

Minister for Education
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Deputy Leader in the Legislative Council

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26 SEP 2024

Mr Simon Scott
Committee Secretary
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Dear Mr Scott

Please find below responses to questions on notice from the Legislative Council Select Committee Estimates A following the examination of the Estimates of the Minister for Education.

Output Group 1 – Education

In school Education

1. How many teacher vacancies were there at the beginning of each school year in 2022, 2023, 2024 (broken down by school)?

Answer:

- **2022** – data was not collected
- **2023**

as at 03/03/2023	Southern FTE	Northern FTE
Primary	8	14
High School	29.15	11
College		
Total Base Grade	37.15 FTE	25 FTE
Senior Staff	4.4	17
Total Teaching	41.55 FTE	42 FTE

- **2024:**

as at 05/03/24	Southern FTE	Northern FTE
Primary	3.2	7
High School	9.6	18.6
College		
Total Base Grade	12.8	25.6
Senior Staff		3.4
Total Teaching	12.8 FTE	29 FTE

2. How many schools purchased additional teachers above their staffing allocation using their Schooling Resource Package in each of the above years?

Answer:

Number of Schools with Teaching Classified Employees Funded from School Resource Package (SRP)

School Area	No. of Schools		
	Mar 22	Mar 23	Mar 24
Primary	121	123	119
Combined	25	25	23
Secondary	28	28	28
Senior Secondary	8	8	8
Support Schools	8	8	8
Total	190	192	186

Note: employees who are engaged by schools from their SRP include full-time and part-time (fractional) workloads

Whilst the majority of teacher staffing are funded through their approved FTE establishment, there are some teacher allocations supported by:

- discrete funding allocations in the School Resource Package (SRP), for example Literacy and Numeracy Coaches, Safeguarding Leads and teachers through the Years 11-12 extension school program; and
- schools can also choose to employ teachers out of their general Fairer Funding Allocation in the SRP.

The table above reflects schools that have purchased teacher staffing through either of the above.

3. How many incidents of violence have been reported in schools each year from 2021 until 2024?

Answer:

The following data is from the DECYP Safety Reporting System (SRS).

The requested data for the 2021 year is not readily available and cannot be provided from SRS.

For incident reports involving violence reported by schools, there were:

- 462 reports in 2022
- 696 reports in 2023
- 876 reports in 2024 (from 1 January to 31 August 2024).

4. What is the longest period of time a student has waited to access the below professional support services in schools in the reporting period (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024):

- **Psychologist**
- **Social Worker**
- **Speech Pathologist**

Psychologist

Answer:

The longest period of time a student has waited to access a school psychologist in the reporting period (1 April, 2023 – 31 March, 2024) is 12 months; most students would have waited three months.

Many students access support from a school psychologist either the day they are referred (i.e. a waiting period of 0 days) or soon after, particularly if they require therapeutic support.

Urgent cases are prioritised and seen as quickly as possible; non urgent cases have longer wait times.

Social Work

Answer:

The reported average waiting time for social work is 6.5 days; social workers *do not* routinely keep waiting lists. If a school social worker is unable to see a child/young person within a short period of time, they refer the student to external agencies or other services.

Speech and Language Pathology

Answer:

The longest period of time a student has waited to access speech and language pathology in the reporting period (1 April, 2023 – 31 March, 2024) is 12 months.

Output Group 2 – Libraries Tasmania

Libraries Tasmania

1. Number of people who participated in the library users survey

Answer: 2588 people participated in the Client Survey

2. Please provide the report into the initial review of 26Ten that shows outcomes to date.

Answer: Please see attachment 1.

Output Group – Education Regulation

Education Regulation

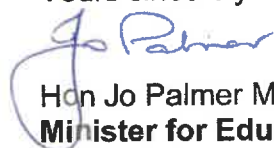
1. How many Home Education registrations have been revoked over the last two years?

Answer:

1809 students registered for home education during the 2023 calendar year and up until 31 March 2024. In the same time period 452 students withdrew from home education. (Leaving a balance of 1479 students at 31 March 2024). This may have been because they had finished their schooling, they were returning to school or another eligible option or because they were not able to meet the Standards and deliver an appropriate program and self-selected out of home education and back to school – this is quite common.

In the last two years there have been two provisional registrations revoked. This means people who were originally granted provisional registration but could not then meet the threshold to prove to the Registrar that they were compliant with the Standards and were therefore not able to be fully registered. There were no revocations of fully registered home educators in this time period.

Yours sincerely



Hon Jo Palmer MLC
Minister for Education



Fae Robinson
Futures

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY...

Evaluation of the **26TEN Communities Program**:
Local literacy for work and life

Final Report



Fae Robinson
Futures

September 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Overview

The aim of this evaluation of the 26TEN Communities Program: Local Literacy for Work and Life is to provide insight into the achievements and impacts of the first 18 months of the Program, and to suggest areas for improvement.

The Communities Program emerged from the findings of the 26TEN strategy five-year review which identified the need for longer term funding and a place-based, community-led approach to achieve sustainable change to adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania. It concluded that short term community grants could not deliver sustainable change.

The intent of the 26TEN Communities Program was to commission selected communities to deliver place-based, community-led collective action over five years to give more Tasmanians access to literacy support where they live or work. The Program is initially funded for four communities for four years.

The delivery model

The Program is currently a hybrid between the intended place-based, community-led approach and a coordinated approach by 26TEN. Program delivery has benefited from good relationships between the community coordinators, host organisations and the 26TEN team and all participants are focused on achieving community-based improvements to literacy and numeracy.

However, communities are required to fulfil specific requirements that don't always align well with the intent of their projects. Consideration needs to be given to the level of coordination and type of support required of 26TEN to deliver community-led outcomes and the authorising environment that's needed to allow communities to get on with their work.

Four communities

The evaluator observed that the four communities selected to participate in the first round of the Program: Clarence Plains, Glenorchy, Huon Valley and Launceston Northern Suburbs each bring a unique and tailored approach to addressing the literacy needs of their communities. The community coordinators are committed to their projects – they ensure effective delivery through their strong relationships, community respect, program development and creativity. There is some under-delivery which each community is aware of which they are attempting or planning to address.

The four projects are:

Clarence Plains: The Clarence Plains story, Parents, Families and Carers – Learning for our Kids: a 26TEN Community Project, has children at its heart. It seeks motivational and intergenerational change.

Clarence Plains has engaged strongly with parents and grandparents at the Child and Family Learning Centre, especially supporting increased reading to children and increasing English



literacy for those with English as an additional language. A highlight of the Clarence Plains project is *Lutrawita Love Stories*, a compilation of stories from local people that exemplifies the joys of reading and writing and encouraged participation from those less likely to be involved in literacy.

Glenorchy: The Glenorchy LLN story, *Building a 26TEN Community*, is one of ambition – an aspirational vision with three core types of activity that follow a staged path towards sustainability – a supportive community environment, a literate local workforce, and a thriving Community of Practice.

Glenorchy's project demonstrates the multiplying power of partnering with local government, business, and the Library service. The 26TEN Community of Practice is a model of community engagement in literacy and numeracy, with members actively engaging workers and community members in literacy and numeracy skill development.

Huon Valley: The Huon LLND story, *Huon 26TEN Community*, is about people in the Huon Valley working together to create an independent and sustainable 26TEN Community.

The Huon Valley's project builds on almost a decade of 26TEN experience with continuing active engagement and increased skill development in key workplaces, making a difference to business efficiency and employee satisfaction. The project is also a creative hub, with imaginative programs engaging local learners in developing their digital, literacy and numeracy skills – Greater than Garlic provided an inventive way to understand numeracy.

Northern Suburbs Launceston: The Launceston Northern Suburbs story, *Connecting with literacy across Launceston Northern Suburbs – 26TEN Hub*, is about empowerment, growth, and change. The aim is to get back to basics with literacy and numeracy as a powerful starting point for that change.

The Launceston Northern Suburbs project provides welcoming and comfortable access for local residents across the northern suburbs to literacy, numeracy and digital skill development. For many engaged with the 26TEN project, new opportunities for work have opened up, life has been made better or people have gained more control over their lives by learning key, life affirming foundational skills.

Evaluation approach

The evaluator spoke to a wide range of stakeholders including 26TEN Coalition, ex-Coalition and team members, host organisations, community coordinators and stakeholders to understand the effectiveness of the Program. Three evaluation questions were applied to assess the effectiveness of the community projects: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

Observations are offered on some of the strengths and challenges in each of the communities, as well as Program-wide observations, which are supported by recommendations for change.



Recommendations

Simplifying the program model

Recommendation 1: That 26TEN convenes a workshop with all Communities Program stakeholders that considers the policy intention, relationships and expectations of stakeholders and agrees a Memorandum of Understanding as the foundation document of the Program.

Fit-for-purpose funding model

Recommendation 2: That 26TEN explores opportunities to develop a plain English funding agreement for the purpose of more effective commissioning of long-term, outcomesoriented projects.

Recommendation 3: That 26TEN defines a commissioning model to ensure there is shared understanding of the approach and adopts a multi-year funding agreement for new projects with agreed conditions/outcomes in line with the commissioning model.

Role of 26TEN team as a backbone organisation

Recommendation 4: That 26TEN convenes a roundtable conversation with the four communities to identify the role and value of a backbone organisation in the context of the Communities Program and to scope the best investment of 26TEN team expertise in the Program.

Aligning to a common agenda

Recommendation 5: That 26TEN recognises and reports the power and importance of community development activities in changing literacy standards in Tasmania.

The importance of mutually reinforcing activities

Recommendation 6: That host organisations of future projects are required to play a more active role in facilitating mutually reinforcing activities to contribute to long-term sustainability; and advocate for, and actively participate in the steering, or other appropriate community-based, committee.

Recommendation 7: That 26TEN explores the potential to establish a statewide Community of Practice to lay the groundwork for new communities as they come on stream, and to build the capacity for mutually reinforcing activities.

Understanding not only where, but how, change can happen



Recommendation 8: That 26TEN considers the role, value and professional development needed to support communities to meet learners' short-term needs so they can function more effectively in work and life.

Community coordinators

Recommendation 9: That 26TEN engages coordinators and host organisations in a roundtable conversation about the role and scope of the coordinator role and how best to deliver both literacy services and community capacity building.

Defining Success

Recommendation 10: That measures of success that include 26TEN and project measures are explicitly negotiated through the engagement phase of project commissioning and inform the performance requirements of the funding agreement.

