. The action group could move to this statewide model once finalised.

Will PTWF be evaluated?

Government has engaged the consulting firm Clear Horizon for an independent evaluation of the program. This will help government, community and residents decide if the program was as effective as it could have been. It will also help shape future similar programs. The evaluation will include speaking to local service providers, the PTWF community partners and residents. PTWF will also work with action group members to co-design an action plan progress update process. This will include working with the action groups to understand the barriers and the support needed to deliver the actions.

When will the Flemington and North Melbourne targeted employment plan be ready?

Throughout the consultation, residents consistently raised the need for tailored education and job pathways for community. As such, a key deliverable for PTWF is developing and rolling out a targeted employment plan that will drive inclusive job opportunities for residents. Like much of the PTWF work, it will recognise the considerable work and leadership of what has come before, including that of long-established resident lead employment brokers and community groups. The plan will support employment, training and upskilling of residents by organising connections across government, community and services to improve coordination and leverage government investment. The PTWF Employment and Projects Lead will finalise the *Flemington and North Melbourne targeted employment plan* by mid-2023.

Appendix 2: 2021 PTWF community-led grant recipients

In 2021, the program received 52 applications and awarded 24 community grants totalling \$163,000.

These are detailed below.



Focus area 1: Communications and participation

Project name	Applicant/auspice organisation	Project overview
'Fikirrada of Poetry' Workshop	North Melbourne resident with auspice from North Melbourne Language and Learning	An opportunity to have a voice, to creatively express frustrations, to articulate concerns and to get involved in creating solutions for the issues experienced during lockdown.



Focus area 3: Employment and education

Project name	Applicant/auspice organisation	Project overview
African Australian Careers Expo	Ubuntu Project	A one-day career expo specifically for African young people. It aimed to increase education achievement and engagement and improve social connection and community participation.
Resident Skills Development Project	Young Australian People	This project aimed to address the need for opportunities for youths in the two estates to gain nationally recognised training and credentials and to gain valuable work experience in volunteer work that offers pathways to jobs.
Digital Literacy –Refugee and Asylum Seeker Women	River Nile Learning Centre	This project piloted a digital literacy program. The project was for culturally diverse women who live at the Flemington and North Melbourne public housing estates.
Building and Construction Pathways Project	Mental Health Wellbeing Foundation	The purpose of the project was to provide job and training opportunities for 20 youth in the African community of the two estates to enter the building and construction sector via the Certificate II in Building and Construction pathways program.

 Focus area 4: Safety, health and wellbeing

Project name	Applicant/auspice organisation	Project overview
Playblocks North Melbourne	The Venny	The project delivered a pop-up play program at the base of the North Melbourne housing estate.
Playblocks Flemington	The Venny	The project will deliver a pop-up play program at the base of the Flemington estate.
Mum and I Summer Holiday Program	Somali Community inc.	The project aimed to address the impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns on the mental health and wellbeing of young mothers and their children living in the two estates, delivering several school holiday excursions.
African Young Women Health and Fitness	Inspire Community Action Network Inc [iCAN]	Young African women were offered access to sport and recreation initiatives that strengthen their mind, body and soul. A female personal trainer motivated and encouraged women in the community to become fit, healthy and active.
Keeping Fit with IMAAP	Inner Melbourne African Australian Partnership (IMAAP)	The aim of this project was physical fitness and wellbeing for young people living in the estates. The project trained the youth in North Melbourne and Flemington to gain skills in self-discipline to keep them fit and healthy beyond the project.
L2R Dance	L2R Dance	This project provides a 10-week hip-hop dance program for young people in North Melbourne and Flemington.
Multicultural Women-Only Swimming Program	Eritrean Australia Community Association Inc	This project encouraged community connection and healing and promotes health and water safety for the women of the Eritrean community living in the estates.
Health and Wellbeing	Vietnamese Women Association; auspiced by Vietnamese Community in Australia – Vic	The project focused on improving fitness, social inclusion, awareness and encouraging conversation among residents and the wider community while promoting greater self-confidence and a way to have fun with exercise that will have immediate and long-term health benefits.
Growing Debney Meadows Mother's Group	Edmund Rice Community and Refugee Services	The purpose of this project was to expand the mother's group to provide more activities. Building on the current Mother's English Language group, the project will offer the women the opportunity to develop skills in event planning and project management and to run the grant project activities.
African Women's Wellbeing Group	African Women's Wellbeing Group auspice by United Through Football	Project aimed at a young African cohort, mostly Eritrean women, to learn to swim in a culturally safe and appropriate environment.

