

Nimbin Interagency Meeting – 31st May 2025

Strategies for Community Collaboration and Volunteer Engagement

Action List – (compiled from the meeting notes that appear below)

Interagency organisation going forward

- Central organisation of actions considered desirable to make the outcomes more useful. Suggestion: Financial contribution from various organisations to engage someone to take initiatives from the day forward. While names were suggested it's possibly a decision best made by those groups who can contribute funds – those who offered at the meeting to take this back to their groups for consideration include Chamber, Community Centre (using their paid staff), Nimbin Garden Club (small one-off amount), Hemp Embassy, Nimbin Aquarius Foundation, Dying, Death and Beyond, CWA.
- Email list of contacts to be shared with all groups so networking is better facilitated (Chamber)
- Write up and distribute notes from this meeting to all groups (Chamber)
- Organisation of the next meeting (NNIC)
- NFP organisations currently not Chamber members to consider joining for Chamber updates - it's free and the joining form is online [Choose your Membership Plan | Nimbin Chamber](#)
- Next meeting discuss who takes responsibility for coordinating and communicating outcomes from meetings – is it the meeting organiser?
- A survey of all organisations asking specific questions in relation to actions identified
- Work out how the Nimbin Village web presence can be utilised for the benefit of the community with security into the future.

Honouring Volunteers

- Plan annual 'Heroes of Nimbin' volunteer celebration event with awards – a whole of community event that could also raise money for a collaborative community project or next year's awards program event
- NIMFM interviews with volunteers during weekly Saturday radio slot.
- Submit volunteer stories/testimonials from your organisation for local media and social media (e.g. 'Nimbin Heroes').
- Contribute to a 'Volunteer of the Month' column in The Good Times.
- Organise a Volunteer Expo with a youth focus.
- Create an online volunteer honour roll
- Reward volunteers e.g. meals, travel allowance, certificates, training, accommodation for itinerants etc.
- Community organisations publicly thank their volunteers (e.g. letters to editor, radio shout-outs).

Streamlining Volunteer Efforts

- Develop and maintain a central volunteer database via Nimbin Village website – lists organisational needs and skills required alongside those offering to volunteer and the expertise they bring.
- Survey all organisations for volunteer needs and offerings to build the volunteer database.
- Organisations to create job descriptions for volunteer roles (this could be a shared exercise with organisations that currently have this in place sharing the info with others).
- Organise shared volunteer training (First Aid, RSA, leadership, etc.).
- Coordinate a shared events and volunteer needs calendar on Nimbin Village website.
- Promote at-home volunteering opportunities (e.g., for elderly, disabled, parents).
- Distribute and review the 'Welcome to Nimbin' book – strengthen the volunteering section (NNIC to coordinate).
- Encourage every organisation to mentor a Year 10 student (liaise with schools and youth groups).
- Develop recruitment campaign across media, schools, and posters.

Collaborative Opportunities

- Explore housing strategies: co-ops, tiny homes, use of vacant public land.
- Use Nimbin Village website to share events, grant opportunities, skills, and info.
- Engage younger and First Nations people via mentorship, school outreach, community events.
- Improve visibility and access to defibrillators – publish map/info.
- Save the Bowling Club – identify needed roles and explore funding for management.
- Choose one major community project/s for group focus each meeting (e.g. saving Bowling Club, Nimbin Village website development).

Working with Council

- Continue monthly Chamber–Council Destination & Economy meetings.
- Schedule Interagency meetings before VAG meetings (3x annually).
- Maintain contact with VAG reps through email/Facebook.
- Lobby Council as opportunities arise to recognise and support community-owned assets and services.
- Advocate for infrastructure needs: seating, shade, improved maintenance (per Nimbin Place Plan).
- Push for developer contributions in Nimbin to remain local (Cr Waters)
- Monthly breakfast meetings with Cr Waters (Gin to action)
- Identify escalation paths for unresolved Council issues (e.g., Office of Local Government).

Skills Sharing and Development

- Organise training with external bodies (ATO, Service NSW, Destination NSW).
- Host grant writing info sessions, (including identifying where to access demographic specific Nimbin data).
- Hold a community workshop to discuss development of a Reconciliation Action Plan. This could be a focus for the next interagency meeting.
- Promote youth mentoring and work experience as employment pathways.
- Digital skills development (Wick from Aether offered and it aligns with further development of the Nimbin Village website).
- Establish a skill-sharing noticeboard on the website.
- Provide training in financial management, governance, and effective meetings.
- Offer cultural awareness training for Indigenous inclusion.
- Develop organisational disaster and continuity planning workshops.