Measurement and reporting

Recommendation 11: That 26TEN:

- Re-engages communities in developing a simplified, streamlined set of indicators that reflect the work of the projects and are useful for understanding project performance and where project improvement needs to occur
- Develops simplified reporting processes through a fit-for-purpose reporting platform.

Marketing and communications

Recommendation 12: That the 26TEN Coalition includes a bid for a long-term comprehensive social marketing campaign that is designed to achieve changes to attitudes about, and behaviours towards, getting LLND support.

Recommendation 13: That the 26TEN team engages with communities to understand the need and deliver increased communications support to their projects.

Challenge of volunteers

Recommendation 14: That 26TEN and communities explore options for cost-effective volunteer recruitment and management.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

The aim of this evaluation of the 26TEN Communities Program: Local Literacy for Work and Life (Communities Program) is to provide insight into the achievements and impacts of the program in each of the four participating communities, Clarence Plains, Glenorchy, Huon Valley and Launceston Northern Suburbs over its initial 18 months of operation, and to suggest areas for improvement.

Based on 2011 research done by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it is understood that as many as one in two Tasmanians do not have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to participate effectively in everyday life. Those impacted are missing out on a range of life experiences, among them job opportunities, the fulfilment of reading to their kids, or being able to keep in touch with family and friends through their phone, tablet, or computer. Successfully addressing low literacy and numeracy, including digital literacy, changes life trajectories and increases wellbeing.

The 26TEN ten-year strategy, *26TEN Tasmania: Tasmania's strategy for adult literacy and numeracy 2016-2025* articulates a long-term vision for change:

All Tasmanians have the literacy and numeracy skills they need for work and life.

The vision is supported by an ambitious shorter-term goal:

To increase the number of adult Tasmanians with literacy and numeracy skills at or above Level 3 (OECD PIAAC) by 10 per cent by 2025.

Three aims set out how this might be achieved:

1. Everyone knows about adult literacy and numeracy.
2. Everyone is supported to improve their skills and to help others.
3. Everyone communicates clearly.¹

Origins of the Communities Program

The Communities Program emerged from the findings of the 26TEN strategy five-year review: *26TEN in 2020: How far we've come as a state towards better adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania, and what we've learned*. The review identified that longer term funding and a placebased approach were needed to achieve sustainable change to adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania. It concluded that short term community grants could not deliver sustainable change.

Based on these findings, the 26TEN Coalition, comprising influential Tasmanians working together to motivate other Tasmanians to join the collective effort to lift adult literacy and

¹ 26TEN, *26TEN Communities Evaluation: Context and Background Information*, Tasmanian Government



numeracy and who provide advice to the Minister for Education, submitted a proposal to the

Tasmanian Government for a longer term, community-led, place-based approach. The submission sought funding for 15 Tasmanian communities to be phased in over 10 years, with each community to receive five-year funding. It was designed to create a critical mass of activity to address literacy and numeracy levels across the state.

The Tasmanian Government responded by providing \$3 million through a new *Adult Learning Strategy 2020-2023* administered by Skills Tasmania (Department of State Growth), to 'Expand 26TEN's model to deliver additional local services to help lift literacy and numeracy levels for more Tasmanians in seven communities by 2023-24'.² The funding fell short in both the number of communities funded and the duration of the funding.

The resulting Communities Program contributes to the achievement of the vision, goal and aims of the 26TEN ten-year strategy by implementing 'solutions that are collaborative, practical and tailored to the specific needs of each community... Its collective impact approach recognises that no single person, group or organisation can resolve the entrenched problem of low adult literacy. It takes a collective effort, and more importantly, collective action'.³

² Department of State Growth, *Adult Learning Strategy 2020-2023*, Tasmanian Government ³ 26TEN, *op cit*.



2. ABOUT THE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Policy intent and approach

The intent of the 26TEN Communities Program was to commission selected communities to deliver place-based, community-led collective action over five years to give more Tasmanians access to literacy support where they live or work.

Communities were provided with some specific parameters and expectations:

- Funding to be provided by the Tasmanian Government under a commissioning model and administered by 26TEN who will provide support and guidance
- There would be flexibility to direct resources to areas of greatest need, or potential employment opportunities, and to train people to help others.
- It must make a significant contribution to 26TEN's goal of increasing the number of adult Tasmanians with literacy and numeracy skills at or above Level 3 (OECD PIAAC) by 10 per cent by 2025
- A lead organisation would host a community coordinator to support local activity



- Communities would be encouraged and mentored by 26TEN Coalition members • Communities to take collective action across business, government and community
- Communities were expected to mobilise their own resources.

Selection process

Seven applications were received in March 2021. Each community submitted a unique and tailored approach to the program brief. They were evaluated by an Advisory Panel against four assessment criteria:

1. A strong, well-established governance and project team
2. The community shows readiness for change
3. Value for money
4. The community has demonstrated need.³

The Panel noted key common features across the four successful applicants:

- 'large urban council areas and a regional council... with low educational attainment and high unemployment
- the communities have high scores on the scales of socio-economic disadvantage
- two in places where Jobs Hubs exist
- a geographical spread with three located in the south and one in the north of the state.'⁴

The four selected communities are Clarence Plains, Glenorchy, Huon Valley and Launceston Northern Suburbs. Each region's project is featured at chapters 4-7.

Structure and roles

The delivery structure of the Communities Program is triangulated. As funder, 26TEN directs the funding through a host organisation which employs the community coordinator. In parallel, 26TEN's program manager works directly with community coordinators generally without reference to the host organisation.

26TEN team

26TEN describes itself as the 'backbone' of a collective impact effort. *Collective impact* is:

'...the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem... Unlike most collaborations, collective impact initiatives involve a centralized infrastructure, a dedicated staff,

³ 26TEN, *26TEN Communities Program 2020-2021: Advisory Panel Report*, 14 April 2021

⁴ *Ibid.*



and a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants.’⁵

The 26TEN program manager plays an active role in the delivery of the Program in each community. They convene a fortnightly meeting with the community coordinators, attend steering committee meetings, administer reporting and funding, and provide support and guidance; the team also provides some limited communications and promotional resources. The team reports quarterly to the Coalition; it is not clear what, if any, encouragement and mentorship the Coalition is providing.

Host organisation

The host organisation, described as ‘the lead organisation in each community’⁶, varies across the four communities. Two host organisations are part of the Neighbourhood House network, one is a local government authority and the fourth is a social sector not-for-profit organisation. Each of these organisations was responsible for project conceptualisation and the application for funding, however, they generally have limited involvement in implementation.

Steering committees

Each community has a steering committee made up of community representatives; it is convened by the community coordinator. Steering committee responsibilities vary slightly across the four communities – at their heart is a desire to provide direction, ideas and passion to create positive change.

The community coordinator is responsible for developing a project plan that contributes to 26TEN’s 2025 goal, and to support achievement of its three aims. The steering committees

are expected to support decision making aligned with the project plan and share ideas and resources in support of the project plan.

Measurement and reporting

The community coordinators are required to meet monthly reporting obligations that allow the program manager to report to the 26TEN Coalition. Reporting was initially required weekly and moved to monthly in October 2022.

⁵ Kania J & Kramer M 2011, *Collective Impact*, Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2011

⁶ 26TEN, *26TEN Communities: Local Literacy for Work and Life Program Plan 2021-2024*, Libraries Tasmania



The program manager engaged the community coordinators to codesign the measurement regime based on a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach. Current measures report individual client level activity in support of aim 2: *Everyone is supported to improve their skills and to help others*. Communities report the number of learners, learner hours and tutors, levels of skill acquisition, and referrals in and out. It is understood these measures were requested by the 26TEN Coalition. Learner surveys, case studies a professional reflection record are also part of the reporting requirements.

Activities that support achievement of the other two Aims, *Everyone knows about adult literacy and numeracy*, and *Everyone communicates clearly*, are described and recorded as text.

Funding

Funding is provided to Skills Tasmania under the *Adult Literacy Strategy* and transferred to 26TEN for distribution under the Communities Program. The Program is 'initially funded for four years under the budget cycle'.⁷ The Program Plan⁹ shows six months' establishment funding in 2020-21 and three full years of funding. The Funding Agreement only provides for the initial six months' and one full year of funding, totalling \$239,950; completion of the approved purpose was December 2022. The Agreement doesn't indicate a commitment to long-term funding despite being indicated to applicants. It is understood that a further one year of funding has been provided to the four communities.

A small allocation of funding, known as Discretionary Adult Learning and Engagement Program (DALEP), is directed through libraries in each of the selected communities to mutually agreed discretionary spending on language, literacy and numeracy (LLND) initiatives including digital literacy.

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This evaluation covers activity and progress for the period January 2022-June 2023.

Given the short time the community projects have been underway, it must be considered a formative evaluation contributing to understanding how much has been done in the first

⁷ 26TEN Communities Evaluation, *op. cit.*

⁹ 26TEN Program Plan, *op. cit.*



18months of full operations, how well it's been done, and whether anyone is better off. It is too early to consider a social return on investment.

1. How much did we do?

This question records the activities and number of participants against the three 26TEN aims.

2. How well did we do it?

This question explores how well activities were delivered in the eyes of project partners based on interviews conducted by the evaluator. This is a qualitative assessment in the absence of measures that record the percentage of services/activities that performed well.

3. Is anyone better off?

This question is answered through stories told from a range of perspectives of those involved with the community projects. They are based on interviews conducted by the evaluator.

It became evident during the evaluation process that the community projects were being affected by the design and implementation of the Communities Program. A final chapter, with recommendations, considers this wider organizational context.

To complete this evaluation, the evaluator:

- Reviewed and analysed a wide range of documents, a funding agreement, and project reports
- Met with 26TEN and Library administrators.
- Conducted mainly in-person conversations with key stakeholders and project participants in each of the four communities ▪ Drafted a report for review by 26TEN.

The final report will incorporate feedback to the draft.

4. CLARENCE PLAINS COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Parents, Families and Carers – Learning for our Kids: a 26TEN Community Project Five Year Vision

To improve the reading, writing and maths skills of parents and caregivers so that they consistently and confidently participate in their children's educational environment and school community.

To fully develop the Clarence Plains community into a connected and collaborative learning community in the next five years.