Appendix 2: 2021 PTWF community-led grant recipients (cont)

Focus area 5: Community connection and spaces

Project name	Applicant/auspice organisation	Project overview
Melrose St Wellbeing Garden	159 Melrose Street Garden Group with auspice from the Salvation Army	The garden project updated and improved the garden area of 159 Melrose Street to become a more inviting space where residents and visitors can enjoy spending time.
Flemington Estate Engagement	Moonee Valley Legal Services	Senior Citizen Engagement and Youth Block Party at the Flemington estate.
Young Local Emerging Artist Program	Kushitic Productions with auspice from Ubuntu Project	This project focused on creative arts as a way for female youth in the two estates to tackle social issues. The workshops offered a platform for the youth to unpack social issues, share stories, express feelings, discuss and find solutions.
Recognition, Reward, Relaxation	Eritrean Young Mother's Group with auspice from Farnham Street Neighbourhood Learning Centre	<p>This project focused on healing and resilience and the social and emotional wellbeing of the residents living in the estates, with emphasis on the young mother's group in the Eritrean community.</p> <p>The project offers the daytrips, activities and information sessions on topics such as health and wellbeing and the COVID-19 vaccine.</p>
Sewing with Love	Residents of 159 Melrose St with auspice from the Salvation Army North Melbourne	<p>This is a resident-led project focusing on healing and resilience, community connection, education and pride.</p> <p>Funding paid for equipment and running the sewing workshops.</p>
Women's Connection Program	Resident of North Melbourne estate with auspice from Young Australian People	<p>The project focused on improving mental health, social connections and community participation.</p> <p>A several-week program with mind exercise, physical fitness and creative arts activity workshops.</p>
Dancing Together	Resident of the North Melbourne estate, auspiced by cohealth	The project promoted community pride and connection within the communities in the North Melbourne and Flemington high rises. Dancers within the communities taught several dance workshops of African and South Asian traditional dancing.
Harmony Festival	Vietnamese Community Australia – Vic	<p>One-day event full of activities for children and parents to participate.</p> <p>The event had many cohorts in the community taking part in a multicultural entertainment program and children's activities and cultural exhibitions.</p>
Community Members Social and Emotional Wellbeing	Eritrean Jeberti Community in Australia	The project focused on supporting members of the Eritrean Jeberti community in the Flemington and North Melbourne towers with social and emotional issues experienced during the pandemic. It used recreational activities including BBQs in parks and supported children with necessary aged-focused wellbeing.

Appendix 3: Empowered renter decision-making models

The empowered renter decision-making models is one part of the evolution and growth of PTWF and other initiatives. It aims to provide a number of options or approaches that will enable renters in public housing to lead (where appropriate), participate in and take ownership of decision-making processes that impact their homes and the places they live. The models will promote a sense of shared accountability, making their implementation more sustainable. There are many benefits of involving people with lived experience in decision-making.

Renter's voice has been the focus of several initiatives of Homes Victoria and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. These include community capacity building initiatives in North Richmond and South Melbourne estates and our own PTWF in North Melbourne and Flemington. In all of these initiatives, renters have expressed their desire and demonstrated the benefit of having their voices heard and ideas acted on.

The project will develop various accessible models to harness the insights of renters' lived experiences, skills and knowledge of place. By using leading practice examples and working with our renters and other stakeholders, renters can take part in the models in a way that suits them. Implementing these models will lead to better decisions that improve outcomes for renters. Experience has shown that authentically involving people in decisions builds trust, develops a sense of shared accountability and improves service outcomes. This results in more connected, safer and well-maintained communities in social housing.

