



COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CONNECTIONS

Welcome to Community Enterprise Connections

Welcome to our second edition of *Connections*.

Things are picking up as we head into the second quarter of a new year. We are getting ready to shoot a DVD highlighting Community Enterprise case studies and we are putting the finishing touches on our Resource Kit—both of which will be launched in May (fingers crossed)!

Planning is also well underway for a Community

Enterprise Conference scheduled for this August.

And of course, things are progressing with the sites we are working with across the state. They are busy planning everything from recycling enterprises to those that address issues of food security at a local level.

The focus of this edition is on employment. For the BSL, this is why we're involved in Community

Enterprise—to create supportive work environments that provide a stepping stone to jobs in the open labour market.

While every community has its own unique reason for working in this space, jobs are often part of the equation.

We hope you find the information and stories helpful for your own work in Community Enterprise.

- The CEDI Team



Brotherhood of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

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Community Enterprise in Your Town—HomeGround

Since 2005, HomeGround Garden Maintenance Service has used gardening services to provide casual work and traineeships to unemployed residents in the Broadmeadows Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) area. The enterprise aims to improve the look of the community by providing a service to local residents 'that will go in and tidy up the place, and do it at a reasonable cost.'

As a provider of homelessness services, HomeGround's Alan Wood said "we were quite aware that people had limited opportunities to break out of that cycle of homelessness and unemployment and poverty....(and) being within a sector that relies on tendering for government contracts we were drawn to the opportunity to try and establish something that could sustain itself."

The enterprise grew slowly, using tools and machinery from the tool

library that was set up with a grant from NR. Alan hired a gardener and started mowing lawns at no charge 'just to see how it worked.'

Their contracts with St Vincent de Paul and another transitional housing provider have allowed HomeGround to subsidise a low-cost gardening service to residents. As the business has grown, the gardener role has moved from a part-time to a full-time position. The business also relies on casual staff living in the NR area when it gets busy. Alan reflects "for the casuals it's made a huge difference to them, their confidence has grown, their preparedness to have a go at doing things."

A major win came in 2006, when HomeGround secured an Immediate Improvements contract with the Department for Human Services to deliver work in the Broadmeadows area. This has

allowed them to employ three full time staff and underpins the sustainability of the business.

The business' growth and achievements to date have seen Alan move from a program management role to managing the development of this and other community enterprise opportunities for HomeGround. Other community enterprise opportunities that HomeGround will be exploring include removals, cleaning and home maintenance.

With Alan now able to give his full attention to the enterprise, he is looking forward to growing the business by devoting more energy to marketing and tendering for contracts, using the skills he's learnt over the last two years to write a business plan, and being a more hands on manager.



HomeGround Garden Maintenance
Broadmeadows

Community Enterprise in Any Town—Bromley By Bow, UK



More information can be found on the website: www.bbhc.org.uk.

Communities often gravitate to the concept of ‘hubs’. What defines something as a hub is ‘a centre around which other things revolve or from which they radiate.’ The classic ‘community hub’ is the town square—a place where people gather, swap advice and obtain services. In modern days, these often have to be carefully constructed as we become more and more focussed on the individual, rather than community.

Bromley-by-Bow, a suburb in London characterised by high levels of disadvan-

tage, has built an elaborate hub that includes:

- A Centre
- An Enterprise Hub

At the Centre, over 100 activities and services are offered every week in the areas of art, health, enterprise, learning and environment.

Everything that Bromley-by-Bow does is grounded by three values: integration, excellence and partnership.

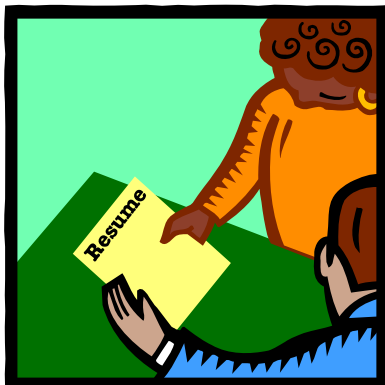
The Enterprise Hub operates eight social enterprises that provide services ranging from cater-

ing, public art and murals, graphic design, beauty salon and more. They’ve become such a classic case study for community development, service delivery and enterprise that they have formed an enterprise that provides tours and seminars on the Bromley-by-Bow Model as well as consulting services.

Surpluses from any of the businesses go to supporting the Bromley-by-Bow Centre.

To learn more, visit their website at: www.bbhc.org.uk or contact connect@bbhc.org.uk

“..there is probably a critical point where an enterprise puts itself at risk if it starts to rely for too great a percentage of its ongoing or operational costs on income from funding or grants (as opposed to earned income).”



Feature: Community Enterprise as a Pathway to Work

Why is The Brotherhood of St Laurence working in community enterprise?

BSL work with communities on High Rise Public Housing Estates in Fitzroy and Collingwood highlighted the failure of mainstream employment vehicles such as Job Network, which is premised on matching unemployed people with jobs, to effectively meet the employment needs of these communities.

The high-rise estates are highly disadvantaged, with up to 95% of households jobless. Most unemployed residents are long-term unemployed with a large number that employers would categorise as ‘unemployable’. Most residents are not ready for the open labour market, but many are enthusiastic and really want to work.