"Parents, families and carers are our children's first teachers... (they) are a vital component in the learning mix for children in the contemporary educational environment..." Hobart City Mission Application for 26TEN Funding

Overview

The Clarence Plains project, *Parents, Families and Carers – Learning for our Kids: a 26TEN Community Project* has children at its heart. It seeks motivational and intergenerational change.

The project is designed to empower community members – parents and caregivers especially – with open conversations about reading, writing and maths and access to services so they can be the best they can be for their children. The project aims to help improve parents' and carers' own reading, writing and maths skills so they can read to their children and help them with their homework.⁸

The project builds on a recent 26TEN community grant and recognises the risk of continuing the generational cycle of low literacy. It acknowledges the community's awareness of how low reading, writing and maths levels impact families and recognises that a key factor in people attending courses or events aimed at improving these skills is *what* is provided, *where* it's provided and *how* it's provided. Being local is vital – a familiar face in a familiar space.

The project and coordinator are based at the Clarence Plains Child and Family Learning Centre

(CPCFLC). It is auspiced by the Hobart City Mission as part of the One Community Together (OCT) collective impact program. OCT is a collective of residents, community groups and organisations in Clarence Plains working together on shared goals to create positive change together. The 26TEN project draws on these foundations – the steering committee is OCT's Work and Learning Focus Team which works to create opportunities for skills development and explores creative ways to break down barriers to work and learning.⁹

The application for funding from Clarence Plains was highly recommended by the 26TEN Advisory Panel which noted its aims for long-term sustainable change, the momentum of OCT, participation of CPCFLC and Rosny Library, the community's interest in improving skills, an experienced project team, and value for money.¹⁰

⁸ Hobart City Mission, *2020-21 26TEN Communities Program, 2020-21 26TEN Communities Application Form, Application 2021COM02 From Hobart City Mission*, 25 March 2021

⁹ <https://onecommunitytogether.org.au/who-are-we/>, accessed 25 August 2023

¹⁰ 26TEN Communities Program 2020-2021, *Notes from Advisory Panel Discussion*, 14 April 2021

¹³ Numbers marked with an asterisk* are provided by 26TEN



How much did we do?

The Clarence Plains Project Plan provides a program of action against each of the 26TEN aims listed earlier. Actions include engagement with schools, community organisations and other service providers and a future focus on engagement with local businesses and industry. Activities include community events, promotion, community champions, information provision, workshops, conversation classes, literacy and numeracy tutoring, training and mentoring volunteers, personal contacts, and advocacy.

The Clarence Plains community coordinator, who has been in the role since December 2021, has extensive skills and experience in teaching LLN and spends about two days a week providing tutoring services and support. In partnership with the literacy coordinator at Rosny Library, they have compiled and delivered a tailored tutor training course including one delivered online with statewide reach that was taken up by other 26TEN communities.

Activity Reporting January 2022-June 2023

1. *Everyone knows about adult literacy*

- Steering Committee established: 9 meetings held
- Literacy Awareness Workshops: 5 delivered, 54 attendees
- Promotion of workplace grants: 50 community member sent information; 2 mailouts
- Promotion of 26TEN in community: 150 members added to engagement register

2. *Everyone is supported to improve their skills to help others*

- New learners: 22*
- Casual learners: 20*
- Total learners: 155*¹³
- Total hours of learner support: 409*
- New volunteers engaged: 32*
- Learner referrals in from local services: 11*
- Learner referrals out to other LLN providers: 20*
- Family Literacy Program: 4 home reading workshops, 25 parents report increased confidence; 4 events in 2022
- English Conversation Groups: 60
- Digital literacy: 4 digital literacy sessions, 3 training events 16 participants
- 26TEN Day: 48 attendees

How well did we do it?

Evaluator Interviews



One Community Together – the OCT project officer works closely with the community coordinator to break down barriers, problem-solve and encourage participation. They observed: 'We'll never know the ripple effect, it's the small wins... getting books into homes, the reading café, putting food on, connecting with people. We now have a core group giving them the types of books they are enjoying or their kids are enjoying. They're swapping books and taking them into their homes...

'Kate reported the steering committee wasn't working... people not turning up. We realised the overlap with the Work and Learning Focus Team members so now one month we have the work and learning meeting and then the next month we combine with the 26TEN steering committee. We have break-out groups and I'm Kate's break-out group. I help organise events. It's provided two opportunities – more interest from work and learning members and it brings more people to the table.'

Hobart City Mission – 'Our biggest achievement apart from Kate and what she's brought to the program is we're almost over the hurdle of getting the Neighbourhood Houses on board. Our next hurdle is the schools – how do we make ourselves more wanted?'

Rosny Library Literacy Coordinator – 'I referred a client to Kate in the first week, a prospective learner living with a disability. They live in the Clarence Plains community and Kate provides proximity and ease of access for one-on-one tuition. Kate will look at options for the best tutor.'

54 Reasons – 54 Reasons, formerly Save the Children, promote and deliver HIPPPY – Home Interaction Program with Parents and Youngsters. There is strong synergy with the 26TEN project: 'Not one person from a non-English-speaking background had been in that Centre till Kate got there... it's a whole family thing, very inclusive... my (HIPPPY) tutors do their delivery and then sit with Kate to do her delivery. Kate helps us support parents to understand...

'We work together and get bigger numbers... we're both bringing people in for each other. It's better for me to work in partnership... better for me, better for the families. It's easy, it's a beautiful collaboration and that's not always the case.'

The steering committee has also been an important point of connection: 'It's so positive. You have the freedom to say what you need. I love the steering committee – you can provide feedback and contribute.'

Is anyone better off?

Case Study 1 – 26TEN Lutrawita Love Stories

Lutrawita Love Stories

Life as a Community coordinator is often about creativity, connections, and opportunity.



When Indigenous Literacy Day was coming up in late 2022, Nerissa, the Aboriginal liaison officer, and Kate, the Clarence Plains community learning coordinator, began to explore ideas that would bring the day to life and make it memorable.

‘Nerissa stuck a Post It note on my desk about it – we’d done projects together before and I’d been reading Trent Dalton’s book, *Love Stories* and thought it was a great idea for us.’

The result is *Lutrawita Love Stories*, a book written by locals about what they love about Tasmania – Lutrawita. People of all nationalities tell the story of their unique connection to this place.

‘It’s very much about seeing everyone as writers, authors, readers... we facilitated ordinary people to get something published,’ Kate explains.

Nerissa and Kate started asking everyone coming into the Clarence Plains Child and Family Learning Centre if they had a story to tell and whether they’d like to share it; they also posted a request for contributors on Facebook. People didn’t have to be able to write – they just needed to be able to tell their story.

The more than 50 stories told in *Lutrawita Love Stories* are personal, moving, multicultural and special. The dedication reads: This collection of love stories is dedicated to the people who live, love, work and walk in Clarence Plains, southern Tasmania.

Lutrawita Love Stories fits with Aboriginal yarning. As Kate explains, ‘There’s been a lot of fantastic individual repercussions. One learner struggling to come to see their tutor wrote a beautiful story – a creek story. I had no idea she could write like that,’ Kate said.

Another local who joined in was Ricky. Ricky had been a 26TEN learner off and on for some time. ‘I’d been doing reading and writing with a lady from 26TEN – Bron. Bron helped me... I’m very shy around people and she brought out the best in me...

‘Kate asked me whether I had a story and it came into my head.’

Ricky’s story expresses his connection to land and the importance of his Aboriginal family and his traditional Aboriginal practice.

‘Being in the book, it’s changed my life a little bit,’ Ricky shared. ‘I could read to a certain extent but not writing – I can’t spell my words properly.’

Ricky could not write his story but he told it to Kate. ‘He told me and I read it back to him,’ Kate explained. When the book was launched, Kathryn (OCT Coordinator) took Ricky outside to read it to him. ‘They both had tears in their eyes. Ricky was very moved.’

‘I pop in every now and then to see Kate, catch up, have a yarn... it’s been a help,’ he said.



Patricia also participated in the first edition of Lutrawita Love Stories. Her powerful story, *The Love Story of my Life* is my precious granddaughter Skylar Rose tells of Skylar's dramatic entry into the world. Her daughter Leah, Skylar's Mum has added her story of Skylar to the new edition. She says in her story: Now I will work on myself and get it together so that I can get my daughter home to where she belongs...

Leah's 26TEN story is part of that. 'I've always been interested in getting reading and writing skills to better myself. I set it all up at the Centre with Kate, engaged about tutoring, how many days... It was just easy and I feel better knowing I'm improving my reading and writing...

'I find that it's a good experience, tutors are great, happy to help. I'll be talking to my friends about it. I tell them I'm improving slowly – even a little bit of help takes you a long way, that's for sure.'

Lutrawita Love Stories shows the power of storytelling and reframing how people see themselves as readers, writers and authors in their learning journey – a creative access point for connections... connections to country, connections to community and connections to learning.

As the community learning coordinator put it: 'It's all very subtle. When I started (the project) I was envisaging a whole lot of tutors and learners... it's all about building trust in the community and having them come in.'

Local observations

Community coordinator – the community learning coordinator was highly regarded by interviewees and acknowledged as skillful, hardworking and creative. They collaborate well. The size of the role and time needed to deliver project plan activities were seen as issues.

Host organisation – Hobart City Mission (HCM) has had a presence in the Clarence Plains community for some years as the backbone organisation for OCT. They bring this knowledge, experience and connections to the 26TEN project as the host organisation. The project was developed by a focus team of OCT and aligns with community need.

While the OCT project officer is a key partner, HCM has a limited role in activities. It sees its role as taking responsibility and bringing accountability by providing human resource and financial management services, attending steering committee meetings, acting as a sounding board and generally supporting the coordinator.

Rosny Library – the literacy coordinator has been involved with the 26TEN project since inception and is on the steering committee. They expressed support for the coordinator and the Reading Cafes but had reservations about a narrow focus on activities targeting women and the Aboriginal community, the effectiveness of some activities, the location of



the project at the CPCFLC, and desired better collaboration on decisions relating to the DALEP funds.

Steering Committee – challenges in sustaining attendance at steering committee meetings were resolved by incorporating the committee members into the Work and Learning Focus Team meetings every second month. This has helped to address some overlap between the two committees. Although three local school representatives agreed to be part of the steering committee at the start of the project, attendance has not been sustained.

Schools – schools were a vital part of the original application for funding and play a key role in breaking the cycle of low skill levels of reading, writing and maths. They are an important connector between parents/carers and children. However, it has been difficult for the coordinator to establish robust relationships beyond one school – primary and secondary schools, both state and private, have all been hard to engage for varying reasons.