The project will be developed in three phases:

Phase 1: Develop the models

– May 2022 to January 2023

- Internal and external research
- Develop and endorse project principles
- Stakeholder engagement to inform activities that would support the project principles, the models and to consider implementation
- Approve models to be trialled

Phase 2: Trial and refine the models

– February 2023 to September 2023

- Establish trial sites (× 3)
- Trial sites to confirm the elements of the model to be tested
- Test and refine models
- Identify internal elements of the model such as reporting on maintenance performance
- Test and refine internal elements of the model

Phase 3: Further rollout

– September 2023 to June 2024

- Establish sites
- Sites to confirm the elements of the models to implement
- Support sites to implement models
- Identify other internal opportunities to support the model

Renters and other stakeholders will take part in developing the project (phase 1) by informing and agreeing on the project principles, suggesting activities that bring the principles to life, reviewing and amending the final models and exploring ways to implement. There will be more opportunities for renters and other stakeholders' input in phases 2 and 3.

Appendix 4: Flemington local action plan progress report

The list below provides an update on the progress of the actions within the *Flemington local action plan*.

The status of each action is allocated a colour to indicate its progress. Refer to the key below for details.

This information was updated on 14 September 2022.

Progress report by focus area

Communication and participation

Action	Status
Establish resident action group	Complete
Involvement in designing resident decision-making models	In progress
Education sessions on how government works	In progress
New communication channels	In progress
Promote housing officer roles	In progress
Community grants, leadership and governance training	In progress
Local council participation	In progress
Youth leadership development	Not yet begun
Consultation between residents and stakeholders	In progress
Youth podcasting	Complete
Feedback and suggestion box	Complete

Key	
Complete	The action has been completed
In progress	The action is currently in progress
Not yet begun	The action has not yet begun
Currently seeking opportunities	The action is yet to be assigned an owner or funding source

Maintenance and amenity

Action	Status
Maintenance and housing education series	In progress
Welcome pack for new renters	Complete
Regular estate walk-arounds	In progress
Simplify housing information	Not yet begun
Secure carparking system	In progress
Abandoned vehicle removal	Complete
Improve adherence to parking rules	In progress
Install bins and remove litter	In progress
Housing and renters conference	Not yet begun
Community safety audit	Complete
Improve lighting and safety	Not yet begun
Improve digital experience for maintenance requests	In progress

Employment and education

Action	Status
Engage, map and identify job priorities	In progress
Small business and entrepreneurship support	In progress
Develop and implement the targeted employment plan	Not yet begun
Promote access to jobs	In progress
Support job initiatives for residents	In progress
Help young people find their first job	In progress

Progress report by focus area

Safety, health and wellbeing

Action	Status
Health outreach program	In progress
Mental health program	In progress
Health and wellbeing program	In progress
Health info sessions	In progress
Support for older people	In progress
Access to sports programs for kids	In progress
Map and promote local services	In progress
Services fair	In progress
Women's health and safety awareness	Not yet begun
Culturally appropriate swimming	Complete
Community safety forum	In progress
Legal education and support	In progress
Youth hub and programs for youth	In progress
After-school activities for children	In progress
Toddler playgroup	In progress
Support for parents	In progress
Financial literacy workshops	In progress

Community connection and spaces

Action	Status
Community room access	In progress
Community facilities upgrades	Currently seeking opportunities
Upgrade playgrounds near 120 Racecourse Road	In progress
Outdoor seating and shade	Currently seeking opportunities
Improve basketball court	Currently seeking opportunities
Youth hub	In progress
Support resident creativity	In progress
Secure bike parking	Currently seeking opportunities
Promote multicultural and other grants	Complete
PTWF community grants program	Complete
Community celebration days	Complete
Intergenerational storytelling	Not yet begun
Food security project	Not yet begun
Community art	Not yet begun
Community leaders networking	Complete
Community outings	Complete
Kids cooking classes	In progress

To receive this document in another format,
email the Paving the Way Forward team
<PavingTheWayForwardNMF@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

Paving the Way Forward is a Victorian Government initiative supported by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. In partnership with cohealth, North Melbourne Language and Learning, Drummond Street, and Mission Australia.

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ISBN 978-1-76130-033-2 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-76130-034-9 (pdf/online/MS word)

Available at [Paving the Way Forward Initiative](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/paving-the-way-forward-initiative)

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Printed by Snap Melbourne Latrobe Street (2210336)