The missing piece is a bridge that prepares long-term unemployed people for the open labour market. The bridge needs to include:

- A real, fixed term job (work history)

- Accredited training (qualifications)
- Additional workplace support
- Clear pathways to jobs in the open labour market at conclusion.

BSL identified a need to start up its own businesses to provide the jobs.

BSL started a cleaning business in partnership with the Adult Multicultural Education Service in 2004 based on cleaning contracts within both organisations. This business employs 7 part-time trainees. The trainees are recruited from the Fitzroy and Collingwood Public Housing Estates, they are doing Certificate III in Asset Maintenance and they are supported in their roles by a manager and through a Field Support Worker. A job with the cleaning company lasts for 12 months. Over 25 people have passed through the business with 75% moving into jobs in the open labour market.

The enterprise is the bridge between long-term unemployment and the open labour market. It

turns over and replaces all of its trainees each year. This bridge model is more commonly called the Intermediate Labour Market.

The income for the enterprise is generated through contracts, traineeship incentives and contributions from Job Networks, for whom our jobs provide outcomes. The enterprise pays all associated operating costs and runs surpluses. On the back of our experience in the cleaning enterprise, BSL has established a street cleaning business, two gardening / landscaping businesses and a security related business. Collectively the enterprises employ 37 trainees, 10 supervisory staff and turn over \$2.2 million annually.

Most of the work is based on contracts from government and other community sector agencies who believe that the social benefits of this work are worth investing in as long as the quality of the work and the price are similar to for-profit providers.

Community Enterprise as a Pathway to Work, cont.

Government and philanthropic organisations have also been investors, with Neighbourhood Renewal, Department for Victorian Communities and Regional Partnerships investing capital at start-up.

All of the enterprises provide entry level jobs in industries which are labour intensive and where

there are skills shortages and therefore clear pathways into jobs in the open labour market. To impact on a large number of people it is important that there are lots of jobs available every year.

This work impacts positively in the communities where we work too. It challenges the concept that being unemployed is

the norm. BSL directly manages these businesses. Global Landscapes in Braybrook has a Community Advisory Committee and we are open to exploring opportunities for great community involvement in management.



Community Calendar

Facts & Figures—Long-Term Unemployment in Australia

We've all heard how *low* the unemployment rate is, but in our work, it is clear that behind this number are a huge number of people who are underemployed, long-term unemployed or not actively participating in the workforce at all.

In November 2005:

- The unemployment rate was 4.6%
- The long-term unemployment rate was .9%
- 16.5% of unemployed people were long-term unemployed (12+months)
- The underemployment rate was 5.3%
- The labour force underutilization rate was 10.5%
- (unemployed + underemployed as % of the labour force)

The average length of unemployment by age group (rounded to the nearest whole week):

20-24	32 weeks
25-34	31 weeks
35-44	43 weeks
45-54	63 weeks
55+	84 weeks

From ABS Labour Market Statistics Reports 6105.0-January 2007

We would love to hear from you! If you have any comments or suggestions about this newsletter, please contact Annie at 9445 2408 or adunn@bsl.org.au.

We are already looking for stories to share in our next issue of Community Enterprise Connections—so if your community has something to share—please let us know and we will do our best to feature your community in issues to come.

Save the Date—24 May, 2006

Launch of the BSL Community Enterprise Resource Kit and DVD

At long last, we will be launching our Resource Kit along side a DVD showcasing a variety of Community Enterprises across Victoria. Please come for the celebration and an overview of how to use the resource kit in your community.

4-5 June 2007, Melbourne

Communities in Control Conference

As the national conversation about community priorities continues to evolve, leaders of the nation's community groups, local, state and federal government officials and business leaders will gather for Communities in Control 2007. This year's conference will focus on the need for community organisations to be central to the search for policy solutions. More information: [click here](#)

28-29 August, 2007, Melbourne

Community Enterprise Conference

Join speakers **John Pearce** (UK), author of 'Social Enterprise in Anytown' and **Jill Jordan** (QLD), the driver behind the Malaney cooperative movement in a two-day conference on Community Enterprise. See p. 4 for more details.

For a listing of events in your area, check the following websites:

- www.acc.gov.au and follow the links to your local ACC
- www.business.vic.gov.au
- Your local chamber of commerce

SAVE THE DATE—Community Enterprise Conference in August!

Community Enterprises are sprouting up all across Victoria—but there are few resources or forums to discuss these initiatives or to build on their success.

In response to this lack of opportunity, CEDI is hosting a two-day conference that will provide relevant information, support, inspiration and a chance to network across sectors and among peers.

We will be covering everything from the basics—'what is community enterprise and how do you do it' to some strategic issues facing the sector such as social procurement, measuring social impact, and community ownership.

Keynote speakers will include **John Pearce** (UK), author of *'Social Enterprise in Anytown'* and **Jill Jordan** (QLD), the driver behind the Malaney cooperative movement, making Malaney the town with the third largest number of cooperatives in the world (18).

More details will be available soon—but for now—**SAVE THE DATE!**



SAVE THE DATE!

28–29 August 2007

Melbourne Town Hall

Registration information to follow.

Community Enterprise Conference 28 & 29 August, 2007 Melbourne Town Hall



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