Neighbourhood Houses – establishing ongoing effective engagement with the two Neighbourhood Houses has been challenging. The two houses operate independently but are both important locations for 26TEN to be seen in the community. Some engagement has been established and is expected to improve once the renovation work at Clarendon Vale Neighbourhood House is completed.

Location – the hosting of the project at the CPCFLC had mixed reviews. It was viewed as an important location to connect with the target of the Clarence Plains project – parents and carers addressing intergenerational literacy issues. One described the location as ‘a brilliant idea’. However, those with reservations suggested it risked a narrowing of the target group for 26TEN support and encouraged perceptions of 26TEN working for a childcare centre.

English as an Additional Language – the Clarence Plains community is increasingly multicultural, with parents and grandparents arriving from non-English speaking backgrounds. The conversation classes at the CPCFLC have encouraged non-English speakers, particularly grandparents caring for young children, to learn to read to their grandchildren in English and to develop their English language skills.

5. GLENORCHY COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Building a 26TEN Community

Five Year Vision

That the Glenorchy community values LLN for the benefits it provides to individuals in all aspects of their lives as well as benefits to employers, community organisations and the community more widely. People needing support feel comfortable asking for help, knowing there is someone nearby they can trust. Members of the community can communicate



meaningfully with each other and the wider world, have good employment prospects and encourage the next generation of learners.

"We could see a lot of opportunities to make a difference... we're very committed to it... our focus is to build capacity..." Glenorchy City Council

Overview

The Glenorchy LLN story is one of ambition – an aspirational vision with 'three core types of activity that follow a staged path towards sustainability'.¹¹

The project, *Building a 26TEN community* takes a considered long-term approach, based on previous 26TEN experience and the Glenorchy City Council's community development practitioners' intimate knowledge of their city.

The Glenorchy community has high levels of disadvantage, challenges for local businesses to get local employees with LLN skills, many older people without digital skills, a high migrant population with many lacking English language skills, and the challenge of ensuring providers and agencies complement each other in their efforts to address LLN. The project's threepronged approach supports a broader collective impact approach where organisations undertake "mutually reinforcing activities".

The three core types of activity to realising Glenorchy's vision and sustainability are:

- *A community environment supporting literacy for all* – focusing on growing a community culture that values and supports LLN and lifelong learning, reduces stigma, and enables those in need to feel comfortable seeking support.
- *A literate workforce* – equipping residents to obtain employment or perform the duties required by working with the Jobs Hub and encouraging businesses and organisations to apply for 26TEN employer grants.

-
- *A growing and sustainable Community of Practice* – developing the momentum that carries the work forward, increasing the engagement and capacity of the CoP, supporting development, and sharing of skills.

Glenorchy's project is supported by a cross-sector steering committee comprising elected an

¹¹ Glenorchy City Council, *2020-21 26TEN Communities Program, 2020-21 26TEN Communities Application Form, Application 2021COM03 From Glenorchy City Council*, 26 March 2021



Alderman, and Council, Library, University, TasTAFE, Education Department and Skills Tasmania representatives. The current community coordinator has been employed since December 2022; they are based at the Council offices.

The application was highly recommended by the 26TEN Advisory Panel, which noted its links to the Glenorchy Jobs Hub, experienced project team, relevant activities, and good pathways to sustainability.¹²

How much did we do?

A substantial program of action was developed for each set of core activities involving community events, promotion, ambassadors, information provision, workshops, conversation classes, Community of Practice, personal contacts, and advocacy. The focus of the community coordinator's effort has been on building capacity, networks and collaborative partnerships across the municipality; one-on-one tutoring of learners has been undertaken in partnership with the Glenorchy Library's literacy coordinator.

Activity Reporting January 2022-June 2023

1. *Everyone knows about adult literacy*

- Steering Committee established; 2 meetings held
- Community of Practice (CoP): 8 meetings held, 8 new members
- Ambassadors: 8 recruited & trained 2022
- Adult Literacy Workshops: 7 delivered, 57 attendees
- Promotion of workplace grants: email 33 organisations; presentations at COP
- Promotion in a range of publications: *Glenorchy Gazette* (circulation 50,000+) and Council newsletter (21,000 households).
- Promotion at a range of events: Chigwell House open day (2022), Glenorchy Jobs Fair (2022 & 2023), Chigwell Community Garden opening (2023), Mental Health Expo (2022), 2 x pop-ups in Northgate and Claremont (2022), Attendance at Interagency network meetings (Thrive to 25 x 2 and Linkages x 2)

2. *Everyone is supported to improve their skills to help others*

- New learners: 9*
- Casual learners: 55*
- Total learners: 87*
- Total hours of learner support: 44*
- New volunteers engaged: 7*
- Learner referrals in from local services: 16*

¹² 26TEN Communities Program 2020-2021, *Notes from Advisory Panel Discussion*, 14 April 2021



- Learner referrals out to other LLN providers: 23*
- Referral Guide published and distributed to 29 organisations
- Family Literacy Program: 8 sessions, 73 parents/carers, 79 children
- Clean up your social media workshop: 7 participants
- Digital literacy: 3 participants
- Assistive technology session with CoP: 12 participants
- Health literacy: 3 workshops, 6 participants

3. *Everyone communicates clearly*

- Plain English: 2 workshops, 36 participants

How well did we do it?

Evaluator Interviews

Glenorchy Jobs Hub – having the community coordinator available every fortnight at the Jobs Hub for prospective jobseekers has contributed to referrals: ‘When there’s any resistance, job seekers take the path of least resistance so having a warm person helps... Abi understands, she gets what we do... it’s made it easier having Abi here, (job seekers) definitely listen when it comes from Abi.’

Glenorchy Jobs Hub Coaches attended Plain English workshops and an ambassador information session: ‘it helped us understand what low literacy does’.

Chigwell Child and Family Learning Centre (CFLC) – the Family Book Club at Chigwell CFLC was well-designed and supported: ‘Our families have been through heaps of trauma and they need to trust. It was important that Erica (from CFLC) was there, but 26TEN did the heavy lifting. We couldn’t have run it without them. They provided books, running costs, the cost of Bill (facilitator). It was lovely seeing families enjoying literacy together... we really liked the book choices – good authors and fairly familiar books... we did a reflection at the end of each session on what to improve for the next week. It was continuous improvement.’

Glenorchy Library – the community coordinator works one day a week in the Glenorchy Library: ‘Abi provides support, input, connections... she’s keen and willing to partner... it’s another avenue for information in the community... (Abi) drives clients to the Library – it’s quite significant... there’s been quite a few referrals since Abi started working here... having Abi on board working out of the library one day per week has been very positive – it adds value to what we’re able to do in the community...’ The literacy coordinator at the Library has also done two literacy awareness sessions with Abi.

A strengthened relationship between the Library and the Glenorchy City Council was also observed: ‘our working relationship with GCC is positive and strong... we have open and honest discussions and provide feedback that benefits both of us... the project is another way to strengthen the relationship.’



Is anyone better off?

Case Study 2 – 26TEN Community of Practice

It's like gardening – you plant, reap rewards then have to rebuild...

The Glenorchy 26TEN Community of Practice (CoP) is a story of people who share a common concern about reading, writing and maths across the community. They come together to solve problems, share ideas, support each other and further the goals of 26TEN. It's a diverse group of motivated individuals from the range of Glenorchy's employers, service providers, employment agencies, and Neighbourhood Houses.

The CoP started in 2015 but had lain fallow for some time. It was unseeded, uncultivated and unloved.

A core activity of Building a 26TEN Community has been to revitalise the CoP and harness its efforts and energy to further 26TEN's aims. Its 17 members meet every six weeks with each meeting hosted and chaired by a different member organisation. Being on site like this provides a window into the literacy and numeracy challenges of each other and scaffolds conversations that build commitment and momentum towards improvements.

Nyrstar, one of the world's largest zinc smelters by volume, recently hosted 20 people at a CoP meeting. 'Abi reached out when she (re)started the CoP – myself and a couple of colleagues went along. I met someone from the Migrant Resource Centre at the CoP and I'm now doing a course around literacy in a diverse team... and I met someone from human resources at Metro which has a similar workforce to ours,' said one Nyrstar member. 'It's great to be able to bounce ideas around and share ideas.'

'Everyone genuinely wants to help each other – there was a gap in 26TEN at Nyrstar – someone from five years ago was involved but she left and we've picked it up again. We also had a stall at the Glenorchy Jobs Fair – it was really good.'

The CoP has also made an impression at Eureka Clubhouse, a community-based program that supports people on their mental health recovery journey. Eureka senior worker, Evi, attends the CoP. 'Abi and I got talking and I was invited to the CoP network. I've been going to the meetings with one of our members... it's so helpful and useful meeting others. It's not just 26TEN, it's being part of a community... staying curious about community. Abi helps us connect – we can just call and Abi says yes.'

The revitalised CoP has been a powerful tool in spreading the 26TEN message and engaging key influencers across business and the community service sector. At Nyrstar its Leadership Masterclass sessions were turned over to Abi and Simon (Library literacy



coordinator) to talk about literacy.' We have four different panels (shifts) and we wanted to reach as many people as possible... we have a lot of people who didn't finish year 10 – we now have two people engaged with literacy tutors.'

Local observations

Community coordinator – the coordinator was viewed as skilful in building relationships and connecting individuals and organisations with literacy information and services that meet their needs. One observed: 'It's not (literacy) expertise, it's understanding and being able to work with others.' They are deftly navigating an ambiguous situation: 'I have two bosses who don't always agree.'

Host organisation – GCC is dissatisfied with the role they have as part of the 26TEN Communities Program. They feel they have 'responsibility but not a role... it feels like we've been cut out.' Council developed the project and believe it's being managed outside their control; they feel the role of 'host organisation' is unclear and the value of their contribution is overlooked. This lack of role clarity, and the layers of governance that thwart their full contribution, were identified as issues.

Relationship with Glenorchy Jobs Hub – the community coordinator has established a close working relationship with the Glenorchy Jobs Hub team. They are seen as helping to address one of the top five barriers job seekers face in securing employment: 'she gets what we do'. Individuals with LLN challenges are supported by the community coordinator to address their specific needs, and the jobs coaches have become better at identifying LLND issues and working with job seekers to address them.

Key relationships – school engagement is a work in progress and Metro, which was originally engaged in the project and expected to receive digital literacy support for hundreds of its workers, has not been able to participate due to the impact of COVID and serious staff shortages.

