UNSW SYDNEY

Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania: A Study in Community Development and Self-Help

Author:
Dean, Elizabeth; Boland, Cathy; Jamrozik, Adam

Publication details:
Working Paper No. 74
Reports and Proceedings
0858237296 (ISBN)

Publication Date:
1988

DOI:
https://doi.org/10.26190/unsworks/1011

License:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/au/
Link to license to see what you are allowed to do with this resource.

Downloaded from http://hdl.handle.net/1959.4/45326 in https://unsworks.unsw.edu.au on 2024-04-17

SWRC Reports and Proceedings

No 74 July 1988

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES IN TASMANIA: A STUDY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-HELP

by

Elizabeth Dean, Cathy Boland and Adam Jamrozik

Social Welfare Research Centre
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
P.O. BOX 1 • KENSINGTON • NEW SOUTH WALES • AUSTRALIA • 2033

SWRC REPORTS AND PROCEEDINGS
No. 74 July 1988

Reprinted January 1990

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES IN TASMANIA: A STUDY IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SELF HELP

by

Elizabeth Dean, Cathy Boland and Adam Jamrozik

ISSN 0159 9607
ISBN 0 85823 729 6

Social Welfare Research Centre
The University of New South Wales
P O Box 1 · Kensington · NSW · 2033 · Australia

Printed on the inside and outside back cover is a complete list of the Reports and Proceedings series of the Social Policy Research Centre.

For further enquiries about the work of the Centre, or about purchasing our publications, please contact the Publications Officer, Jennifer Young at the SPRC, University of New South Wales, PO Box 1, Kensington, NSW, 2033. Phone: (02) 697 5150.

As with all issues in the Reports and Proceedings series, the views expressed in this publication do not represent any official position on the part of the Centre. The Reports and Proceedings are produced to make available the research findings of the individual authors, and to promote the development of ideas and discussions about major areas of concern in the field of Social Welfare.

FOREWORD

Community development, self-help, community work -these are terms which are frequently encountered in social welfare literature. The meaning given to these terms is often varied and not always clear. Similarly, the concept of a neighbourhood house or neighbourhood centre has found its place in discussions on community services but the concept lacks clarity. There are very few studies of programs in which these concepts have been applied in practice and then systematically analysed.

This study records the experiences of people involved in the development of a neighbourhood house program in one Australian State - Tasmania. The study was not intended to be, and should not be seen as, an evaluation of that program. Rather, it was undertaken as a case study with the purpose of examining and illustrating the processes which took place in the development of the program and identifying some of the issues that arise in the application of the concepts of community development and self-help. As such, the study should be of interest to the readers and of particular value to those social welfare workers who are interested in becoming (or already are) involved in community work. The empirical data for this report was collected some time ago (late 1985) but the issues analysed in the report are as important today as they have always been.

The report analyses the events and processes through which the concept of a neighbourhood house came to be translated into a State-wide program. It examines the various stages in the evolution of the program and identifies some of the dilemmas faced by community groups and professionals in community work. For professional social welfare workers as well as for government and non-government organisations this study poses the question: how can social movements 'from below' be promoted and/or assisted without the movements and the ideas they might want to pursue being 'taken over' and integrated into the system of welfare services directed 'from above'? Can the state through its provision of material and human resources be an enabler without being a controller?

The project on which this report is based was commissioned by the Social Welfare Research Centre to Elizabeth Dean who conducted the research and was also the main author of the report. Cathy Boland and Adam Jamrozik contributed to the report by further analysis of data, extending the background bibliography, writing of some parts of this report, and editing.

The study would not have been possible without assistance from many people. We want to thank particularly Mr D. Daniels, Director of the Department for Community Welfare, Tasmania, and his Staff; the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Hobart; and, above all, the co-ordinators and committee members of the neighbourhood houses who provided us with most of the data - verbal and written - for this report. Our thanks also go to Jennifer Young and Marea Godthelp for typing the report and preparing the printer's copy.

Elizabeth Dean
Cathy Boland
Adam Jamrozik

CONTENTS

		Page
Foreword		i
List of Tables		v
CHAPTER 1 : The Aim of Study and Content of This Report		
1.1	What is a Neighbourhood House?	1
1.2	Tasmania as a Case Study	1
CHAPTER 2 : Concepts of Self-Help and Community Development		
2.1	Welfare Ideology	7
2.2	Self-Reliance and Self-Help	8
2.3	Community Development	11
CHAPTER 3 : Community Development, Self-Help, and the Neighbourhood House Movement in Australia		
3.1	Models and Concepts	17
3.2	Commonwealth Initiatives	17
3.3	The States	19
CHAPTER 4 : Tasmanian Environment of Neighbourhood Houses		
4.1	Locality of Houses	23
4.2	Background to the Establishment of Neighbourhood Houses	25
4.3	Initiatives and Reasons for Setting up Houses	32
4.4	Initiatives and Involvement of State Government	37
4.5	Assistance from Commonwealth Government	39
4.6	Assistance from Local Government	40
CHAPTER 5 : Neighbourhood Houses in Operation		
5.1	Management	41
5.2	Personnel and People Involved	44
5.3	Activities and Programs	46
5.4	Funding	50

CHAPTER 6 : Neighbourhood Houses : Performance Outcomes and Effects

6.1 Trends and Directions in Development 53
6.2 Changes Over Time 55
6.3 Achievements and Effects 57
6.4 Problematic Areas 60

CHAPTER 7 : Conclusions and Implications

7.1 Neighbourhood Houses as Community Development 63
7.2 Neighbourhood Houses as Self-Help 65
7.3 Neighbourhood House as a Welfare Service 67
7.4 The Future of Neighbourhood Houses : Community Development, Self-Help, or a Welfare Service? 70

BIBLIOGRAPHY 73

APPENDIX: Questionnaire used in the study. 77

TABLES

TABLE 4.1 : Demographic Characteristics of the Population in the Suburbs/Towns of Neighbourhood Houses 26

TABLE 4.2 : Labour Force Participation and Unemployment Rates in the Suburbs/Towns of Neighbourhood Houses 27

TABLE 4.3 : Educational Attainment of the Population in the Suburbs/Towns of Neighbourhood Houses 28

TABLE 4.4 : Initiatives, Sources of Interest, Methods and Length of Time in the Establishment of Houses 34

TABLE 5.1 : Activities Conducted in Neighbourhood Houses 49

CHAPTER 1

THE AIM OF STUDY AND CONTENT OF THIS REPORT

1.1. What Is a Neighbourhood House?

This report is concerned with self-help and community development activities which take place in Australia today. It is a study of one form, or one type, of such activity, namely, the development of neighbourhood houses and the function these houses perform in urban and rural communities.

Over the past decade or so the concept of a neighbourhood house has developed as an innovative form of self-help, as a meeting place, as an information exchange, and particularly as a family and child care service. A neighbourhood house is a multi-functional service, based in a local community and using labour which may be paid or voluntary. It functions as a focal point for local community organisations, providing a venue for meetings and various activities, such as adult education, youth groups, parents' groups and after school activities. These activities offer a way for participants to develop friendships and skills. Some houses are used as premises for consultation by community and child health nurses and community welfare workers, and for short-term courses provided under the auspices of Technical and Further Education (TAFE). Activities vary widely from one house to another, and it has been said that the type of services offered is so varied that 'it is difficult to outline what services do' (CSV Links, 1986:11). The name itself also differs from one State to another; they are referred to as 'neighbourhood centres', 'neighbourhood houses' or even 'community centres'.

Neighbourhood houses have now been established in most States and their total number is estimated to be well over 500 (Social Welfare Policy Secretariat, 1983:2). They provide an example of Commonwealth and State co-operation in the provision of community services. The State usually provides the building and both Commonwealth and States assist with funds for child care, salary and administrative costs and for various programs and activities offered at neighbourhood houses. In some States, local government bodies also assist with funds or by providing land and/or buildings.

The operation of neighbourhood houses depends upon the input of local labour. There is also some indication that local initiative and management enhances self-reliance and self-help in low income and socially disadvantaged communities, thus lessening the need for professional welfare services.

Among the services that neighbourhood houses offer regularly is child care. This service may be available on a 'formal' basis, that is, a child care centre is set-up with paid staff, with a professional co-ordinator and with funding dependent upon strict guidelines under the Commonwealth Office of Child Care. 'Formal' child care caters for the community at large and does not necessarily serve only the children of parents who are engaged in neighbourhood house activities. 'Informal' child care is arranged by the neighbourhood house and is used by parents participating in house programs and is particularly valuable in allowing parents to pursue social and educational activities. Sometimes it is used in situations of family emergency.

1.2 Tasmania as a Case Study

As a case study of this form of community service we have examined the development of neighbourhood houses in one State, Tasmania. That State was selected for a number of reasons. First, the support for neighbourhood houses in Tasmania became part of the deliberate policy of the Tasmanian government in 1981 and is regarded by the Department for Community Welfare (DCW) as one of its positive developments, 'directed towards social enhancement and

development of families and individuals and the provision of broad community welfare services which link persons in need of care with available social facilities and resources' (DCW, Annual Report 1982:7-8). Second, most of the houses in Tasmania have been established in low-income public housing estates, in some country towns and in the isolated mining towns. Third, because of the small size of the State, we have been able to examine the program in its entirety and interview people in all houses which were operational at the time of our survey.

We need to emphasise here that the aim of our study **was not** to evaluate the Neighbourhood House program in Tasmania but rather to examine that program as one 'model' of social provision from which inferences could be drawn for other similar programs and for community services generally. The program in Tasmania was particularly suitable for this purpose, for reasons stated above, and also because we were able to compare the results of our study with the objectives of the program as formulated by the Department for Community Welfare and with the perceptions and aims of the people actively involved in the establishment and/or operation of the houses.

At the time we conducted our survey (August-September 1985) there were 21 neighbourhood houses in Tasmania, 19 of which were established in premises. Fourteen houses were located in public housing estates, either within a city environment or situated in satellite housing estates on the outskirts of a large town or city. The housing estates are inhabited by low income families with a high percentage of single parents, pensioners and unemployed people. Being essentially 'dormitory suburbs' they provide little opportunity for employment locally. Most of the inhabitants pay rent to the State Housing Department. Two houses were situated in isolated mining towns on the west coast of Tasmania. Inhabitants of these towns live in accommodation owned by the mining company and there is full employment. Five houses were established in country towns, with two in the north and three in the south of the state. The country towns have well established communities, with heterogeneous populations.

The houses received Commonwealth funding for child care; in the majority of cases administered through the State Department for Community Welfare. The State provided buildings for rent, or rental costs for a building, funding for part-time salaries, administration, rent, electricity and telephone.

The State Housing Division had accepted responsibility for building houses in public housing estates. At the time of our study, 9 houses had been built, with 4 at the planning stage. The latter were expected to be ready for occupation sometime in 1986. The Department for Community Welfare had the role of master tenant and rent was paid to that department.

The houses were co-ordinated and funded through the State Departments for Community Welfare Grants Programme for neighbourhood houses and through sundry Social Service Grants. One house still received a grant from the Commonwealth for administrative costs. This was mainly for historic reasons that dated back to May 1979. Specialist officers from DCW assisted communities to determine needs and plan for the establishment of neighbourhood houses. Emphasis was on self management and self reliance. Single-purpose organisations were not eligible for assistance under the Neighbourhood House program.