COMPILATION OF MEETING NOTES

1. Honouring Volunteers

Ideas and practices for recognising, valuing, and appreciating volunteer contributions:

- Host an all-of community celebration event or “thank you” gathering for all volunteers “Heroes of Nimbin”. This could be an annual volunteer awards day with nominations made by various community organisations. It should be a fun event with categories like “worst dressed”, “best dressed”, “best cup of tea maker” but also serious categories like “goes above and beyond”, “best networker”, “best fundraiser” etc. This could also be a fund-raising event.
- NIMFM offered a weekly 10-12 Saturday time slot where they would interview various groups on their work and focus on volunteerism in their organisation, with volunteers being interviewed about what they do, why, what they’ve gained from it, how others can get involved.
- Share stories/testimonials from volunteers and recipients across local media platforms. Social media - Nimbin Heroes run by Rain for VisitNimbin was a lovely initiative.
- Organisations contribute to a “Volunteer of the Month” recognition column in the Good Times (rotating between groups). The CWA Q&A approach was considered engaging while a focus on young people (under 50s lol) might encourage younger community members to get involved.
- Recognise that volunteering costs – symbolic gifts (like a t shirt, certificate, recognition on the organisation’s website – if they have one), meals (Nimbin Good Times provide a classy spread) and contributions to transport all assist.
- Hold a volunteer Expo that focuses on younger volunteers
- Develop a local “honour roll” or display of volunteer names/contributions (in a public space or online). This could be done on the Nimbin Village website.
-
- Offer symbolic rewards (certificates, local gift vouchers, potted plants, badges).
- Encourage peer-to-peer recognition among volunteers.
- Encourage all organisations to write public thanks (e.g. letters to the editor, community radio shout-outs).
- More widely promote the strength volunteers bring to our community – more volunteers per capita than anywhere else in the region/Australia; more community owned property per capita than anywhere else etc.

2. Streamlining Volunteer Efforts

Strategies for reducing duplication, improving coordination, and strengthening inter-agency collaboration:

- **High priority 1:** Develop a centralised volunteer database (shared across organisations). This would spell out organisational needs (skills etc.) Some needs are event based (one-off), others are ongoing organisational needs e.g. treasurer, secretary,

gardener. This could be done on the Nimbin Village website currently being established by Wick in his spare time. Strategies to support this need to be developed.

- To build up the database survey each organisation using the email list created for this meeting – what do you offer, what are your needs
- **High Priority 2:** save the Bowlo – there is a Board of 5 who are retiring. What are the roles for a volunteer in that organisation? Do they have funds to pay for club management?
- A small sum of money directed to paid organisation can really assist volunteer input. Community Service Order people are a volunteer pool, but they must be supervised on site.
- Register as an organisation to be able to receive interested Centrelink recipients (55-67 years old) who are required to do 30 hours a fortnight. A list of registered organisations and what they can offer these people would be a useful community resource – possibly on the Nimbin Village website
- Organisations that don't have a 'job description' for various volunteer roles could develop them, assisted by those who have them already.
- Volunteer training e.g. 1st aid; meeting facilitation; RSA certificates; financial management etc. While training needs might be organisation specific there would be many areas of overlap.
- Youth engagement – needs to be meaningful and recognize young people are not in the same position financially to engage as many older community members were 20-40 years ago
- Engage people through their involvement in the organisation e.g. CWA visitors dropping in for tea and cake, Headers through people playing in various teams. The more familiar people become with the value of the organisation the more likely they are to get involved. A group that's been meeting for decades can be very intimidating to newcomers.
- Coordinate a shared calendar of events and volunteer needs. – refer Nimbin Village website as a vehicle
- Organise an event for people who've moved to Nimbin in the past 2 years and get organisations to share info about their work
- Recognise that a lot of volunteering can be done from the home nowadays – doesn't directly engage people in community but could be useful for engaging people with disabilities and the frail or less able to get to the village. Also great to connect the very young (like Kindy or pre-school) with the elderly
- Wider distribution of the Welcome to Nimbin book (which is also online) as a tool to interest newcomers in volunteering. Review the volunteer section to see if it could be strengthened once some of the actions from today take shape. Funding for printing is an issue and needs business sponsorship e.g. the real estate
- Every organisation adopt one young person (maybe from Year 10) that they engage in their meetings maybe for one school year. This requires liaison with the schools and Nimbin Youth
- Offer shared volunteer training (e.g. first aid, conflict resolution, leadership).