Glenorchy Library – the project acknowledges the strengths and avoids duplication by partnering with Glenorchy Library to deliver LLN one-on-one tutoring and to manage volunteer tutors. It recognises both the lack of capacity of GCC to manage volunteers and the Library's acknowledgement of the value of increased community activity around LLN provided by the project. The Library literacy and community coordinators have delivered workshops together and jointly participated in community events. There has been both agreement and disagreement around DALEP funding priorities.

Service delivery hours – there is a recognised need to offer services outside Monday to Friday and to consider how those services might best be delivered. These suggested changes to service delivery recognise that full-time workers do not currently have access to LLND services outside business hours and that any such services need to be delivered in neutral settings where learners feel comfortable. Transport is also a major issue and there is some reluctance to enter the Glenorchy CBD because of antisocial behaviour.



Program delivery focus – the focus has been on in-house delivery in partnership with community services organisations and businesses. However, there is limited capacity among local providers to partner on LLN programmes given staffing and client demand issues.

6. HUON VALLEY COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Huon 26TEN Community

Project Intent

By offering people opportunities to re-engage with LLN learning and for others to learn the skills needed to tutor LLN, our whole community will reap the benefits of lifelong learning including families, businesses, and the community as a whole.

"26TEN is not just letters and numbers – people need major, major help and deserve to know the joys of it all... the work is amazing. You've got to be the best you can be – it's worth it." Huon Valley Business Owner

Overview

The Huon LLND story is about the people in the Huon Valley working together to create an independent and sustainable 26TEN Community.

The project seeks to raise awareness in all businesses and community groups about the need for conversations that encourage someone to find help with LLN, and to explore ways to keep skilled volunteers who can sustain the learning journey. These conversations and volunteer contributions are driven by the skill and long-term experience of the Huon Valley's 26TEN community coordinator known locally as 'Literacy Lucy'.

Huon 26TEN Community builds on the learnings of their 2015 *Huon 26TEN Community* project which 'made a strong start on awareness of adult literacy and numeracy in the Huon Valley but it is yet to be sustainable'¹³ This new project promotes the positive effects of improved LLND, supports employers to see the advantages of LLND support, and increases LLND delivery in the Huon.

The project is about both community capacity building and literacy support. Increased capacity will be achieved by raising awareness of referral pathways, coordinated literacy services, practising clear communication, reducing stigma and getting grassroots buy-in.

¹³ Geeveston Community Centre, 2020-21 26TEN Communities Program, 2020-21 26TEN Communities Application Form, Application 2021COM01 From Geeveston Community Centre Inc, 26 March 2021



Literacy support will provide better work prospects, address skills gaps, enable access to literacy for life, and deliver more learners and volunteer tutors.

The coordinator is a long-standing member of the Huon Valley community and is based at the Geeveston Community Centre. They are supported by a 26TEN community worker and community members who have a long-established interest in improving literacy.

The application was recommended by the 26TEN Advisory Panel, who noted it will provide solid realistic support to people to improve their literacy and numeracy skills – the main goal of the 26TEN Strategy; and has a strong project team, highly skilled literacy practitioner, strong community relationships, and employer support. It was adjudged good value for money.¹⁴

How much did we do?

The Huon Project Plan provides actions against each of the 26TEN aims, including increasing media presence, awareness and plain English workshops, support for businesses and 26TEN membership, sector cooperation and collaboration, presence at events, recruitment and training of tutors, and increasing learners.

The Huon coordinator is a skilled and experienced literacy practitioner who is on the Board of the Southern Employment and Training Network (Huon Valley Jobs Hub) and was a member of the Premier's Literacy Advisory Panel. They spend two days a week providing tutoring services and support and work with the Huon Valley Library to recruit, train and support volunteers.

Activity Reporting January 2022-June 2023

1. *Everyone knows about adult literacy*

- Steering Committee established; 9 meetings held
- Media stories: 15
- LLN Awareness Workshops: 1 STEPS Literacy Awareness workshop; 16 introductory events to 26TEN and adult literacy
- Workplace grants: 4 contacts. 1 application, 1 successful grant
- New 26TEN membership: 20
- 26TEN morning tea: 30 attendees
- Attendance at community events; 6 including TALL intro with TasTAFE, community consultation re DALEP, Taste of the Huon, PCYC Market, Neighbourhood House Week volunteer promotion, National Simultaneous Storytime

¹⁴ 26TEN Communities Program 2020-2021, *Notes from Advisory Panel Discussion*, 14 April 2021



2. *Everyone is supported to improve their skills to help others*

- New learners: 56*
- Casual learners: 92*
- Total learners: 142*
- Total hours of learner support: 258*
- New volunteers engaged: 30*
- Learner referrals in from local services: 43*
- Learner referrals out to other LLN providers: 4*
- DALEP Community Numeracy Program: 6 participants
- Community Literacy (Photobook): 8 participants

3. *Everyone communicates clearly*

-
- Plain English Workshop: 2 workshops, 28 participants

How well did we do it?

Evaluator Interviews

Duggans – Duggans has a strong commitment to 26TEN and has been engaged for more than five years: The General Manager observed: 'I started to think about work challenges, to look to the future... I connected with 26TEN and their employer grant system. I spoke to Lucy about that.'

'The financial support was important but to have a goal, driver and timeline – when you're in a grant situation, others require you to meet milestones... it gives you something you have to do. Lucy was preferred as our workplace person – she's local, skilled and understands our people.'

'The things that come out – connecting with people's lives, like iTunes, banking, Googling... it's true 26TEN, about people's reading and writing and self-improvement at their own pace.'

Geeveston Community Centre (GeCo) – the Centre Manager says 26TEN is incredibly important: 'It makes a real world of difference. You see guys turn up here in hi-viz and there's no judgement, no sense of stigma, they don't have to check in. It's important for the host organisation to make it easy for Lucy to do what she does.'

'More people know about 26TEN – awareness of something is the first step... Lucy has the long game in mind – some things take ages, that's just the way it is.'

'Having Tricia (26TEN community worker) has been huge... she brings networks, dynamics, areas for 26TEN to move into.'

Tim Tierney – Tim Tierney was a member of the 26TEN Coalition. He has a long history of commitment to 26TEN. 'I learnt it was important having someone capable and paid; that



leadership was required to make it sustainable... We're lucky in the Huon because Lucy is pretty intelligent and capable, she has good engagement with the community and is genuinely committed.'

Wayraparattee (Child and Family Learning Centre) – Lucy engages local families at Wayraparattee in a variety of ways. Centre staff said: 'People now know Lucy, she's expected to be here... she is reaching a lot of different people in the community.' 26TEN posters advertise support for writing resumes, filling out forms and other practical support in the Centre.

'Lucy coming in adds to the capacity of staff in the Centre... Lucy is able to offer families so much more. When she comes in I learn so much more.' Centre staff have attended plain English workshops: 'Everyone found it valuable and it helped us to be mindful of our words.'

Mitchell Plastics – Mitchell Plastics is a company committed to supporting literacy and digital literacy in their workplace. They pay for their employees to attend 26TEN tutoring in work time. 'Lucy spends time doing it all in the background... We gave Lucy the sheets – day works, incident reports – it's hands on and obviously working. It's made a big difference to Mick... we have plans for a new grant – we hope to help at least someone else.'

Is anyone better off?

Case Study 3 – Transforming communities and families one person at a time



Transforming communities and families one person at a time

Kati: From Counting to Canva

I'm very confident with my literacy but my numbers I'm going to work on for life...

When Lucy asked Kati to help with a flyer for a planned numeracy program, Greater than Garlic, at Wayraparattee little did she realise it would start a whole new journey of her own.

Greater than Garlic was a 26TEN program that was really all about maths and with Kati home schooling her five-year-old, it was the perfect opportunity to develop her numeracy skills. 'I was doing okay in my younger years – I did a lot of maths tutoring but it wasn't presented in a practical or exciting enough way to engage me properly – it was too formulaic.'

Yet 'numbers are responsible for everything in the world and outer space but its presented in a boring way. That's why the garlic course was so fantastic – it wasn't just presented in the classroom, we grew garlic. We had to physically apply numbers – volume, area, working out averages, and so on.'

It was also important that the course offered care for her two littlies. 'It was beaut to bring a group of people together with children. It builds community. We had people from diverse backgrounds and some EAL speakers.'

Kati then moved from learner to teacher. She partnered with Lucy to deliver a Photobook workshop, combining to provide literacy and digital skills in a unique way. 'Having kids involved was really special... and it was really special to write a book.'

Next was a Canva workshop. 'I'd been learning lots of tips and tricks and the four-week course taught a range of skills. It included a lot of plain English, making things accessible for a wide range of people... I used a lot of 26TEN resources and guides.' Kati also saw change over the four weeks. 'I saw their confidence grow... they were very excited learning new skills. It builds a lot of skills around them.'

Sam: Coming in from the cold

I needed to get further up the ladder. I hated being in the cold outside in the winter...



The trigger for Sam to take action around his reading and writing was a divorce. 'Being separated was the jolt I needed to be more independent, and with my job here, I needed to be more educated to go up the ladder.'

Sam says his education was 'very limited'... he moved schools a lot. 'I just wasn't a very good reader or speller. My education centred around sport – I was a good footballer. The teachers made me do it out loud in class. I got called dumb.'

Sam works at Huon Valley Council and started his 26TEN journey when Lucy was stationed at the depot a couple of days a week. 'At the time I was a field worker and hadn't done a resume or learnt computer skills. I had privacy with Lucy – she helped me with my writing and replying to my mail. She was chatty, likeable.'

For Sam, learning digital skills has been essential. 'Everything is going from paper to tablets. If you don't use them, you don't get paid!'

Sam admitted he's getting there with his writing, but his spelling is 'a bit ordinary'. But he's confident using the computer – he's managed his mother's finances and used email to advocate for his son's much-needed treatment to Tasmania's Premier. 'I'm confident now, I don't go to Lucy anymore.'

Mick: In good company

I pretty much owe him everything...

Mick's a family man. He bought a house and brought his family to Tasmania for a new job, but it didn't last long. So he left his resume with Mitchell Plastics and he soon had a new job. It changed things for him and his family in ways he couldn't have imagined.

'I was in Burnie doing a leadership course when Brendon (owner of Mitchell Plastics) noticed I wasn't good with my reading and writing. He leaned across and asked me if I wanted help and I said yes... I couldn't even spell my own name in year 10. They kept pushing me through – it was horrible.'