(a) Aim of Study

The aim of our study was guided by three areas of enquiry. Firstly, we needed to discover the purpose for which the houses were established. Then we wanted to know how people went about setting up a house, and in doing so, what initiatives were taken and by whom. For example, to what extent were welfare professionals involved, and, if they were, was this involvement a necessary part of development, or was it simply a 'by-product' of the whole process? We aimed to find out how neighbourhood houses 'fitted in' with the life of the community, and whether or not residents needed an understanding of community development for the successful functioning of a neighbourhood house.

We also wanted to know the extent of government involvement in terms of management and policy. (Inherent in this line of enquiry was the notion of whether neighbourhood houses were "done to" or "done by" the communities concerned.)

To obtain this information we needed answers to the following questions:-

* What issues/common problems bring people together?
* What purpose prompts people to establish a neighbourhood house?
* Who takes the first initiative?
* What part does the social structure of a community play in how a house operates?
* What resources are available and how do groups gain access to them?
* What part do welfare and other professionals play in the establishment and running of houses?
* How crucial is the role of government in terms of administration, policy and funding and how are these factors viewed by the houses?

The second aim of our study was to examine the operation of the neighbourhood houses. We wanted to know if particular characteristics had developed through operation and whether there were particular identifiable developmental stages? We were interested in how management committees worked in practice and what activities were perceived as significant. We aimed to find out how the provision of child care, skill oriented programs and adult learning courses were effected and how the provision of these services affected the houses in terms of their development of human resources and original objectives.

The third aim of our study was to isolate from our findings trends, achievements, problem areas and implications for government welfare policy and for community development in a societal context.

We found that neighbourhood houses, though initially set up with limited objectives and small groups of active persons, mainly women, were striving to develop a broader image, without the taint of 'welfare' and gender connotations so as to serve, and be seen to serve, the whole local community. At best, their success in that direction was varied, although some measure of their achievement can be assessed in the serious policy intent of the State government in providing and building houses and in their allocation of neighbourhood house funding grants as a concept of community development.

(b) Method of Study

We decided to interview co-ordinators and committee members from all neighbourhood houses in Tasmania. For this purpose we consulted with the State Department for Community Welfare as the co-ordinating and main funding body, and obtained their co-operation. We used the Department for Community Welfare definition of a Neighbourhood House in deciding which groups to interview. At the time, under the Department's Grants Program, neighbourhood house grants were allocated to 22 houses. We did not consider one centre could be defined as a house as it served a single organisation only. We therefore interviewed and collated data from 21 houses throughout the State. Some houses have preferred to name their dwellings as **Neighbourhood Centres** but throughout this study, we have called them **houses** for the sake of continuity. This is no reflection on individual committee decisions.

We obtained names, telephone numbers and addresses of contact people (usually the part-time co-ordinator), telephone numbers and addresses from the Department for Community Welfare.

We were able to make preliminary contact to explain the purpose of the study as one of us attended a State Conference of neighbourhood house co-ordinators. This encounter was followed by a letter, then later a telephone call to arrange an appointment time.
Our interviews took place over a period of 6 weeks, from August to mid-September, 1985. Interviews were conducted in 17 houses during operational hours. Three interviews took place in private houses and one in a municipal council building. Of the four interviews which did not take place in neighbourhood houses, two related to groups which were not yet established in a building and, in the third case, the house was shared with another organisation with no room to interview on the specific day. In the fourth case, the co-ordinator was unavailable and the management committee president was interviewed.

Respondents' answers and comments were mostly written up as the interview progressed. Impressionistic comments were noted briefly and written up more thoroughly at the end of each day's fieldwork. As much of the material was extremely detailed, the interviewer needed time to assimilate and digest comments before condensing and forming impressions.

Sixteen part-time co-ordinators, one child care supervisor, one development officer and sixteen committee members answered our questions. One house was in the process of appointing a new co-ordinator and the previous two co-ordinators (who had shared the position) and were now committee members, were interviewed.

Selection of interviewees was discussed when telephoning for an appointment. We tried to 'fit in' with the operation of the house, stressing only that we needed to talk with people who had been involved with the house for some time and who would be aware of common issues and problems as well as positive aspects. Selection of interviewees was left to house committees to arrange. All but one interviewee were women. The only male was a development officer and was employed for a limited period.

In some cases, factual material such as establishment date, was confirmed by reference to annual reports but not all houses were able to supply them. Two of the new houses had not had an annual general meeting at the time of interview. One group was funded with a 'seeding' grant and was expecting a house to be built within the next 12 months. Another committee operated from municipal council chambers and used the facilities of that organisation. They had not received any administrative or salary funding at the time of interview.

For demographic data of the population in relevant neighbourhoods we relied upon ABS figures from the 1981 census. These figures may not be up to date, especially in areas such as new housing estates where building was still in progress.

In the analysis of data from the study of the neighbourhood house program in Tasmania we have attempted to relate the findings to the concepts of self-help and community development - the two concepts which provide the underpinnings for such programs. We consider this theoretical context to be important as it provides the key for understanding the values - and some of the contradictions - which remain the central issues for those people who see the neighbourhood houses as instruments for encouraging both community development and personal autonomy and independence of residents who become actively involved in them. These issues are discussed in the following chapter (Chapter 2) and are taken up again in the concluding chapter (Chapter 7) in which implications for social policy from the findings of the study are also considered.

At this point we have to note that much material written about community work is concerned with the role of the professional practitioner (Young and Jamrozik, 1982) and little attention has been paid to the actors within self-help groups. This is understandable when one considers that self-help has a commonality with forms ranging from a talk over the back fence to organising a neighbourhood baby-sitting club. Riessman (1985) considers that people are converted into helpers where personal knowledge becomes a resource to be used. Where this occurs, not only is the quality of help changed but it is freed from professional assumptions. We found minimal documentation of self- and mutual-help groups presented from the viewpoint of the helpers. We

thought that groups such as those establishing neighbourhood houses were developing new patterns of communication and functioning. Nevertheless, we were aware that houses were not developing in isolation from local organisations and government departments. We considered the nature of the interaction between professional welfare workers and the community would need to be viewed in the light of change; that is, when people were able to control some part of their lives, they became more motivated and able to deal with bigger and sometimes political issues. This has important implications for professional welfare workers who might be drawn to this form of community work, as their interactions with community members and/or clients will then occur in a less structured environment than an office, hospital, prison, etc.

Because we have focused on the actual process of self-help and community development and have endeavoured to record these processes in the subjective perspectives of the people involved, our study can best be understood as describing and analysing one alternative that can expand the choices available to people within the community and to professional workers within the welfare area.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTS OF SELF-HELP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Welfare Ideology

Interwoven with the concepts of self-help and community development are two strands of thought which run through the debate on 'welfare' and 'the welfare state'. Their origins may be traced, on the one hand, to nineteenth century liberalism and, on the other, to the social-democratic ideals which developed to a certain extent from the Marxian philosophy. Both liberal and social-democratic thought envisaged certain conditions which were regarded as necessary prerequisites for an 'ideal' society. Liberalism saw the pursuit of individual interest to be in harmony with social good as a 'natural' order from which an ideal society would emerge. Social-democratic thought, on the other hand, acknowledged a conflict between individual interest and social good but considered this conflict to be containable (unlike Marxism which saw social conflict to be inherent and insoluble in a capitalist class society).

Drawing on these two different sources, welfare ideology found it difficult to establish a secure base from which practitioners could operate. The two strands of ideology co-exist uneasily in social policies of Western governments and in welfare practice, leading at times to often bitter conflicts over the establishment of conditions which would produce the basis for a better society. Perhaps because of this, welfare thinking has a strong utilitarian core, resulting in social policies which aim for goals of optimum satisfaction shared among the majority while keeping the 'human residue' under control. Such policies are validated by the growing authority of the 'helping professions' who tend to see themselves as non-partisan instruments for the achievement of policy goals, inclined to dismiss the fundamental differences of ideology.

Thus 'a-political' perception of welfare prevailed until the late 1960s, and welfare policy was then viewed as having a limited choice of alternatives. In the 1970s the administrative process of welfare provisions began to expand, together with the growth of professionalism, into previously unexplored areas such as legal and community work. The professional defined conditions and areas of need without giving much consideration to the possibility that the need might not be recognised, or might be defined differently, by the (potential) client groups. As noted at the time by Bryson and Thompson in their study of an **An Australian Newtown** (1972),

> The socialization of professionals encourages them to be confident that they know what people need and consequently it often appears irrelevant to them what people think ... Blinkered by successful socialization into middle-class ways of thought and action, they simply seek to induct 'the less fortunate and misguided' into the same attitudes and approaches. (1972:288-289)

In time, the growth of bureaucratic and professional domination evoked a reaction. Traditional approaches began to be increasingly questioned by welfare activists, client groups, and some (usually younger) professionals themselves. With greater awareness in the community there was also a growth of dissatisfaction with the authoritative and paternalistic provision of services and definitions of need 'from above'. Arguments began to be advanced that

> residual and remedial [care] ... did more to retain people as victims of oppression than help them develop their potential as independent and self-sufficient citizens. (Daniels and Marris, 1985:13)

It was in this social and political climate that the concept of community development was revived. Later, in the mid-1970s, the emphasis seemed to have changed to 'self-help' activities. This change was prompted by the growing belief that the era of the growth of the welfare state and related growth of public expenditure on social objectives was over. With the re-assertion of conservative forces in politics the emphasis shifted to self-help rather than community development. This occurred probably because the notion of self-help validated the curtailment of public expenditure and moved the focus of debate onto the individual, the family, and kinship group. The notion of self-help was also congruent with the liberal-conservative ideology.

2.2 Self-Reliance and Self-Help

Notions of self-reliance are part of the democratic ideal and suggestions of self-help are generally embraced by all sections of society. Many of the arguments advocating social support indicate clear links between mental, physical and social health and are said to 'protect' people from a wide variety of stressful and socially isolating situations. A number of different disciplines appear to have accepted the consequences of the presence or absence of social support and this has resulted in an increased regard by professionals for 'the value of the natural helper' (Pilisuk and Minkler, 1985). Welfare policy and residual care have been attacked for inhibiting self-reliance, and suggestions have been made for fundamental change in political philosophy: the 'real need' is for the 'state to do less and people to do more for themselves' (Goodin, 1985:28).

The argument for self reliance is not new and has re-emerged regularly in the last 200 years. Conservative Western governments have used this theme repeatedly, perceiving the 'hardworking middle classes' to be subsidising the poor, with an 'all pervasive welfare state for the working class' (Titmuss, 1976:37) being the result of such public largesse.

Goodin sees self-reliance as a moral issue and questions whether transference of reliance from the state to the private realm, that is, families, will decrease dependency per se. He notes that the 'objection is not to people receiving assistance ... but coming to **rely** on it' (1985:28). So, the argument is not so much against dependency per se (society after all encourages some forms of intra-family dependency such as the care of children) as against **public** dependency. Goodin notes that some writers have argued that the State can actually **promote** self reliance by offering encouragement and financial help for those 'who otherwise regard themselves as utterly helpless and their plight as utterly hopeless' (1985:41).