- Identify overlapping needs (e.g. admin support, event set-up) to allow for shared volunteer pools.
- Cross-promote each other's volunteer opportunities.
- Launch a shared recruitment campaign (posters, social media content, school outreach).
- Strategies to engage itinerant volunteers (accommodation provision is essential to this)
- Our Mission:
- To support local businesses and community organizations, foster collaboration, and strengthen Nimbin's unique community through coordinated efforts and shared resources.

3. Collaborative Opportunities

HOUSING

Lack of suitable and available housing is seen as a big problem. No quick fix likely.

Take a small part of that problem to try to solve e.g. loss of medical staff due to lack of suitable accommodation

What community strategies may be options to increase housing stock? Feasibility of Housing Co-op? Tiny houses? What public land is available/unused in the village? Catholic church site, Bellevue park, extensions to Mulgum House, the St Vinnies building.

WEBSITE www.nimbin.village.au

Excellent tool for collaboration. Collate event/meeting information in the "Nimbin Village Calendar" and publish the coming months Calendar in the Good Times creating an information loop. Create Notice Boards on the website for community groups to share grant funding availability thus maximising the opportunity for all eligible groups to apply.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO HOT SHOWERS

Increase pressure on Council to install hot water system to the new amenities block. All community groups to write to Councillors and General Manager urging this action. (It was said that Council has an obligation to provide showering facilities on sporting fields elsewhere in the LGA; but that was not verified)

YOUTH/YOUNGER AND FIRST NATIONS PARTICIPANTS

All our community organisations need and will benefit with younger members and Indigenous members – how do we attract them? Mentor, presentations at High School, open doors to low key involvement, invite to specific events. NAIDOC? Nimbin Show?

GOALS

Build relationships between organisations through Interagency. Encourage cross volunteering via sub-committees for specific projects of personal interest.

For most effective return on action - pick a single project to concentrate group effort on based on most need and/or critical time frame. (e.g. keeping Bowling Club operating)

OTHERS

Defibrillators – We need to know where in town they are located and make that information generally known via Good Times and nimbinvillage.au

Disaster Resilience Group – many members live in places that get cut off in flood so we need to recruit members who live in town and can get to the evacuation centre.

4. Working with Council

- Monthly meetings between the Chamber and the Council's Destination & Economy team to continue
- Village Advisory group (VAG) members can raise issues (meets 3 x annually)
- 3 interagency meetings a year to occur before the VAG meeting so issues can be identified
- Communicate further with VAG reps via email or Facebook
- Lismore Council needs to acknowledge the extensive community ownership of assets and extensive services provided by the community
- Need a hot shower in the new toilets (Cr Waters advised that she has been told this is included)
- Need more seating and shade – identified in the Nimbin Place Plan
- Contributions collected from developers in Nimbin should be spent in Nimbin – contributions to community services currently being directed to Goonellabah Sports Centre
- Council to lobby, alongside community, for the Catholic Church land to be dedicated to affordable housing/social/public housing
- Nimbin Ring Road
- Some group needs to take carriage of communication from the interagency
- Nimbin village 1st Saturday of the month breakfast meeting with Cr Waters
- Mechanisms to pursue outcomes with Council that are not satisfied with decisions to be identified e.g. Office of Local Government

5. Skills Sharing and Development

- Leverage training from external bodies e.g. ATO, Service NSW, Destination NSW etc.
- Host info sessions on grant writing and share online resources
- Reconciliation Action Plan – workshop how to do this as a community
- Youth mentoring and work experience – promote mentoring programs and work experience pathways; highlight how skills gained can help with employment. This could be the topic of a special meeting
- Support from Nimbin Village – digital skills
- Establish a skills share noticeboard on the Nimbin Village website
- Training:

- Identify skills lacking and explore opportunities to build skills
- Share tips on running efficient meetings
- Financial management provided for treasurers of organisations
- Governance training and responsibilities behind committee roles
- Development of organisational disaster and business continuity planning –list of organisations and resources available circulated; workshops on how to
- Cultural awareness training to support Indigenous inclusion