But it wasn't just Brendon who supported Mick. Brad, the production manager, knew the value of 26TEN – he'd done Excel training with Lucy. 'Some guys, one in particular, couldn't write or spell properly. It's important. We get daywork variation sheets that we charge off to the customer. If you can't read it properly or understand it, it costs us money.' The particular guy is Mick: 'now he's jumped over other people – he's improved ten-fold.'

Mick started with Lucy on company time. 'Lucy got onto me at our first meeting – I'm dyslexic... Lucy taught me to break up the syllables or try to think of a word I do know that sounds like that. She's been absolutely phenomenal.' Mick's daughter is also dyslexic. 'Lucy will print off homework for her – she's coming along in leaps and bounds. I'm teaching her.'



Mick shares that quite a lot of people are amazed at how he's progressing: 'Even my wife is happy that I can help my kids with their homework.' But there's more than that on Mick's mind. 'Hopefully there'll be a leadership role down the track. I don't want to be a labourer all my life.'

Local observations

Community coordinator – the Coordinator is known locally as 'Literacy Lucy' – she personifies the ambition of 26TEN and the desire to make progress in achieving aim 2 in the strategic plan, to improve literacy and numeracy skills. They are a skilful, experienced practitioner who is widely respected throughout the Huon Valley. The 'person factor' was seen as very important – 'you need to be a local... they'll smell if you're from Hobart!' A community connector has been added to the 26TEN team two days per week: 'having Tricia on board has been huge... new networks, new dynamics'.

Host organisation – GeCo, the host organisation in the Huon Valley has a very 'hands-off' approach. The Manager is not a member of the steering committee; their role is seen as one of 'making it easy for Lucy to do what she does... providing practical support, including the support of the events programs officer, problem-solving, payroll, bookkeeping, and professional supervision... Lucy contributes to us as a house. She's happy to step up when there's not enough staff... she's one of us and has her own remit.'

Place-based – GeCo acknowledged the importance of the project being place-based: 'it's beautifully place-based so it reflects our community... its important (the project) does reflect our community... Lucy is doing a good job of flexing place-based... (the 26TEN team) saying this is what we need to do doesn't work for us down here.'

The need to find comfortable, neutral learning spaces across the Huon Valley was acknowledged. A new mobile hub has been funded by Bendigo Bank, but appropriate spaces in Dover are hard to find. 'Making sure different regions across the Valley have access and awareness leads to increases in tutors and learners.'

Business relationships – 26TEN in the Huon Valley is well connected with business. Tim Tierney was a member of the 26TEN Coalition for eight years; a business event was convened as part of the 2015 project 'which motivated a number of people to do something'; at least two medium-sized businesses and the Council have had employer grants; and there is active business representation on the steering committee, although one member feels 'there are not enough industry people on it'.

Huon Valley Library – the Library literacy coordinator and 26TEN community coordinator collaborate on supporting tutors and learners, in part geographically, because the Library coordinator is based in Huonville and the 26TEN coordinator is based in Geeveston, and in part to ensure the learner has the right match for their needs and circumstances. 'We're



here for learners and what's best for the learner... where the learner is more comfortable is what we're after.'

DALEP funding has been used for workshops and 'fun, engaging things... Lucy comes up with the program ideas... it's worked fine for us but we would have liked to be a bit more involved.' While there is a long and strong relationship between the Library and Lucy, there was a suggestion that a more formal mechanism for deployment of DALEP funding would be helpful.

Steering Committee – the steering committee is working well, with rotating chair and minute taker with coordination in the background by the community coordinator. Membership is seen as representative of a range of backgrounds and interests and while the committee was described as 'fit-for-purpose', there is a view that it would be better branded as a consultative committee. Challenges include keeping people coming to meetings, ensuring meeting outcomes are clearly defined, developing a cohesive idea of what the overall project is and the outcomes you're looking for.

Funding – the funding flows to GeCo on a calendar year basis which adds complexity to reporting. Alignment with financial years would make the acquittal process easier. There was also a noteworthy underspend which needed to be acquitted before new funds were made available. This led to a flurry of activity which could have been mitigated if there was provision for carryover funds to be invested in line with community need.



7. NORTHERN SUBURBS COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Connecting with literacy across Launceston Northern Suburbs – 26TEN Community Hub Project Intent

Connecting with literacy across Launceston Northern Suburbs 26TEN hub is about supporting people when they need it. Its addressing people's needs "where they're at". By supporting these initial needs, it provides an opportunity to then follow up with further nurturing and support to provide pathways and training to meet their own personal, professional, educational and employment goals.

"On the whole, I really love this program... we don't tend to be experts – we just learn together.." Manager, Host organisation

Overview

The Launceston Northern Suburbs story is about empowerment, growth, and change. The aim is to get back to basics with literacy and numeracy as a powerful starting point.

The project, *Connecting literacy across Launceston Northern Suburbs – 26TEN Community Hub*, spans three Neighbourhood Houses in Launceston's northern suburbs – Starting Point in Ravenswood, and Northern Suburbs Community Centres in Mowbray and Newnham. It seeks to empower volunteers to be part of the solution, to enable members of these low socioeconomic communities to "thrive not survive", and to meet widely varying calls for literacyrelated help – to fill out forms, read a letter, do something online, navigate a new phone or read to a child, for example. Digital literacy is especially important, to address social isolation, access essential services, and ensure technology is used safely.

The community coordinator describes herself as a 'community connector, community responder or community learning advocate' and works across the three Neighbourhood Houses in conjunction with two literacy support staff. Her work focuses on three categories: paid- and volunteer-delivered one-on-one literacy tutoring, walk-in support, and community programs. The coordinator is new to LLN and describes the role as 'encompassing so much more than lining up tutors and learners'.

The application was highly recommended by the 26TEN Advisory Panel, who noted it represents an area of high need, there is excellent understanding of, and relationships with, the community, the proposed hubs at two of the Houses have a focus on literacy, and



members of the project team have skills, background, professional and life experience that can transfer to the project.¹⁵

How much did we do?

The Northern Suburbs project application describes activities under literacy support and community capacity building. Under literacy support, activities include advertising, promotion and engagement with community, learning opportunities, networking and collaboration with local organisations and businesses, and training and support for volunteer tutors. Activities under community capacity building include meetings to identify further action, engagement with local support services and businesses, surveys, and opportunities for employer grants.

The coordinator reported there is no longer a 12 month plan 'because it might not fit with the needs of the community... we originally did but opportunities were missed. It's place-based change and it's important to be able to react, to have time for service and support.'

Activity Reporting January 2022-June 2023

1. *Everyone knows about adult literacy*

- Steering Committee established; 6 meetings held
- Media stories: 1
- LLN Awareness Workshops: 1 workshop, 4 participants
- Workplace grants: referred to 26TEN
- 26TEN events: 23 events, 398 attendees (includes workshops, information sessions, classes and stalls)

2. *Everyone is supported to improve their skills to help others*

- New learners: 93*
- Casual learners: 100*
- Total learners: 137*
- Total hours of learner support: 350*
- New volunteers engaged: 7*
- Learner referrals in from local services: 5*
- Learner referrals out to other LLN providers: 5*

3. *Everyone communicates clearly*

- Plain English Workshop: held at Launceston Library

¹⁵ 26TEN Communities Program 2020-2021, *Notes from Advisory Panel Discussion*, 14 April 2021



How well did we do it?

Evaluator Interviews

Launceston Library – Launceston Library appreciates the capacity the Northern Suburbs project has added to their literacy agenda. They see being place-based is important: 'It's a blessing... the philosophy of outreach, going to where the people are, being communitybased, demonstrating to clients they're valued and the advantage of being in the community... it's meshed in well with our program to spread the word.' The ability to support the 26TEN project in this way 'landed in our lap like manna from heaven... it was a ready-made project to extend what we were doing.'

Literacy support worker – Location, location, location is important to this project: 'Where we are we get a lot of foot traffic. We're right in the heart of the community, people walk past – on any given day when we're open people come in; we're walking distance from anywhere in Ravenswood.' These are the reflections of long-time Ravenswood community, and now literacy support, worker. She reinforces the responsiveness of their approach: 'I don't want anyone to be held back because they can't read or write.'

Northern Suburbs Community Houses – Mowbray and Newnham

The two northern suburbs community houses cover a wide area – Lilydale, Rocherlea, Mayfield, Newnham, Mowbray and Invermay and the manager of the two houses reported there is now a significant migrant community they cater for. 'Our Nepali community meet weekly with three 26TEN volunteers for conversation classes – the volunteers were trained by Taylor and Sharon.' The 26TEN staff work with the migrant communities in creative ways: 'Sharon developed road signs for the Burmese community... she contacted the community for help with translation – we need them to use English.'

The intention of the Northern Suburbs 26TEN program was to train up champions: 'we come from a sustainable point of view – we thought train the trainer... we're spread so thin with volunteers.'

Starting Point Neighbourhood House

Project host, Starting Point Neighbourhood House reflected: 'Digital has struck a chord – COVID has been important for that... we're not getting out to business so much – we didn't appreciate how much time and effort was involved... so much work on the community level hasn't quite happened – in some things we overpromised and underdelivered.'

Is anyone better off?

Case Study 4 – Learners and tutors: A perfect match

Learners and tutors: a perfect match

Hayley – People who can't fill out forms or read to their kids – that devastates me...



Hayley's been part of the Starting Point Neighbourhood House for over nine years. She began with a placement when she was doing her Certificate IV in Community Services. 'I was placed here and I haven't left!' Hayley's since been a community mobiliser, study buddy and more recently CANDO – community advantage development officer.

Now Hayley does one day a week with 26TEN as literacy support worker and lead digital mentor. 'In previous roles I supported a lot of people to get job ready – employment is a strong thing for me to be part of 26TEN. I'm really doing more than one day per week to support the community.'

Hayley says many people who come into the House need support with MyGov: 'They're at risk of not getting their payment, it's a big barrier for people who can't use computers... I find a laptop in a private space or a computer in the computer room. I



like to have a lesson plan but people just come in – it doesn't give me time so I do a lesson plan after the fact and follow up and encourage people to come back.'

Hayley is a very bubbly, infectious, positive influence at the House. 'I couldn't do the community services lingo at the cocktail parties – I just speak me – relatable, genuine.'