The concept of self-help is now freely used by people of all political persuasions, and it is not readily clear what meaning is attached to the concept. Often the language of the conservative on the right and the progressive on the left is strikingly similar, giving an impression that both views are 'anti-state'. Yet, there are substantial differences between the two perspectives, although they are not often articulated clearly. As Evers and Wintersberger point out,

> The fact that the concept of self-help is claimed by left and right alike indicates that it is not yet settled how we perceive this issue more precisely in order to clarify the forms of state and public help and incentives needed. The more conservative way to describe self-help is to conjure up a revival of the very traditional forms of it, which are often dependent and unvoluntary, isolating and individualising the subject ...
> A different way of defining self-help came up in the context of new social and cultural movements in the late 1960s and 1970s, revitalising social forms of community and collective self-help. These forms often included a new self-confidence with regard to public authorities, they were interlinked with criticism of the traditional state contributions

> not in terms of giving insufficiently, but in terms of giving the wrong things with regard to people's everyday life, responsibilities, competences and desires for participation. (1987:156-157)

These new forms of self-help are seen to perform three basic functions:

> (1) to develop new forms of dealing with personal or social problems in primary social groups, the main purpose being mutual help between those who share the same problems
> (2) for the individual to become aware of personal and social competence ..., i.e. the competence of the layman is set against professional expertise ...
> (3) to force the institutions to become more responsive to clients' needs ... (Grunow, 1986:201-202)

Grunow argues that the impact of the self-help movement can be effective, provided it does not become associated with the image of 'dropouts' or with the traditional sex-related bias which presents self-help as **female** self-help. The potential of the movement lies in the reconstruction of the welfare system from a system 'on behalf of' the population to one of 'with and by' the population. To achieve this potential new ways of thinking and acting need to be invented and some old ways may be rediscovered (1986:203).

Self-help groups are constituted of small groups of individuals who, basically, have a common need or problem and come together with the aim of overcoming it or helping each other (Riessman, 1985). Help is based on individual experience and wisdom and does not rely on professional practice and systematic theory. Because of the anonymity of non-professional help, knowledge of the operation of such groups is relatively unknown. Successful groups which work collectively and become large organisations or 'movements' are still difficult to classify within any organisational model. Riessman considers self-helpers are initially 'pre-political' and become more political as they progress. He notes three stages in this process. First, the very process of mutual help begins to develop competencies of working together and sharing, which can then be applied to larger issues. The beginnings of empowerment emerge as people feel able to control some aspect of their lives. Then, an advocacy focus may appear as the self-helpers discover the external cause of their problems. Such advocacy may take the form of criticism of the manner in which services are provided or it may concern itself with the media and the images presented of a particular self-help problem or condition. Underlying all of this is the basic self-help ethos that emphasises indigenous strengths to the people involved in contrast to a dependence on external, elite experts. These attitudes are in contrast to a lobbyist form of advocacy, in which representatives speak for the constituents while the latter remain passive and inactive. From these pre-political forms there begins to emerge a consciousness of the interconnections of issues. Coalitions of self-help groups may surface, at first in the form of group alliances, and later in wider social movements which aim to address issues of national significance.

The concept of self-help is closely associated with those forms of mutual assistance referred to in literature as supporting networks.

> Social networks or helping networks refer to the various individuals to whom each of us turns for coping with daily and more serious problems of living. They are not necessarily groups. They often do not know each other. They are combinations of people we turn to: a spouse, a neighbour, friends, relatives and co-workers. Together they form the 'natural helping networks' of an individual. (Warren, 1981:194)

The presence of someone in whom to confide has been proposed as a mechanism for increasing well-being and decreasing physical and psychological ill-health. The effects of such support are well documented.

At best, supporting networks can supply

> ... intimacy, caring and reflection (emotional support) ...[and can] provide the individual with practical support and with information about problem solving. (Van Tilburg, 1985:215)

In an extensive review of literature on the subject, Peter D'Abbs (1982) has identified four important aspects of social support networks.
They are:

(1) Social class and kin networks
(2) Sex-based differences
(3) The efforts of social and geographical mobility
(4) Family life cycle

By examining these, we may find some indication of who is most at risk of failing to obtain access to these networks which are so vital to well-being.

(1) Social Class and Kin Networks

Kin networks relate to an individual's family of origin. Their operation and effectiveness also differ according to social class. In middle-class families aid is given in the form of services, gifts, advice and financial assistance, the latter being given most frequently to young married couples. Care is exercised that help does not appear to 'transgress the values of independence and autonomy' (D'Abbs, 1982:28).

Working class families tend to share resources more openly; a key link is provided through the females of the family, with help given in child care, shopping and transport. D'Abbs points out that this does not always apply in new working-class areas where lack of mobility or no access to a car or telephone may inhibit contact. Survival becomes difficult for couples and single parents without the kin support network. In such cases, people are more inclined to look to local groups and neighbours as substitutes for kin.

Middle-class people tend to differentiate between family, friends and neighbours. They also maintain support networks over greater geographical areas. Within working-class areas, especially older localities, relationships between kin, friends and neighbours tend to involve the same groups of people (D'Abbs, 1982:31).

(2) Sex-based Differences

Most studies appear to record that male friendships are based more on sociability rather than intimacy, whilst women often maintain intimate friendships with other women. Men are more likely to turn to their wives for intimate friendship while women turn to friends or children.

(3) Geographical and Social Mobility

Geographical mobility appears class-related, with middle-class people tending to be spread over wider geographical areas than working class families. The poor are especially affected in not having the resources to travel and may be far more adversely disadvantaged when forced to leave supportive family ties.

(4) Family Life Cycle

Changes in life style affect social relationships, with social ties being particularly important for mothers of young children, young children themselves and the aged. Motherhood brings reduced mobility and thus fewer opportunities to form new ties. The old tend to be more 'home based' and interaction is with old friends and family.

Changes in marriage patterns have meant a number of adjustments, especially for single parents, who may need to combine child care with employment. Where the single parent is not in paid employment, the tendency is to turn to the family for support.

In summary of D'Abbs categories of supporting networks, class emerges as a most significant factor in community and neighbourhood development. D'Abbs considers that development is (or should be) concerned with the disadvantaged and underprivileged, and, although some relatively well-off and motivated communities will be involved in community development, the aim should be to involve working class people and must include an appreciation of their reality and experience. It is through the varied experiences of community and neighbourhood development that people are able (or not able) to attach meaning to their various roles as members of a specific class, age or gender group. Thus, class and neighbourhood are interwoven in an intricate relationship.

2.3 Community Development

As is the case with the concept of self-help, the term 'community development' is frequently used but the meaning of the term is unclear and subject of various interpretations. In Australia, the rhetoric about 'community' is relatively new, having come into usage in the late 1960s and early 1970s and focusing mainly on the role of the community worker. The notions of community work, resident participation and self-help became attractive to the welfare professional in search of an alternative to the more traditional, institutional approach (Daniels and Marris, 1985).

The meaning of the term is briefly reviewed here in four of its aspects: the evolution of the concept; its meaning in the social sciences; appreciation of the concept in practice; and the place of the concept of community development in the neighbourhood house movement.

(1) History of Community Development

Historically, the concept of community development has evolved in three distinct areas: in international programs of assistance to 'third world' countries; as a response to the problems of industrialisation in the late nineteenth century; and as a reaction to the 're-discovery of poverty' in the affluent industrialised societies in the 1960s.

In relation to programs in the 'third world' countries, Mayo (1975:130) points out that British colonial rule 'coined' the term 'community development' in the programs of education and welfare in the colonies. She questions, however, whether these programs were aimed primarily at benefiting the population in the colonies or whether, being based on paternalism and the self-interest of the colonial power, they gave the colonists a mandate to civilize while exploiting.

In contrast to colonial intentions, the United Nations has, since the 1950s, promoted the concept of community development through self-help and co-operatives, in the hope of creating a stimulant for tackling social problems and economic scarcity (UN, 1985). The programs aim to achieve economic development by restructuring agrarian and village communities, raising living standards by greater distribution of material resources through economic planning and the collectivisation of agriculture.

The response to the problems of industrialisation in the late nineteenth century came in the form of the settlement house movement. The movement engaged in the establishment of settlement houses in working-class neighbourhoods with the aims of community development and prevention of social problems. The houses were 'attempts of reformers to organise and educate people, primarily at the neighbourhood level, to take a hand in shaping their environments' (Perlman and Gurin, 1972:23-28).

The settlement houses grew out of a need to improve the appalling conditions of poverty and disease in urban America at the end of the century. For example, New York lower East side, described in 1893 as the most congested city in the world, contained 330,000 inhabitants per square mile (Trattner, 1979:134-135), with conditions not much better in other cities. Largely, the emigration of millions of poor European settlers to America coincided with the movement of Blacks to northern cities after the Civil War, resulting in overcrowding in filthy tenements (Trattner, 1979:140).

The settlement house workers regarded themselves as social reformers rather than charity workers. As Trattner says,

> They were not interested in doling out relief, either financial or verbal. Rather, their goal was to bridge the gap between classes and races, to eliminate the sources of distress, and to improve human living and working conditions. (1979:134)

The concept of the settlement house had originated in England among British intellectuals such as Carlyle, Ruskin and the Christian Socialists, with the establishment of Toynbee Hall in 1884. American pioneer reformers were soon to emulate the movement. Both countries attracted articulate, educated young people who chose a life devoid of 'theological doctrines and ritualistic practice'. Trattner suggests that these young people were the first generation of college graduates who came to maturity in an industrial society, with no clearly defined place for them. Many felt alienated from big business and organised labour and the challenge of the big city offered opportunities to create meaningful careers for themselves and at the same time to fulfil their altruism in 'rescuing society from the social ills of industrial and urban change' (1979:140-141).

The first task of the settlement house residents was to establish good relationships within the neighbourhood and inspire the people to work for practical improvements within the locality. A kindergarten was usually the initial step in achieving rapport with parents, with nurseries and day-care centres soon to follow, so that working mothers could safely leave their children (Trattner, 1979:143). The settlement houses broadened their activities to include courses in arts and crafts, men's clubs, savings banks, employment bureau, kitchens and many other services.

Early this century, settlement house workers began to see the structure of society as being in need of reform and merged their activities with charity organisations into professional fields of welfare work. Their aim was to encourage the traditional charity organisations to re-examine their theory of failure as being the result of individual defect and change their method of intervention accordingly.

Whereas organised charities felt poverty could be overcome by moral virtue alone, settlement house residents turned to social change as a means of encouraging efforts towards community betterment and became 'spearheads for reform'.

The settlement house movement was successful in many areas of social and urban legislation. However, it encountered growing opposition from conservative forces and the 'new' professional social workers who turned increasingly towards methods of individual intervention and were not interested in social reform. By the mid-1920s the movement virtually ceased to exist.

(2) Community Development in a Social Science Context

Interest in community development by the social sciences can be seen as an historical development. Like self-help, the term community development remains ambiguous.

There are two levels of theory surrounding community development: the first level is that of the practitioner and the second that of the social science discipline (Sanders, 1958). The literature shows quite clearly an active body of theory at the practitioner level. The

practitioner level is operational and is aimed at the way in which success may be achieved for the target group which the practitioner is expected to assist. Theory is set forth in handbooks and in evaluative case studies, and has general applicability for people who wish to originate and carry out community development programs. It is not abstract.

The second level of enquiry is concerned with the theoretical level of several social science disciplines and relates to various aspects of community development. For example, the social psychologist will formulate theories of attitude and personality; the political scientist will be concerned with the organisation and the structure of power; and the anthropologist with culture. Sanders considers that the social scientist is frequently unconcerned with the applicability of the theoretical at the practitioner level, nor does the practitioner always want to be bothered with an analysis of the implications of his work. Yet, as O'Brien (1975:66) states, community development is not 'merely a technical matter involving the application of correct organisational techniques but stems from much deeper problems in the philosophical and ideological origins [of the community development]'. This suggests that theoretical considerations of community development should be tested empirically and, conversely, the practice of community development should be guided by a relevant ideology and/or theory.

Two strands of thought run through the literature on community development: they are 'the concept of autonomous community' and the 'concept of the integrative mechanism ... of the larger community' (O'Brien, 1975:67-77). The 'autonomous perspective' holds the notion that the community is in opposition to the larger society and therefore sees 'withdrawal as necessary to preserve their ideals and to prevent contamination from the corrupting influence of the status quo'. The 'integrative perspective' sees common interest of small communities with the larger society and seeks to integrate the former into the latter. These concepts are essentially in conflict.

Nevertheless, there remains great confusion between the two viewpoints and, as O'Brien points out,

> The notion of community autonomy provides a rationale for demonstrating that community development is consistent with age-old democratic ideals, while the notion of the integrative community provides a rationale for obtaining outside assistance for community development. (1975:80)

The concept of autonomous community has its origins in the Utopian Socialists of the 19th century with the communalist movement, and its history can be seen as re-emerging in the 'counter culture' (the 'hippy movement') of the 60s and the 'alternate lifestyle' advocates of today. Specifically, the movement objected to the 'rational' forces of bureaucratisation and the competitiveness of the market economy. Nineteenth century Marxism saw parallels in the 'unnatural' relationship between man and machines but unlike the communalists, the Marxists saw the solution in the politicisation of the worker and in class conflict.

The 'integrative mechanism' concept focuses on the 'functions the community serves in bringing about order and stability in the larger society' (O'Brien, 1975:73). It is based on the belief that no community can operate independently of its milieu. The 'romantic-conservative' movement with its emphasis on tradition and sentiment of the 18th and 19th centuries is responsible to a large degree for the concept of the integrative community. The conservatives saw the integration of society as a means of suppressing conflict, whether the conflict was economic or the disruptive Marxist type of class conflict. Thus, the conservative viewpoint is tied to a fundamental belief that conflict is an abnormal state. The very important difference, according to O'Brien, is that 'the integrative viewpoint' tends to see the goals of the community as consistent with those of the larger society and indeed essential to the maintenance of the latter (1975:73).

This viewpoint has significance in considering national and international goals. From this perspective, the development of communities is said to aid the integration of individuals into the larger community, while reconciling traditional aspects of culture with modern technology.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that both ideologies saw change as a way to a more ideal society: the communalist movement saw change as a return to a more natural way of life without conflict, whereas the Marxist-socialist stream of thought saw conflict as a necessary adjunct to the political attributes of change. The lasting appeal of the 'autonomous' community is understandable in its influence when the rationale is given for people to have a measure of control over their own destiny and at the same time, to develop individual creativity. It is then to be expected that a pursuit of such goals would at times lead to conflict situations between group interests and the interests of a wider community. As Jakubowicz states,

> Community action [development] relates to the recognition by groups of people of the group interest, the realisation that those interests are not being met, and a conviction that they can act together to achieve their ends. But there is also an implicit understanding that the present social structure has led to their situation and that any action will necessitate conflict with existing interests. (1974:3)

For Jakubowicz then, community development is about participation, change in the nature of power, and the distribution of resources.

Most forms of community development have ignored this and tended to focus on an integrative approach with assumption of citizen involvement, consensus, and gradual change. The integrative approach favours non-material goals, with the emphasis on the individual's values and attitudes. Change takes place in the alteration of personal motivation and expectations with evaluation of the social structure generally receiving scant attention (Khinduka, 1979:356-357).

(3) Forms of Community Development in Practice

Concepts alone do not explain the nature of community development. In reviewing the literature we have considered various forms of community activity, loosely termed as community development. Activities aim at a wide range of purposes, including establishing new services and programs, managing existing organisations and facilitating relationships between them; building 'grass roots' citizen groups to solve community problems; activities aimed at social reform directed mainly towards oppressed minority groups and the arrangement of education and information programs. Community development correlates terms such as community organisation, community planning and community action. In considering the vast amount of material, we were concerned to find an approach which embraced the practice of all forms. Bearing in mind that there would be variations in definition, we have looked at four major approaches. These are:-

community development as
- (i) a process
- (ii) a method
- (iii) a programme
- (iv) a social movement

(i) The Process of Community Development

Various writers have described community development as a process, moving by stages from one condition to the next, with strategies ranging from imposition to self-determination. The emphasis is upon what happens to people socially and psychologically. It is an 'apolitical venture' (O'Brien, 1975) although Riessman sees the process as a 'pre-political stage' (1985:2) which does not necessarily move 'in a straight line to political positions that progressives might espouse' (1985:4). The process is viewed without reference to the wider community and change is oriented through group participation. O'Brien (1975:81) has pointed to the fact that the process of community development has relied upon elements that unite people in common

efforts but avoid concepts of conflict and struggle. The 'soft' strategy (Biddle and Biddle, 1979) of community development has had a greater contribution as a method of welfare service than as a mechanism of social change (Khinduka, 1979).

(ii) Community Development as a Method

The method of community development is a means to an end (goal-oriented and problem-solving) and will sometimes use a process to achieve a goal (Sanders, 1958), which may be determined by local people, government or an outside body. Emphasis is on the end result, whether harmful or helpful to the community, and the power structure will be engaged as employers and sponsors. The method may be used for different ends. It can be a means of social control and has been used effectively in that manner in community development projects in India and Africa as part of colonial rule (Mayo, 1975). Closer to home, methods used by state welfare agencies for the end result of the 'common good' of Aboriginal people, have been used to formalise the control structures of the dominant culture. The other approach is sometimes known as 'social planning' and the community is the beneficiary rather than the initiator. The interests of the community are served by expert planners who are able to guide the complex change process. Examples are departments of urban planning, public administration, community health (Rothman, 1979). Thus, methods of community development can be seen as positive, providing needed services, or as negative, such as former welfare interventions into Aboriginal communities.

(iii) Community Development as a Program

Programs tend to focus upon activities rather than on what happens to people within the program. Specialities such as health, welfare, agriculture and recreation become the objective of community development. Analysis takes place in terms of social organisation, with well defined objectives and roles of participants who then become either leaders or followers.

(iv) Community Development as a Social Movement

The fourth approach to community development is that of a social movement (which often becomes a crusade). It is unlikely to be neutral and indeed is usually political. Political leaders are often quick to use a movement, either as a platform or as a way to denigrate their opponents. Movements have a strong emotional element, with a philosophical content, and are more dedicated to an idea than to a scientific content. Tendencies exist for institutionalisation as most movements set up their own structures and procedures. Movements often turn to governments for funding and appropriate legislation, which is an aspect of their political nature.

To a certain degree these four aspects of community development - as a process, a method, a program, and a social movement - depend on one another. Thus once a process is activated, a method will be used to carry out objectives. A program incorporates both process and method in needing social channels to operate and to carry out its activities. A movement holds a certain promise and will need particular programs to generate a successful outcome.

Community development is about change; it can also be about social planning and social control. It sometimes stands for co-operation between the public and private sector. It can thus facilitate participation and strengthen social bonds within a community and create inter-community relations. It can be, essentially, a humanising and humanistic activity, in an age where alienation, impersonal bureaucratisation and hedonistic pursuits are the hidden results of progress and technology. Nevertheless, community development has often neglected such principles as equality and justice, and in so doing it has become an instrument of inequality.

However, community development is more complex than the four aspects noted above indicate. Operation takes place within different geographical locations and within different social and cultural communities. Geographic location and leadership are two additional aspects that have to be considered in community development.

Perlman and Gurin (1972:104) suggest there have been inconsistencies within the field of community development from its earliest days. The practice of community development has been limited to the local level and has proceeded in relative isolation from the political forces of government, religion and caste systems, relying mainly on processes which unite groups in a common effort. In some instances, organising groups have articulated demands and have become in effect a political force, although most writers appear to agree that this was not their original intention.

Community development may be considered and applied at various levels of social organisation. At the **community level**, development originates and operates within a single community. Local leadership is responsible although help may be obtained from an outside consultant acting in a catalyst role. Resources are used from within the community where possible. The objective is to help a particular community. At a **regional level**, focus is on dealing with a number of communities. Specialist help is used and needs are tied to services. Programs are formulated outside the community and are used by local leaders for local communities. At a **national level**, specific programs may be worked out at a regional or community level but within carefully defined parameters. The community is the beneficiary rather than the decision maker, but is active in carrying out details of the program. Important to this focus are the issues of leadership and decision making.

Leadership may be either local or professional. Much community development is carried out by local residents and is in response to a perceived need that local people recognise. Leaders may be self appointed, designated or elected (Sanders, 1958:2-4). Professional leaders are engaged to promote community interest in areas of health, welfare, agriculture, education and the arts. Some communities work through local organisations with supervision in local hands, but with professional organisers and specialists appointed from outside the community who represent state and/or national organisations. Sometimes the aim is specific. Professionals often put emphasis on training local leaders rather than on the direction of activities.

CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, SELF-HELP, AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

3.1 Models and Concepts

In September 1983 the (then) Social Welfare Policy Secretariat (SWPS) presented the Minister for Social Security with a report, **Community Development in a Social Welfare Context** (SWPS, 1983). The report outlined the history of community development in Australia, some of the programs and services in existence at the time that could be regarded as community development activities, and suggested a list of options the Government could consider for policy decisions. The report was written

> ... with the purpose of providing a general 'feel' for what was happening, and probably could happen in the area of community development, particularly in relation to welfare services. The paper was also to examine models of community development, in particular, the potential of local government and neighbourhood houses, as a focus for community development. (SWPS, 1983:3)

The report noted that the concept of community development was the subject of varied interpretations and applications. It was, or could be, seen either in concrete terms as capital works programs (roads, buildings, recreation facilities, etc.), or as a 'process' in which services and personnel were provided at the regional and/or local level, which facilitated community development. It could also be seen in terms of both types of resources being used at the same time (SWPS, 1983:4). Further, the report noted, there were differences in views among various theories of community development. For example, the 'purists' questioned whether actual facilities should be provided in community development programs, while the 'pragmatists' agreed with this approach, provided that local residents were involved in decision-making about such facilities and their use. In relation to this issue it was important to note that, in general, community development was seen as 'emerging from below', in contrast to social planning which was seen to be 'imposed from above' (SWPS, 1983:5).

3.2 Commonwealth Initiatives

According to the SWPS report, the history of community development in Australia had two distinct phases. The first was the Labor Post-War Reconstruction Program in the 1940s, and the second became prominent in the initiatives taken by the Whitlam Labor Government in the early 1970s.