Gary – I can read perfectly but get me to try and spell, then I'm up the creek without a paddle

For Gary, Hayley's relatability was just what he needed. He lives at Ravenswood in a caravan in a mate's backyard – a rental was beyond him: 'the bond's nothing,' he said, 'it's the rent that's the killer.'

Gary discovered 26TEN through his involvement with the Men's Shed. 'I came to the Neighbourhood House for a cup of coffee and heard about 26TEN. I said I wouldn't mind doing a computer course so I got myself a laptop.

Learning to use his computer has opened up a whole new world for Gary. 'I've been learning about how to watch out for scammers, use search engines, started using Facebook... I can report my Centrelink things over the internet... I use my computer at night to watch YouTube – I watch different documentaries, movies...'

Hayley also helped Gary get his Working with Vulnerable People Card and a Police check for his volunteering work at the Men's Shed.

'Hayley sits in the background – she doesn't tell you what to do – she asks "is that right?"... She has a little joke and laugh, builds up your confidence. When you do something wrong, she doesn't shoot you down in flames. The best part about doing the course with her (Hayley) is there's never a dull moment.'

Mani – I wouldn't have got this job if I hadn't improved my English

Mani is from Bhutan. He arrived in Launceston in 2013 after 20 years in a refugee camp in Nepal. 'I didn't have good English when I arrived,' he shared. 'It was difficult explaining to others – some people were not understanding me, I had a problem.'

Not only has Mani's English come a long way thanks to Sharon, the local 26TEN literacy support worker, but so has his role in the Northern Suburbs community. Mani formed the Australian Bhutanese Society of Northern Tasmania in June 2013, and since 2016, he has been the coordinator of the L2P driver training program.

'Sharon helps me with my writing, speaking and pronunciation – I write a summary and Sharon critiques my words. She has a really good technique – never angry, encouraging me... Sometimes I make a very long sentence then she cuts it in the middle to make a



“sensible sentence”. She writes some paragraphs and gets me to read it for my pronunciation. We use the computer and the dictionary.’



As part of his role as L2P coordinator, Mani must write reports and submit them to the state coordinator. 'I wouldn't have got this job if I hadn't improved my English,' Mani said. 'I look after everyone in the Northern Suburbs – people from Bhutan, Sudan, Philippines, Burma, Ethiopia, and local people, people who are socially isolated. I help them get their licence with volunteer mentors.'

Local observations

Community coordinator and Literacy Support Workers – the coordinator was viewed as a very good match for the needs of the Northern Suburbs communities. While new to a leadership role, they were seen as having the care and knowledge needed for the role and the ability to work at a grassroots level,.

There has been some juggling of hours within the funding envelop – the coordinator started on 15 hours per week and is now 24 hours including some funding from the Library. The two literacy support workers provide six hours' support per house per week – one across the two Northern Suburbs Houses, and the other dedicated to Starting Point. Managing across three sites has been challenging for the coordinator.

Host organisation – the Starting Point Neighbourhood House is the lead host organisation – the managers of the three Neighbourhood Houses often collaborate on funding opportunities and share the management of different projects. Starting Point provides the project with 'back-end' support, and both managers are available to the coordinator to use as a sounding board, to add oversight and shared understanding of the project, and to check in when needed. Staying 'close to the funder' (26TEN) was seen as important, although it was noted the project is still at the 'storming, forming' stage.

There was mixed value expressed in being part of the Neighbourhood Houses: 'Being based at the Neighbourhood Houses is very important... for a lot of people in those communities a trip into town is rare... to actually get people into this library is an enormous task.' But there was recognition there needed to be support provided in a safe space outside the houses: 'they're quite connected to the community but also restrictively connected... there are already people going to the Houses and those who don't probably never will.' There is a need to consider how to widen effective reach.

Activity planning – The Northern Suburbs project has a more reactive, opportunistic operational model than the other projects. The focus is on responding to the immediate, liferelated literacy needs presenting in their communities – NDIS, Centrelink, being able to send and read texts, fill out forms and so on. To meet these and other requirements, there is an emphasis on digital literacy and using assistive technology: 'for some people it's all they want... (people) have an immediate stress taken away, like their job's on the line. They can use technology straight away and can be more prepared to go on the longer literacy journey'.



Launceston Library – the Library has had a focus on assistive technology and has trained the community coordinator and the two literacy support workers to deliver digital skills that help community members in their everyday lives. ‘People are carrying around in their pockets, something that can really help them with their literacy needs...’ The Library has provided practical support to 26TEN and, in return, report getting a lot of referrals from 26TEN.

Steering Committee – there has been limited commitment and significant challenges getting consistent attendance at steering committee meetings, which is chaired by the coordinator and ‘feels (its) like a bit of a show and tell’. The July meeting, observed by the evaluator, was the first for 2023. Terms of Reference were tabled to build a shared understanding of the role.



8. PROGRAM-WIDE OBSERVATIONS

Simplifying the program model

The Communities Program model is complex. It has State Government connections through the state service hierarchy (26TEN ⇒ Libraries Tasmania ⇒ DCYP and to State Growth through Skills Tasmania) and has political connections through the 26TEN Coalition to the Minister. It has community connections through the host organisation and the steering committees; one community also has political and bureaucratic connections through local government.

Against this backdrop, the Program aims to be long-term, place-based and community led. Communities are commissioned to deliver outputs, outcomes and impacts, but must also include particular structural elements in the design of the projects: a lead/host organisation, steering committees, and a community coordinator, and reporting against a uniform set of measures. It begs the question: what does place-based and community-led mean in practice?

The assumed shared understanding of the scope of 'long-term, place-based and communityled' projects that deliver on the needs of local communities within the goal and aims of 26TEN needs to be more explicitly agreed. This will clarify the policy intention of the Communities Program and help define the relationships and expectations of all stakeholders.

Recommendation 1: That 26TEN convenes a workshop with all Communities Program stakeholders that considers the policy intention, relationships and expectations of stakeholders and agrees a Memorandum of Understanding as the foundation document of the Program.

Fit-for-purpose funding model

The funding model and agreement are not fit for purpose. The Program is still administered like a grants program, with funds provided on a short-term basis. There is no guarantee of the four- or five-year funding assumed in the project applications. Given this funding approach, there is a lack of job security for the community coordinators. There has also been pressure from the 26TEN team to acquit funds on an annual basis, with a push to disperse 'underspends' before new funding is released.

A focus on achieving clearly agreed outcomes, with appropriate milestones for the full life of each project, could lead to a lighter touch on annual acquittal and more community discretion on spending priorities in line with a commissioning model. This would align with a 26TEN belief that communities have 'absolute discretion' over funding.

While there is no one definition of commissioning, a commissioning model in the social services sector generally starts with a clear understanding of population need, followed by development of a commissioning plan and effective relationships with providers, shaping



payments and incentives in a contractual agreement, acquiring and analysing information about provider performance, and reviewing progress.¹⁶

Primary Health Tasmania offers a clear view of their approach to commissioning:

Primary Health Tasmania's commissioning is focused on ensuring outcomes for local communities and populations – not just delivering activity.

Implementation of the model involves four phases in a cyclical process: assessing needs (at the local level), designing solutions (working with others), implementing solutions (procuring and proactively working with providers to monitor performance and progress), and evaluating outcomes (efficiency and effectiveness).¹⁷

There is an opportunity to learn from the approach to funding of the Jobs Hubs by Jobs Tasmania (Department of State Growth). In providing multi-year funding to the Jobs Hubs, Jobs Tasmania has used a similar funding instrument to that used by 26TEN. However, there is a single agreement guaranteeing the flow of multi-year funding (\$1,625,000 over three years) subject to relatively straightforward conditions (Conditions precedent). There is no clawback clause.

Funding of both these longer-term programs would benefit from a much simpler outcomesoriented agreement based on a commissioning model.

Recommendation 2: That 26TEN explores opportunities to develop a plain English funding agreement for the purpose of more effective commissioning of long-term, outcomesoriented projects.

Recommendation 3: That 26TEN defines a commissioning model to ensure there is shared understanding of the approach and adopts a multi-year funding agreement for new projects with agreed conditions/outcomes in line with the commissioning model.

Role of 26TEN team as a backbone organisation

The 26TEN team is sandwiched between the Government's and Coalition's expectations and requirements, and each community's place-based knowledge, community leadership and response to their community's needs. They also bring their own set of expectations.

The team identifies itself as the 'backbone' organisation in a collective impact model, 'a separate organization with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the

¹⁶ Dickinson H, 2015, *Commissioning public services evidence review: Lessons for Australian public services*, Melbourne School of Government, University of Melbourne

¹⁷ <https://www.primaryhealthtas.com.au/what-we-do/commissioning/>, accessed 08 September 2023



entire initiative and coordinate participating organisations and agencies... The work of a backbone organisation is complex... their work is largely behind the scenes'.¹⁸

The 26TEN team provides staff and skills to the Communities Program but its governance responsibilities as funder and administrator, and expectations of government and the Coalition, make it difficult to work behind the scenes. It appears to be more contract and program administrator than overseeing a commissioning model.

With a focus on outcomes, the 26TEN team could reduce some of its direct, operational support and provide more agile, nuanced, 'scaffolding' support, and mentorship to the Program as the backbone. Contributions may include developing a reference guide to successful community projects, more promotional resources, comprehensive communications, facilitating a statewide Community of Practice, and continuing professional development.

A change in the emphasis of the 26TEN team's role would also create a space for a different conversation with, and role for, the host organisations, which vary across the four communities.

Recommendation 4: That 26TEN convenes a roundtable conversation with the four communities to identify the role and value of a backbone organisation in the context of the Communities Program and to scope the best investment of 26TEN team expertise in the Program.

Aligning to a common agenda

A common agenda is a condition of collective impact and acts as the shared vision for change – a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed actions.

The agenda of 26TEN (team and Coalition) and the agendas of the communities as set out in their project applications are not always in synch. 26TEN has a clear focus on literacy learners and tutors and requires coordinators to have literacy expertise.

The communities each have their own vision for change. They each have a different approach, emphasis and mix of activities for the delivery of LLND services, and some place greater emphasis on community development and capacity building. While the former effort is reported in line with 26TEN expectations, much of the latter effort goes unreported and unrecognised.

¹⁸ Shiloh Turner, Kathy Merchant, John Kania & Ellen Martin 2012, *Understanding the Value of Backbone Organizations in Collective Impact: Part 1*, Stanford Social Innovation Review July 2012



Recommendation 5: That 26TEN recognises and reports the power and importance of community development activities in changing literacy standards in Tasmania.