The Post-War Reconstruction Program included financing of co-operative societies, rural reconstruction, public housing and development of social services. The co-operatively owned hotels, pharmacies and general stores established under that program still remain today in the Barossa Valley and in the Riverland of South Australia.

The most significant initiative in community development taken by the Whitlam Government was the Australian Assistance Plan. The principles on which the Plan (AAP) was introduced have been important for developing community services. It was an innovative program designed with the aim to enable the community to assess its social and welfare needs and determine its priorities at a local and regional level. The aim of the AAP, as stated at the time, was

> ... to assist in the development, at a regional level within a nationally co-ordinated framework, of integrated patterns of welfare services, complementary to income support programs and the welfare-related aspects of health, education, housing, employment, migration and other social policies ... (Social Welfare Commission, 1973:3)

The AAP was later defined as

> ... a strategy to give to all the people in Australia a better opportunity to take part in planning, developing and controlling their own local community services. The plan ensures that where there is dynamic innovative local community effort for the provision of better services, this effort will be complemented by the financial and personnel resources of the Australian Government. (SWC, 1974a:7)

The emphasis of the AAP strategy was on social planning, regionalisation and integration of services, and the participation of communities in decision-making and defining their own needs. Social planning was to be done by Regional Councils of Social Development which were set up with Government assistance in all regions of Australia (a region included a population ranging from 250,000 to 500,000).

The other program of significance, initiated in 1974, was the Children's Services Field Officers' ('Catalysts') Program, which was proposed by the Social Welfare Commission's **Project Care** (SWC, 1974b) and adopted on an experimental basis by the Interim Committee for the Children's Commission. Under this program the 'Catalysts' were appointed by Local Government bodies (funded for this purpose by the Interim Committee). Their role was to stimulate community development activities at local level, especially educational and recreational activities for children in socially disadvantaged areas (see Jamrozik, McCauley and Camilleri, 1976).

The Australian Assistance Plan and its inaugurating and sponsoring body, the Social Welfare Commission, were short-lived, and the Children's Commission was never established, although the Act to establish it was passed by the Federal Parliament in June 1975 but was never promulgated. In retrospect, the Social Welfare Commission was 'an idea before its time' (Coleman, 1978). The programs introduced by the SWC were programs initiated 'from above' with the aim of evoking responses and generating movements 'from below'. However, while the programs did not survive, the ideas sown by them did find a fertile ground and have borne fruit in subsequent years. The programs and the ideas and theories on which they were based were instrumental in discovering and releasing human resources and abilities which until then had been dormant. Leadership, initiative, self-help and organisational abilities came to the surface in many urban and rural areas where apathy and non-involvement in community affairs had previously prevailed. As Graycar observed,

> Prior to 1972, Australia had only an embryonic welfare state in which there was no real channel for claim articulation, and with strong reliance on the market there were some doubts about the legitimacy of the claims of those who had not benefited from the prosperity of the 1960s and 1970s. The advent of the Whitlam government showed a recognition that communities, as well as individuals, could make legitimate claims of residents of urban and outer urban areas ... (1979:182:183)

The antecedents of various community development organisations and self-help groups now in existence in Australia can thus be found in the programs initiated by the Whitlam government, and the neighbourhood house movement is one such development. However, while the original initiative and stimulus for their establishment might have come from the Commonwealth government in the early 1970s, their development in subsequent years has been due mainly to initiatives by State governments. Since the demise of the Whitlam government in 1975, promotion and support for community development activities 'from below' have received little attention from the Commonwealth government. Apart from providing funds for a range of community organisations, the initiatives of the Commonwealth government towards direct involvement in this area of social welfare have been negligible. As noted in the SWPS report (1983:10), 'The Commonwealth has limited direct involvement in community development particularly in the area of social security and welfare services'.

The SWPS report recommended that the Commonwealth should consider implementing a policy of support to neighbourhood houses because of their value in 'developing local, self-help skill-sharing programs, consistent with ALP policy' (1983:42). The reason for this recommendation was that

> Neighbourhood houses can provide relatively small communities with a range of services to meet community needs. Their small scale, localised nature makes for easier access to services for the community and more than likely they are able to better cater for their local community needs. Neighbourhood houses are characterised by greater local participation in their day to day running. (SWPS, 1983:31)

The support for neighbourhood houses is explicitly mentioned in the ALP Platform (McMullan, 1984:201-202), and many houses receive Commonwealth funds, usually for specific activities such as occasional child care or other programs. Commonwealth funds also find their way through co-ordinated programs with the States. However, there is no specific, well-defined Commonwealth policy of support for neighbourhood houses as such. Their main source of funds comes from State government.

3.3. The States

All State governments are involved in community development and self-help activities, usually through the provision of funds to local government and non-government organisations. The funds may come under the auspices of welfare, education, health, or leisure, sport and recreation. Indeed, the word 'community' is widely encountered in a wide range of activities, such as 'community welfare', 'community health', 'community services'. Associated with these developments has been the rise of professional specialisations, such as 'community development workers', 'youth workers', 'recreation officers', or simply 'community workers'.

As far as neighbourhood houses are concerned, they are to be found in all States and also under different names. The SWPS report (1983) identified at the time 558 neighbourhood houses in five States (except Western Australia) but also noted that these data needed to be treated with caution because of the extent of activities and a variety of services which could be defined as performing the function of neighbourhood houses (1983:20). For the purpose of illustrating the extent of States' activities in this area we note below some information about neighbourhood houses in New South Wales and Victoria, and make brief references to the other States. We emphasise that this overview is rather sketchy; its purpose is to illustrate the extent of the neighbourhood house movement in Australia and thus to provide a background for the study of the Tasmanian situation examined in the subsequent chapters.

New South Wales

The name commonly used in New South Wales is that of Neighbourhood or Community Centres. According to the definition by the then NSW Department of Youth and Community Services (now Department of Family and Community Services),

> Neighbourhood Centres are local, multipurpose community centres which provide a geographic area with a range of services and activities to meet local needs. The centres are characterised by substantial user participation in their day-to-day operation. (YACS, Annual Report 1985-86:33)

The neighbourhood centres in NSW operate under the auspices of and support from the Department of Family and Community Services. The first centre was opened in 1961 and government support was first provided in 1976 when 32 centres received funding; in 1986-87 funding was received by 146 centres (total of $3.2 million). In December 1985 the then Department (YACS) adopted a policy in which the main activities of neighbourhood centres were identified as:

- social planning and research
- service development
- organisation of community activities and programs
- the provision of community information and advocacy

The policy also states that all funded neighbourhood centres must ensure that their services are accessible and appropriate to people from non-English speaking backgrounds and to Aborigines. It thus appears that the centres in NSW are closely linked to Government welfare services. While their activities vary considerably, most serve as information centres and some are involved in the provision of services under the Home and Community Care (HACC) program.

The centres in NSW are linked together by the Local Community Services Association (LCSA). In its directory of member organisations (August 1986) the LCSA lists 235 centres in the Sydney metropolitan area (173 general and 62 ethno-specific), and 161 centres in other NSW locations (148 general and 13 ethno-specific). The LCSA was formed in 1974 as a division of the NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS). It provides a wide range of services to its members - organisational assistance, promotion, consultation, information. It also publishes a monthly newsletter with articles on social issues and on the programs provided by various centres. Its associated body, Community Information Sharing Service (CISS) is defined as

> ... an independent, co-operative group which provides an advisory, assisting service to people involved in setting up or running a service and plays an advocacy role to improve awareness and standards community information service to the community. (CISS Pamphlet, March 1983)

The LCSA receives funding for its activities from the Department of Family and Community Services as well as from other government bodies, e.g. Ministry of Employment, Housing Commission, the Board of Adult Education and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (LCSA Pamphlet, undated).

Victoria

In Victoria the houses are referred to as neighbourhood houses. According to information from the Department of Community Services Victoria (CSV Links, 1986, November), there were 171 neighbourhood houses in 1986 receiving support from the Government of Victoria. About two-thirds of the houses were in the Melbourne metropolitan area and one-third in country towns. The support for 1986 amounted to close to $1.2 million; it was provided under a Community Services Grants Scheme and administered through the Family and Community Services Program (FACS) and the Neighbourhood House Scheme. In the Department's (CSV) view,

> The central aspects of Neighbourhood Houses are the values and practices on which they are based. These can be summarised as concepts of community control, of building 'neighbourliness' and community spirit and of providing self help and control over their own lives. (CSV Annual Report, 1984-85:32)

It is more difficult to ascertain what activities actually take place in the neighbourhood houses. What stands out is the diversity of activities and programs, developed by the participants themselves. As stated in the CSV Links,

> It is difficult to outline what Houses do because they are a very local service which provide a range of activities to meet local needs and demands. (CSV Links, 1986, 12, November)

From the limited information we have, it appears that 'localism' and orientation towards the needs of families are a feature of neighbourhood houses in that State. In addition to receiving funds from the State government, the houses receive support from local government bodies in the form of facilities and maintenance, and in some instances also contributions towards operating costs.

Queensland

In Queensland the houses operate under various names. It is difficult to determine from Queensland government reports how many neighbourhood houses are in operation in that State. In the reports of the Department of Children's Services (DCS, 1986) some grants to neighbourhood centres are mentioned but there is no indication in the reports whether the government has developed any explicit policy towards the centres. The SWPS report (1983) noted a wide geographic spread of neighbourhood houses in that State, the emphasis in their operation being on family counselling. Much of that work was being done by unpaid volunteers, and State government policy was to encourage voluntary activities in providing supportive and preventative services towards strengthening family life. Some centres provided occasional child care, supported by funds from the Children's Services Program (Commonwealth) in conjunction with the State Department of Children's Services.

South Australia

In South Australia, too, the houses are referred to by various names: as neighbourhood houses, neighbourhood centres, or community houses. Again, it is difficult to determine from government reports how many such houses/centres there are in that State. From the list of grants allocated by the State government through its Department for Community Welfare it appears there must be about 50 such houses/centres (DCW, 1985). There is also a Community and Neighbourhood Houses Association which received some support from the State government.

Western Australia

The movement towards establishing neighbourhood houses appears to have come later in Western Australia than in the other States. The report of the State Department of Community Services (1985) announced the initiative towards establishing community houses. It states,

> As a result of recommendations of the recent Welfare and Community Services Review, the Department commenced establishment of six Community Houses throughout the State in May 1985. The primary role of these Houses will be to provide 25 child care places in an environment oriented towards community development. The Houses will be multi-functional in nature and responsive to the needs of the local community. They will provide an information service, facilitate self help groups, arrange community workshops,

> and provide a venue for group meetings and educational sessions. Administration will be by a local community Management Committee. (DCS, 1985:30)

The DCS report for 1987 refers to Neighbourhood Group Services and notes that these services assist families and individuals through a network of Family Resource Workers 'operating in concert with Departmental field staff and other agencies' (DCS 1987:29). The report refers to Family Resource Centres which perform a 'multifaceted role'. The centres are said to offer social contact for parents (mainly women 20 to 40 years, many of them single parents on low incomes), provide child care services, and opportunities for learning new skills, building self-esteem and confidence, and for developing the ability to make greater use of community resources.

CHAPTER 4

TASMANIAN ENVIRONMENT OF NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

4.1 Locality of Houses

Neighbourhood houses in Tasmania are not confined to public housing estates. With the adoption of policy guidelines in 1981, the State government recognised that need for such facilities was not confined solely to socio-economic factors common to public housing estates. Lack of community resources and educational opportunity were seen as significant disadvantages, particularly for women in isolated rural and mining towns. Country and mining areas were encouraged to explore avenues such as local government and non-government agencies for facilities within which to operate, and provision for neighbourhood houses was extended to country and mining towns as well. While people from country and mining towns shared a common aim with residents of public housing estates to bring people together, perceptions of need and life experience varied.

As noted in Chapter 1 of this report, of the 21 houses included in this study, 14 were in public housing estates, five were in country towns, and two in mining towns. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population living in the suburbs and towns in which the 21 houses were established are shown in Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. It may be easily noted that in the majority of the public housing estates, the feature of the population is a high proportion of children, of one-parent families, of low-income families, and of rented housing (Table 4.1). High unemployment rates (Table 4.2) and low-educational attainment (Table 4.3) are corresponding features. These characteristics are less prominent in country towns and in mining towns.

(a) Public Housing Estates

Public housing estates in Tasmania are built by the State Department of Housing and Construction through its Housing Division, and rent is assessed according to income. In some of the older estates, housing stock has been sold to tenants and to other people. People living in public housing estates generally have low incomes and many are pensioners and beneficiaries of the Department of Social Security. In some cases, families are in such urgent need of housing that their only option is to move to wherever housing becomes available. This results in young families and single parents living in areas which are sometimes considerable distances from friends and family. This factor is made worse through lack of private transport. Women, especially, are disadvantaged; if there is a family car, the husband may use it to travel to work or for other reasons. Quite often, women are unable to drive. In new estates, public transport is often infrequent and it is not unusual for women to have to travel 15-20 kms to shop, and to have to catch several buses. This can sometimes take more than one hour each way.

Lack of support from family and friends, the inability to leave the estate easily and lack of resources and services combined with poverty are a potent mixture of circumstances. Moving to an estate will present most people with a 'ready made' problem for which they are often quite unprepared.

In our study five houses were situated in 'old' estates and nine houses were in 'new' estates.* 'Old' estates tended to have an older population with larger numbers of aged pensioners and retired people. Public services were generally better than in the 'new' estates. Definition of

* A Public Housing Estate built 15+ years is designated here as 'old', and building has ceased. A 'new' estate established under 15 years with houses still being built.

problems tended to be markedly different from the perception of problems in 'new' estates. The people we interviewed commented that residents from 'old' estates were inclined to see issues such as isolation, loneliness and poverty as the result of personal failure and individual fault. Self sufficiency and individualism were viewed as 'positive' virtues. Personal expectations were frequently low.

In the 'new' estates, isolation and disadvantage were perceived as problems needing a remedy. The younger population of these estates appeared to have a greater familiarity with the 'Welfare State' and saw government organisations and professional expertise as resources to be used. Individual hardships tended to be perceived as an effect of social conditions rather than a character defect. As a result, unhappy conditions were more easily identified as problems. These attitudes became significant in the perceptions of the neighbourhood houses and in the use of services they offered.

(b) Country Towns

In our study five neighbourhood houses were situated in country towns. Economic disadvantage did not appear to be considered a serious problem in four towns although all five towns had a significant number of people with low incomes. Problems which were mentioned were perceived in social terms such as lack of access to resources. Three towns were economically dependent on primary industries, such as fishing, timber, farming, apple growing and packing. Much of this work was seasonal. The people we interviewed in these towns mentioned strong family support systems; many of its inhabitants had lived all their lives in the town and often were descendants of original settlers. Two towns were tourist towns with employment heavily dependent on the 'summer season', especially for women. Two towns were within commuting distance of Hobart where many of the residents worked. These two towns identified with the city in terms of resources and information but saw themselves as 'having the best of both worlds'.

All towns had a strong sense of community and saw themselves as self-reliant and versatile in terms of manual skills. They tended to view themselves as 'different' from city people, as being more competent to deal with adversity, as more compassionate and as less concerned with material possessions and less susceptible to consumerism.

Our impression was that people in country towns were more likely to accept their traditional roles. Stratification of the community was mentioned as extreme in four towns. In two towns the division was based on birth and dated back to the first settlers. People in two towns thought class division was due to money and education. One town was a part-company, part-historic mining town and people in that town expressed a great deal of bitterness towards the 'managerial class'. This town had a high level of unemployment with an ageing pensioner population and saw the 'managerial class' as highly mobile and not interested in the community.
People living 'alternate' life styles were prominent in three towns. At first, residents had treated the 'alternates' as a 'joke', but at the time of our interviews these people were being taken more seriously. This appears due to the fact that the 'alternates' had shown their willingness to work and had encouraged and developed local craft skills. They also identified strongly with the community and sought to 'open up' the often 'closed' nature of the country town by the public use of expressive arts, such as music, dancing, painting and the display of their crafts.

(c) Mining Towns

Two houses were situated in mining towns. While one town had been settled for over 50 years and the other less than 20, they share a number of similar characteristics which were revealed during our interviews.

Isolation: Both towns are geographically isolated, being situated in mountainous terrain with an exceptionally high annual rainfall. Roads are often impassable with snow in winter. Hence, physically, it is extremely hard to leave the town for some months of the year. Social isolation is

experienced through lack of family supports, lack of services, access to information and resources, high diversity of ethnicity and large numbers of single men. The high 'visibility' of social problems tend to complicate issues.

Women: With a young population and apart from family and friends, many young mothers felt 'dumped'. Neither town had employment opportunities for women outside the 'company'. Marriage breakdown was high and 'company' policy was that housing was available only for married and single men. Separated women frequently entered into de-facto relationships to obtain housing.

Mobility: High mobility of the population was seen traditionally as an element adding to the instability of mining towns, although present residents did not consider it as high as in times of full employment.

Shift Work: This was perceived as a contributing factor to marriage breakdown and as helping to isolate people from social networks. Continual shift work was also seen as a health hazard, with effects similar to jet lag.

Stratification: The older town was highly stratified, with management appointing professional people from 'outside'. Management and workers did not mix and life was affected by these divisions in areas of housing, education, income, social life and attitudes. The younger town had a 'company' policy of promotion through the 'ranks' and divisions were seen more in terms of personalities. The latter town appeared to be a more close-knit community and although residents from both towns expressed negativity towards their circumstances, residents of the younger town were more inclined to view it as a temporary situation.

Incomes: Incomes were generally high and money easy to earn, especially in the younger mining town. Many people found it difficult to manage finances and while 'paternalism' of the company was resented in some cases, regular income and provision of housing made the management of family finances relatively simple.
Almost without exception the only source of income in these towns was employment in the mining company. In the older town there were only three aged pensioners. In the newer town there were no pensioners, and residents actively planned for their retirement by building houses in other places.

4.2 Background to the Establishment of Neighbourhood Houses

The spread of suburbia in the 1950s and 1960s and the growth of housing estates (referred to as 'dormitory suburbs') was soon to be followed by the emergence of social problems which at first received little attention. The inhabitants of housing estates experienced isolation from friends and relatives, and lack of resources such as shopping and recreation facilities and public transport. In the public housing estates, inhabited by low-income families, the problems became aggravated in the 1970s by rapidly growing unemployment.

In Tasmania (as elsewhere in Australia) the concepts of social planning and community development were discussed among welfare professionals but the gap between concepts and action was wide. In the mid-1970s there were few mechanisms at either a State or local government level to respond effectively to the increasing problems. In the new housing estates, well-intentioned surveys were conducted by professionals and university students into the needs for adult learning, recreation and child care. Single-parent families - the 'new poor' - attracted particular attention.

TABLE 4.1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION IN THE SUBURBS/TOWNS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

Neighbourhood	Population	Age distribution (years) 0-14	15-64	65+	Families Total	One-Parent	Income < $6,000 p.a.	Public Housing Tenancy
	N	%	%	%	N	%	%	%
Tasmania	**418,957**	**26.2**		**9.8**	**138,589**	**7.2**	**25.0**	**7.0**
Public Housing Estates:								
House A & B	5,682	46.5	51.3	2.2	1,541	21.6	24.6	58.4
" C & D	6,879	45.8	52.7	1.5	1,821	20.7	23.0	72.4
" E	5,511	38.5	57.9	3.6	1,586	19.2	25.6	44.8
" F	4,109	27.0	69.6	3.4	1,114	17.1	24.0	25.7
" G	1,086	25.6	67.2	7.2	343	15.8	35.9	49.7
" H	4,756	22.5	68.5	9.0	1,560	11.1	30.9	25.4
" I	1,162	21.5	67.4	11.1	399	13.8	38.9	38.8
" J	2,872	22.5	67.8	9.7	952	15.0	39.0	37.5
" "	2,795	37.2	56.6	6.2	758	15.8	21.5	21.5
" K	3,529	21.2	63.8	15.0	1,249	9.5	35.4	7.7
" L	8,556	30.3	62.8	6.9	2,815	7.9	16.5	3.5
" M	7,256	33.3	61.3	5.4	2,203	12.2	24.4	9.6
" N	6,416	30.5	60.8	8.6	2,048	8.6	23.4	7.2
Country Towns:								
House O	2,545	29.8	62.4	8.8	854	6.6	25.2	0.6
" P	584	21.6	62.8	15.6	207	4.3	25.6	1.1
" Q	5,592	34.7	61.9	3.4	1,616	8.1	15.5	29.1
" R	859	32.4	60.0	7.6	265	7.5	27.6	N/A
" S	1,005	24.3	60.2	15.5	348	6.7	34.7	N/A
Mining Towns:								
House T	2,675	34.9	64.4	0.7	653	4.1	4.0	N/A
" U	1,141	33.8	65.9	0.3	292	2.7	2.1	N/A

Source: ABS, **1981 Census of Population and Housing.**

TABLE 4.2 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%) IN THE SUBURBS/TOWNS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

Neighbourhood	Men		Women		Persons	
	Participation	Unemployment	Participation	Unemployment	Participation	Unemployment
Tasmania	**77.2**	**7.3**	**42.5**	**8.4**	**59.6**	**7.6**
Public Housing Estates:						
House A & B	85.8	19.5	33.0	14.6	56.7	17.8
" C & D	86.8	22.6	28.5	19.2	55.7	21.6
" E	82.4	8.6	38.0	12.1	58.8	9.7
" F	70.9	16.0	45.1	12.6	58.9	15.0
" G	74.8	15.1	37.1	19.9	56.7	16.7
" H	76.4	10.4	43.1	9.5	59.6	10.0
" I	66.5	19.9	34.2	15.0	50.9	18.5
" J	73.2	21.6	35.0	16.4	53.8	19.9
" "	82.1	11.5	41.4	15.0	60.5	12.6
" K	70.2	7.1	36.0	9.4	52.0	8.0
" L	81.4	5.0	46.6	6.4	63.5	5.6
" M	81.7	9.2	37.1	12.6	58.6	10.3
" N	80.6	6.4	40.6	8.0	59.3	7.0
Country Towns:						
House O	80.1	7.0	42.3	6.6	61.1	6.9
" P	73.9	7.8	45.1	10.4	59.2	8.8
" Q	86.1	6.6	34.7	11.6	61.1	8.0
" R	76.2	8.7	31.5	11.8	53.5	9.6
" S	67.8	7.0	41.5	7.5	54.6	7.2
Mining Towns:						
House T	91.0	1.6	43.6	6.7	73.6	3.0
" U	96.6	1.6	36.0	1.8	71.4	1.7

Source: ABS, **1981 Census of Population and Housing.**

TABLE 4.3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THE POPULATION IN THE SUBURBS/TOWNS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES.