The importance of mutually reinforcing activities

‘Mutually reinforcing activities’ are another condition of collective impact and require the mobilisation of differentiated, coordinated activities – organisational, institutional and business – in support of achieving the common agenda. The involvement of a range of players in a collective impact effort builds capacity and contributes to sustainability.

The engagement, and types of engagement, of organisations and business across the four communities varies greatly. There is limited capacity for some coordinators to build and develop relationships that result in wider community contributions to the literacy goal. Both steering committees (or similar community-led committee) and host organisations have an important role to play in the development of strategic partnerships and services that deliver on the common agenda and agreed plan of action.

For host organisations to take up this role will require increased clarity about their role and expectations. Currently two of the host organisations have a relatively hands-off auspicing approach, including limited or no participation on the steering committee; one auspices, participates on the steering committee, and brings collective impact experience; the fourth host organisation has commitment, capability and desire to build capacity across their community and would like to be a more active participant in the project.

Recommendation 6: That host organisations of future projects are required to play a more active role in facilitating mutually reinforcing activities to contribute to long-term sustainability; and advocate for, and actively participate in the steering, or other appropriate community-based, committee.

Recommendation 7: That 26TEN explores the potential to establish a statewide LLN Community of Practice to lay the groundwork for new communities as they come on stream, and to build the capacity for mutually reinforcing activities.

Understanding not only where, but how, change can happen

The policy intention and ethos of the Communities Program is community-led. Communities recognise their strengths and opportunities to increase awareness of, and access to, literacy and numeracy services. They understand where change can happen and bring insights into how it might be possible to enter the lives of people who don’t readily ask for help. They understand *There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives* (writer and activist Audre Lorde) and recognise there are almost always deeper issues at play with people experiencing low literacy and numeracy.

Learning to read and write at or above level 3 on the Australian Core Skills Framework as an adult takes a long time, is really hard and many don’t have the capacity to consider it in



an otherwise demanding life. Those who can make the commitment could be supported to access the Library Literacy Service.

It may be time to re-examine what is meant by functional literacy, the role the Communities Program needs to play in its delivery, and the value of short-term support in literacy for work and life including, for example, financial literacy, health literacy, English language proficiency for those writing and speaking English as an additional language, and the use of assistive technology.

Recommendation 8: That 26TEN considers the role, value and professional development needed to support communities to meet learners' short-term needs so they can function more effectively in work and life.

Community coordinators

The community coordinators were all celebrated for their various skills, creativity and ability to build relationships across their communities. They have varying degrees of expertise in adult literacy and different approaches to providing tutoring support to learners. Two have extensive skills and experience in teaching literacy and tutoring learners one-on-one; one refers learners to the Library Literacy Service, while the fourth coordinator is supported by two literacy support workers. It was suggested the program is conceived as a 'mini library literacy service with a whole heap of other responsibilities around awareness, community engagement and short programs'.

The coordinator role was widely acknowledged by stakeholders as very broad with many competing demands. Getting clarity about how the community projects complement existing literacy services, and the difference the projects can make in building capacity in community, will influence the role of the coordinators and the expertise needed to deliver it.

Recommendation 9: That 26TEN engages coordinators and host organisations in a roundtable conversation about the role and scope of the coordinator role and how best to deliver both literacy services and community capacity building.

Defining success

There doesn't seem to be a clear, shared understanding of what success looks like in the Communities Program.

The focus of 26TEN has been on measuring learner and volunteer numbers and skill levels to help reach the 26TEN goal. The focus of each community's measures of success, which are described in detail in their applications for funding, is on how much and how well they will provide services and support in line with their local understanding of the needs that



shaped their project. This means success factors vary across projects and across communities.

However, it is not an either/or equation – understanding success needs to embrace both the 26TEN ambition and the local changes that are achieved in each community's project. A more robust approach to commissioning projects, appropriate scoping of each funding agreement, and a more nuanced approach to project reporting will support better definition and reporting of success. RBA also needs to include program/project measures of effort, effect, and outcomes, not only population and client measures.

Recommendation 10: That measures of success that include 26TEN and project measures are explicitly negotiated through the engagement phase of project commissioning and inform the performance requirements of the funding agreement.

Measurement and reporting

With contributions to the achievement of 26TEN goal and aim 2 at the heart of what was expected of the Community Program, program measurement has focused on indicators of learner and volunteer engagement, with 10 quantitative measures initially selected using a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach. An 11th measure, 'Activities', is reported qualitatively. In October 2022, three measures were dropped and reporting moved from weekly to monthly. Coordinators are also required to complete learner surveys, case studies and a professional reflection record.

The 26TEN measurement regime was the subject of a co-design process between 26TEN and the coordinators early, possibly too early, in the implementation phase of the Program. There were concerns expressed by a host organisation about engagement in this co-design process. It is noted that communities identified what they intended to measure in their applications but this does not seem to be taken into account in the design of measures and the reporting regime.

The information collected is reported to the 26TEN Coalition quarterly, but it is unclear how it is used for program management and improvement. Data collection, extraction and reporting are manual and onerous.

Community coordinators are also required to provide extensive six-monthly reports using a text-based 'Smarty Grants' template. This reporting is not directly related to the weekly/monthly reporting described above, nor to the performance requirements of the Funding Agreement. The narrative style of these reports also makes it difficult to look across the performance and activities of the four communities to get a strategic view of the Program.

They do demonstrate there is a lot going on in each community.

Coordinators also report separately to their steering committee and host organisation.



Recommendation 11: That 26TEN:

- Re-engages communities in developing a simplified, streamlined set of indicators that reflect the work of the projects and are useful for understanding project performance and where project improvements need to occur
- Develops simplified reporting processes through a fit-for-purpose reporting platform.

Marketing and communications

In line with the first aim of the 26TEN ten-year strategy, a key to realising the effectiveness of the Communities Program is raising awareness. There is a need for a comprehensive social marketing campaign to bring adult literacy and numeracy properly into the light. It is 'the missing piece' and has been identified as a priority by others. Recommendation 6 of the fiveyear review identified the need to:

Develop a marketing campaign based on: knowledge of effective national and international stigma-reduction campaigns; feedback from current and past learners on what induced them to act; and feedback and ideas from Network members.¹⁹

In their report, *Lifting Literacy*, the expert panel also identified the need for a marketing campaign:

Initiate a community-wide campaign to lift literacy in Tasmania. This should build on existing work and aim to lift literacy aspirations, address stigma, and encourage all Tasmanians, no matter their age, to further develop their literacy knowledge, understanding, and skills.²⁰

Social marketing campaigns like *Life. Be in it.* and *Slip. Slop. Slap.* have been instrumental in changing behaviours over decades. They are based on rigorous research and connect to motivational and emotional factors that change behaviours. Neuroscience tells us that what we think is what we feel which in turn motivates behaviour and action. A considered, longterm approach is needed.

Within the Communities Program, there is also a need for a stronger marketing and communications presence and support from the 26TEN team. A marketing toolkit, support with event promotion, and templates for posters promoting events would be a good start.

Recommendation 12: That the 26TEN Coalition includes a bid for a long-term comprehensive social marketing campaign that is designed to achieve changes to attitudes about, and behaviours towards, getting LLND support.

¹⁹ 26TEN 2020, *26TEN in 2020: How far we've come as a state towards better adult literacy and numeracy in Tasmania and what we've learned*, Tasmanian Government

²⁰ Literacy Advisory Panel 2023, *Final Report to Government: Lifting Literacy*, Tasmania



Recommendation 13: That the 26TEN team engages with communities to understand the need and deliver increased communications support to their projects.

Challenge of volunteers

The communities and 26TEN acknowledged the challenge of getting volunteer tutors and recognised the importance of local tutors. They also reflected on the time and resources needed to manage a volunteer workforce. Part of the reason is the sometimes haphazard attendance of learners at appointments. One coordinator spends considerable time ensuring the learner is committed to attending the appointment as insurance to keeping the volunteer on board.

It was suggested that there is sufficient budget for coordinators to get administrative support for volunteer management.

Recommendation 14: That 26TEN and communities explore options for cost-effective volunteer recruitment and management.

Impact of Covid

It is noted that early implementation of the Communities Program was impacted by the COVID19 pandemic. Individuals were reluctant to attend individual and group learning spaces and there was an impact on the ability to recruit volunteer tutors, which persisted even after Tasmania's border reopened on 15 December 2021, six months into the launch of the Program. This needs to be taken into account when assessing project performance.



9. CONCLUSION

The Communities Program is an effective community engagement program to further the goal and aims of 26TEN. The work of the communities to date – with the support of 26TEN – while not measured in population terms, is making a difference to individual lives, one person at a time.

Importantly, in some communities, it is building the capacity of the community to further their literacy aims and ambitions over the longer term. While it is too early in the Program's implementation to assess the social impact and social return on investment, the impact is tangible among those who have engaged with the projects. This is demonstrated in the case studies from each community and the observations of stakeholders under *How well did you do it?*

The recommendations in the previous chapter identify changes that can be made to the Program to improve its performance and community relevance, and make better use of resources. Important among these is the need for a stronger authorising environment and imprimatur from key stakeholders to implement truly long-term, place-based, community-led projects. A Memorandum of Understanding among the web of stakeholders with a stake in the Program can underpin not only a shared understanding, but the authority to more fully apply the ideas of place-based and community-led. It will set out how far governments and agencies are prepared to go in enabling and empowering communities to deliver what needs to be delivered.

It is also important to recognise the Program is in its infancy and learning from the experience of participants is key to building and developing it for even better results. There needs to be further development of the policy ethos of collective impact, and translating the theory into practice in ways that support communities to achieve their outcomes and deliver social impact. This will help clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure that all players are doing what they do best – the 26TEN team, host organisations, steering committees, and community coordinators.

The four community coordinators are all working hard to deliver results for their communities. They are widely regarded and respected for the work they do. Each community has its strengths and focus and the coordinator is seeking to harness those strengths across a broad range of activities. Their commitment, drive, expertise and creativity have propelled the projects forward, some with limited support from their hosts or steering committees. More fully addressing roles and responsibilities will further strengthen the effectiveness of the projects.

Finally, a commitment to five-year funding will ensure that this place-based, community-led approach is given time to fully prove itself in contributing to increases in literacy and numeracy skills across the spectrum of needs.