	Educational Attainment (% of Population)						
Neighbourhood	Degree or higher	Diploma	Trade and other certificate	Total post-school	No qualifi-cations	Still at school	Not stated
Tasmania	**3.8**	**3.2**	**14.7**	**21.7**	**66.9**	**3.1**	**8.3**
Public Housing Estates:							
House A & B	0.6	0.8	12.4	13.7	74.3	1.9	10.2
" C & D	0.2	0.1	10.3	10.7	81.2	2.3	5.7
" E	0.5	0.8	12.2	13.5	73.1	4.2	9.2
" F	0.8	0.8	12.0	13.6	74.0	4.0	8.3
" G	0.0	0.2	7.8	8.0	74.8	4.5	12.7
" H	1.3	1.5	12.7	15.6	73.0	3.4	8.0
" I	0.4	0.8	8.1	9.3	82.4	1.9	6.5
" J	0.3	0.2	7.6	8.2	78.7	3.4	9.7
" "	1.3	1.5	12.5	15.4	71.5	4.8	8.2
" K*							
" L	6.3	5.1	20.2	31.7	59.7	3.2	5.5
" M	1.4	2.3	12.8	16.4	73.3	3.6	6.7
" N	2.3	3.1	16.5	22.0	64.6	2.9	10.5
Country Towns:							
House O	1.3	2.2	17.2	20.7	72.1	1.9	5.3
" P	4.3	4.6	13.4	22.4	67.4	2.2	8.0
" Q	1.7	2.4	14.9	18.9	69.2	4.1	7.8
" R	3.4	2.8	8.4	14.7	77.8	2.4	5.2
" S	1.7	2.2	15.6	19.4	68.2	1.3	11.0
Mining Towns:							
House T	4.3	2.5	17.7	24.6	62.3	2.1	11.0
" U	4.8	2.2	19.7	26.7	62.7	1.3	9.3

Source: ABS, **1981 Census of Population and Housing.**

* No data available.

Few of these studies were co-ordinated and several surveys were sometimes made of the same population, but with little response from the authorities.

However, with the increasing knowledge of social problems in the housing estates the authorities did begin to take some notice. Discussions generated under the auspices of the Australian Assistance Plan and the work done in a number of local government areas by the Children's Services Field Officers (the 'Catalysts') under the auspices of the Interim Committee for the Children's Commission (see Chapter 3) played a significant role in awakening public awareness of these problems.

An event which played an important role in raising awareness of social problems, as well as in prompting a response from the authorities occurred unexpectedly in January 1975. The Tasman Bridge spanning the Derwent River and linking eastern, western and southern Hobart was accidentally hit by a ship and collapsed. All major commerce and industry and most public services were located on the western side of the river, and access to these was therefore no longer readily available to residents of suburbs and housing estates on the eastern shore. The nearest bridge was approximately 20 km upstream and was inadequately served by road. Six public housing estates were situated on the eastern shore, with building taking place on a seventh. Three 'new' estates and one 'old' estate were the most affected by the bridge collapse and communities were thrown upon their own resources. The disaster had a unifying effect on the community and money was allocated to establishing services. Professionals and local people worked together to establish 'ad hoc' and citizen services for the isolated population. Whether or not this event directly contributed to the establishment of neighbourhood houses cannot be said with certainty. However, it clearly added to the awareness that many communities were isolated and that this isolation contributed to their social problems. This situation called for a response not only from the authorities but also at a local level in the form of some action of self-help.

(a) First Houses

The first two houses were established in urban public housing estates; one to the South-East of Hobart and the other in a northerly direction. Both estates were within a 20 km radius of Hobart, within different municipalities (Estates A and C - see Tables).* Both estates were seen as 'disadvantaged' in that they housed low-income families with minimal facilities and services.

In Estate A, in 1976, a group of women with young children, little money and without access to either private or public transport, began to meet regularly in one anothers' houses. Some of them lacked parenting and housewifely skills, and they were all attempting to cope with loneliness and isolation from family support. However, discussion was difficult, if nearly impossible, as the women needed to bring their children with them. A chance remark from an Adult Education tutor suggested they form a morning discussion group and apply for funds from Technical and Further Education (TAFE). This led to discussions between the women and social workers employed in the locality.

By December 1977 the group had obtained a house on a rental basis from the Department of Housing and had applied for child care funding from the Commonwealth Government's Office of Child Care. This was granted in 1978 with a 'one off' grant for equipment of $2,847 and a recurring grant of $10,500 for administration and a co-ordinator's salary. The local municipal council undertook to administer the grants as the women involved did not have the administrative skills to deal with public money. Much the same process was happening in Estate C.

---

* In Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 (pp 26, 27 and 28) the population of Estates A and B, and C and D are shown jointly as these are adjoining housing estates and ABS data for these estates are accordingly grouped together.

It is difficult to ascertain with precision the actual date when the first suggestion for a neighbourhood house was made. What is known is that two groups of women from two separate public housing estates applied for and were granted approval for funding from the Commonwealth Office of Child Care through the Children's Services Program, in April 1978 and May 1979 respectively.

The two early houses have served as a 'model' for later houses and have created precedents for establishment and funding. In subsequent initiatives there have also been continuing cultural, social and economic attributes of similar character. These are:

(i) Houses have all been initiated by women, with or without professional welfare involvement.
(ii) Child care has been perceived as a ma issue.
(iii) Isolation, whether perceived as social geographical has acted as a motivating e in initiating moves for establishment.
(iv) Poverty has been a recurrent theme in an establishment. In country areas, financial distress might not have been so apparent but was manifest in poverty of resources and opportunity.
(v) Government support has played a major role in terms of support and recurrent funding (both direct and 'indirect').

(b) Professional Involvement in the Establishment of the First Two Houses

The establishment of the first two houses was an outcome of a chain of events and social interactions among the inhabitants of public housing estates who found their living conditions difficult and began to seek ways of improving them. It needs to be noted that ideas and actions which eventually resulted in the establishment of the neighbourhood houses came mainly from women, most of whom l little or no experience of social action of that kind.

Recognition should als given to the fact that involvement of professionals in these developments was substantial and of considerable significance. As mentioned earlier, a chance remark in a discussion between local women living in Estate A to an Adult Education tutor resulted in the beginning of the women's group whose later actions coalesced towards the objective of establishing a neighbourhood house. Throughout the period of early endeavours and after the houses had been established, professional women acted as advisors, enablers and catalysts. This was the case particularly of two community social workers who were employed by the State Department of Health and were attached to the Community Health Centres located close to Estates A and C where the first two houses were established. The two social workers saw their task to be one of education and prevention, and easily extended their perspective from the concern limited to health issues to a wider concern for community development.

Both workers played significant roles in developing local initiative and self-determination. This was particularly so in Estate A where the worker was involved for a longer period and from her community development perspective was able to have some influence in the setting up of government guidelines.

The two social workers held the view (which they shared with the women's groups) that initiatives should take place simultaneously at both local community and government levels. Residents had no access to the knowledge necessary to obtain funding nor were they aware of how bureaucracies operated. The social workers were convinced that if houses were to be successful, there must be an assurance of stability in terms of funding and premises, as well as frequent, informed access to bureaucratic processes and policy.

Approaches were made to State Departments of Housing, Health, Education (through the Division of Further Education), Social Welfare and Recreation. The newly appointed Advisoron Women's Affairs* played a crucial, co-ordinating role in undertaking to contact and to talk with the relevant authorities. She also talked to groups on the strategies necessary to involve government.

Over a period of time the purpose of the neighbourhood houses changed subtly into a wider perspective. Views began to be expressed about long term aims, rather than the 'stop-gap' methods of the first initiatives. Distinctions also began to be drawn between community centres and neighbourhood houses.

Community centres operated along traditional and sometimes institutional lines. They were usually managed either by a local committee who rented premises for recreational purposes and organised groups for fund raising activities, such as fairs, dances and public meetings; or by local government for various purposes such as family day care, play groups, unemployed groups, pensioner activities and such like. Neighbourhood groups considered the community centres did not necessarily provide the opportunities to develop the potential for self-confidence, organisational and educational skills, and the environment needed for self-determination and self-autonomy. So while neighbourhood groups saw the value of the community centres, they wished to develop their own structures along different lines and, perhaps, to use the community centres as an adjunct to the houses. These distinctions became important in giving the neighbourhood houses in Tasmania a well-defined identity in terms of values, objectives, and methods of operation.

Professional activity in neighbourhood houses was legitimised late in 1979 with the formation of a State Interdepartmental Committee via the Premier's Department to oversee interdepartmental activities in this area. At that time, there were three neighbourhood houses in urban housing estates and five were seeking establishment. The aim of the Interdepartmental Committee was to promote flexibility and to decrease the ad hoc nature of submission writing, to elicit the financial contribution of local government, and to determine the design of neighbourhood houses which was to be guided by the Housing Department.

By the end of 1979, a weekend seminar of professionals and users of houses passed the following resolutions:

(i) Houses should promote a concept of neighbourliness and should be a house for a whole neighbourhood, not just for women.
(ii) Child care should not be necessarily a component for funding houses, and that funding should be more flexible.
(iii) Regional meetings for houses should be held regularly.
(iv) Two representatives of houses should be asked to join the Interdepartmental Committee.
(v) Local initiatives and self determination were stressed as vital for the women using the houses. There was a general concern that the bureaucratisation of Government welfare agencies could undermine this.

---

* Advisor on Women's Affairs was attached to the State Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The Office was created in 1979 but was later abolished in 1982 when the State Liberal Party took office.

(vi) The opinions of house committees should be sought in drawing up funding and administration guidelines.
(vii) The guidelines to be reviewed annually with assistance from house personnel.
(viii) Government support was to be sought for rental assistance.

4.3 Initiatives and Reasons for Setting up Houses

From the description of events which led to the establishment of the first two neighbourhood houses in Tasmania it is clear that a recognition and subsequent definition of a problem area were crucial factors in the initiatives to establish the houses. This is consistent with the view on community development expressed in literature (e.g. Loewenberg and Dolgoff, 1974) that success of a group action will depend upon people's ability to become aware of a problem's existence and upon their ability to articulate their perception of the nature of the problem. People in different social circumstances will 'see' similar situations differently, from their subjective perspective. Perception will be influenced by social location as well as by life experience and values of the people involved. Thus, similar circumstances such as social isolation may be viewed differently by residents of an 'old' housing estate from the view of those living, for instance, in an isolated mining town.

Where conditions are recognised as unsatisfactory, group action for change is more likely to occur if the following four factors are present:-

(1) The condition must become 'visible' to the people involved before they are able to define it as a 'problem'.
(2) The problem is thus identified not by fact (its 'objective' existence) but by definition.
(3) Assumptions made about the cause of the problem will depend on knowledge of social factors and how they are perceived.
(4) Unless the existence and definition of the problem is acknowledged and accepted by people who have power and resources, or access to these, little will be done about the problem.

To test these propositions, we have analysed the data obtained in the interviews with the people involved in the 21 neighbourhood houses and from the documents we have studied with the objective of identifying: (a) the sources of the initiatives for their establishment; and (b) the interests, or problems, which provided the stimulus for the initiatives. It needs to be noted, however, that in attempting to identify a single source or a single interest we cannot claim that other factors did not play a role. At best, we may claim that the identified sources or interests were likely to be the **main** sources and interests (see Table 4.4).

Furthermore, as noted earlier in relation to the establishment of the first two houses, it was the local residents who took the initiative but the involvement of the social workers employed in the two localities was significant. In processes of social action and in the interactions of groups and individuals it is not always possible to identify with precision who (or which event) provided the initial stimulus for a subsequent chain of events.

(a) Sources of Initiatives

With the appropriate qualifications expressed above, we have ascertained that the initiatives for the establishment of neighbourhood houses had flowed from four main sources.

(i) Local groups and individuals
(ii) Non-government organisations (established community groups)
(iii) Welfare professionals
(iv) Government authorities (see Table 4.4)

(i) Local groups and individuals were responsible for two-thirds (14 houses) of initiatives in forming groups which later established a neighbourhood house. One-third (7 houses) came from public housing estates; a quarter (5 houses) were in country towns; and two were from mining towns.

The seven public housing estate groups were from 'new' estates. All were composed of women who were aware of the problems facing young families and they perceived common issues of financial and social disadvantage in their circumstances. They began to talk and meet together to discuss the problem. In the five country towns women 'talked together'. In four towns, the focus was on access to resources. The fifth town saw the problem as part of the class structure in the town, and thought that a number of people suffered disadvantage through impoverished circumstances. Women from the two mining towns defined their primary problem as multi-faceted, due to lack of social and family supports and access to resources. All groups saw merit in meeting and identifying problem areas.

(ii) Non-government community organisations were responsible for three initiatives: one in an 'old' and two in 'new' public housing estates. The 'old' estate was in an area geographically isolated by water and bounded by bush. Although inhabited mainly by an ageing population, presently young people were moving back into the area, often those who had their family there and because housing was cheap or available through the State Housing Division. Initiatives were developed from a community group established in 1978. There appeared to be little concensus as to reasons for establishment of a house. Some of the community thought a new medical centre should come first while others saw a neighbourhood house as a 'place of ill-repute'. There was no general perception of a common problem.

By contrast, common problems were identified in the new estates and initiatives were taken by two community groups. One community group was established after a needs survey of the area by a community worker employed by the local municipal council. The community group wanted to push for services into the area. Problem definition was at first difficult; although many of the social and economic disadvantages common to public housing estates were present, residents did not wish to identify them. This was due to the fact that the estate had been built as an 'experiment' between two reasonably affluent suburbs and residents of the public housing estate tended to identify with their more comfortably situated neighbours. By focusing on the lack of public services, the problem became 'visible' to residents.

The second community group to initiate moves came from a child care co-operative from another suburb. Residents had only just moved to the 'new' estate when people from the co-operative began to talk to local women, defining their problem in specific terms, that is, the lack of child care. Women from the 'new' estate were able to relate the discussions to their own needs and circumstances.

TABLE 4.4: INITIATIVES, SOURCES OF INTEREST, METHODS AND LENGTH OF TIME IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HOUSES.

Characteristics	Sample	Public Housing Estates	Country Towns	Mining Towns
Neighbourhood Houses in study	**21**	**14**	**5**	**2**
Initiatives for establishment by:				
- Professionals	3	3	-	-
- Non-government agencies	3	3	-	-
- Local government	1	1	-	-
- Local residents	14	7	5	2
Initial interest in establishment:				
- Child care and family support	3	3	2	1
- Meeting place	4	3	1	-
- Not specific	10	8	1	-
- Other	1	-	1	-
Methods used in establishment:				
- Small group discussion	13	9	3	1
- Public meeting	8	5	2	1
Length of time from initiative to establishment:				
- 1 year or less	6	4	2	-
- 1 year to 3 years	6	3	2	1
- 3 years to 6 years	4	3	-	1
- 6 years and over	2	2	-	-
- Not yet established	3	2	1	-

(iii) Welfare professionals were responsible for three initiatives, all three situated in 'old' housing estates.

In one estate, a group of welfare professionals became concerned with the social problems of two adjoining suburbs, both of which had established services. The older suburb had an older-to-ageing population and retained a residue of a 'welfare image'. This had been somewhat mitigated by a number of interstate people moving into the area because houses were cheap. The other suburb had more substantial houses and was considered a more desirable place to live. A submission was made and funded through the Commonwealth Community Employment Programme (CEP) to employ a community development worker to assess the needs of the area and to 'gain as broad a view as possible of the feeling of the (local) residents'.

The second initiative came from a public housing estate built in the early fifties, mainly to accommodate workers for a large private enterprise corporation. A number of residents had come there when young and were now retired. The area was largely 'cut off' from adjacent suburbs by a major highway and had a reputation as a 'rough, tough place'. It appeared to be a forgotten area until a community church worker, skilled in 'building communities', initiated a church group. The people in the estate were divided as to what service was appropriate, as not all people wished to be associated with the particular church denomination of the worker.

The third initiative came from a large town servicing a rural and industrial population. A group of welfare professionals from government agencies saw social problems and disadvantage in the housing estate and initiated moves to establish a focal point. In this group no local people were contacted or consulted at the initiating stage. A division occurred between local residents and the professionals, as the local people resented the suggestion that their condition was seen as 'disadvantaged'.

(iv) Government authorities: A local government authority initiated moves to establish one group. This was for an 'old' public housing estate where a number of committees had been formed and disbanded over a period of eight years. Much argument between local church groups and the community had taken place over that time, resulting eventually in government funding being made available on an 'ad hoc' basis. The estate had acquired a 'welfare image' when it was built in the mid-fifties and, to a large extent, the stigma still existed at the time we conducted the survey. The community became a 'battleground' for community development, and local residents expressed cynicism towards initiatives to establish a house. Hence, while local residents saw the area as having social and economic problems, they were not convinced that a neighbourhood house was the means necessary to overcome these problems.

(b) Reasons for Initiatives

Reasons for the initiatives taken for the establishment of neighbourhood houses ranged from specific causes or interests to the more general. In the houses established earlier, the need for the house was determined through discussions and identification of specific problems or interests. The groups which established the later houses did not always define their interest so specifically and appeared inclined to follow the earlier 'models', sometimes without much discussion of need or interest.

The main reasons for the initiatives taken fell into four categories of needs or interests:

(i) child care and family support
(ii) a meeting place
(iii) not specific
(iv) other

(i) Child care and family support : We have combined these two reasons into one category, as many of the persons interviewed saw little or no difference between the two. Close to one-third (6 out of 21) of the groups saw the need for child care and family support as the main reasons for the initiative towards establishing a neighbourhood house. Of these, three were situated in public housing estates, two in country towns, and one in a mining town.

Care of children was seen as dependent upon having an extended family to babysit and to help out in times of sickness. Extended families also provided models for learning to care for and nurture children, and provided the necessary encouragement for young mothers. Implicit in the term 'family support' was a belief that families provided a major part of the emotional life of people, and the absence of extended family denied an important element of life. For some women child care became a priority after it became obvious that they would not be able to participate in activities without child care facilities. Other women had arrived at that conclusion before becoming involved.

(ii) A meeting place: Women from four houses originally began to meet in one anothers' houses. Their primary interest was to get together with other women for companionship as well as a means of overcoming loneliness. Three of these groups were from public housing estates. One group from a country town was interested in having a place to meet. Their social contacts were good but they wished to have some place of their own. A house was therefore seen as a means of encouraging newcomers to participate in community life.

(iii) Not specific: Ten groups appeared uncertain as to where their interest originated. Of these, eight were from public housing estates with one each from a mining town and a country town. The groups from public housing estates gave a variety of reasons for interest, such as better services, discussion groups, group activities and educational needs. Houses with uncertain aims had been initiated by welfare professionals with concern for social problems. Lack of specification might have been due to the non-recording of reasons when the house was established, and as some committee members had changed since then, the reasons were not known at the time of the interview.

(iv) Other: The interest of one country town was to establish a craft centre. This had been accomplished by one woman, and later it was realised that local people had other interests which could be accommodated by expanding the craft aspect to become a neighbourhood house.

(c) Methods Used to Form Interest Groups

Once the initial need or interest was identified, the means to form an action group was explored. Organisation of groups and actions towards establishment of houses was pursued by one of two methods. The most common method used was personal contact by small groups of women talking to one another and agreeing to meet at regular intervals. Thirteen groups used this method of group formation.

Calling a public meeting was the method used by eight groups. This was achieved by various means, ranging from one woman's initiative in arranging a public meeting because she was unable to obtain child care in a country town, to meetings called by professionals and municipal councils who saw a need for action. In housing estates, public meetings were more likely to be called by professionals with the aim of involving the local community. In the latter case, local involvement and initiative was minimal. Where the impetus came from a local community, support was stronger.

The time taken from the initial steps to the establishment of the house ranged from less than one year to over six years. The majority of the houses (12 out of 21) were established within three years. At the time our survey was conducted, three houses had not yet been established (Table 4.4).

4.4 Initiatives and Involvement of State Government

(a) Initial Involvement

Involvement of the State government in the establishment of neighbourhood houses began at the time of first initiatives from the community in 1978. After much consultation and numerous meetings and submissions, the government agreed in 1979 to establish an Interdepartmental Committee 'to evaluate the need for further neighbourhood centres such as those operating so successfully [in Estates A and C] ...' (Department for Community Welfare, 1981). The membership of the Committee included representatives from the Department of Social Welfare (now Department for Community Welfare) and from other government departments and authorities, such as Education, Health, Housing and Advisor on Women's Affairs.

The Interdepartmental Committee was formed and developed a set of guidelines for government assistance to neighbourhood houses. These guidelines were based on two main principles: first, when applying for funds the group should be able to demonstrate a community interest extending beyond personal involvement; and, second, the groups should satisfy the Department for Community Welfare of their intention and ability to make the Centre available for meetings, classes, recreation and other activities which would enrich the life of the community. The guidelines had the stated intention of flexibility and (were) to allow each centre 'to make the maximum use of community support'. Guidelines were also seen as a way of reducing the 'ad hoc' nature of submission requests for funding and to 'rationalise State Government expenditure on these useful community resources'. The committee which developed the guidelines stressed that it was important that neighbourhood houses were available where needed. They saw need in wider terms than socio-economic and pointed out that lack of resources and the availablility of opportunities, particlularly for women, was deprivation of another kind. Geographical isolation experienced by people in rural and mining towns often created needs for resources and programs similar to those in low-income public housing estates. Therefore, priority should be given to funding neighbourhood houses in areas where facilities and programs (for women) were limited or non-existent.

The guidelines were endorsed by the State Cabinet in January 1981, and became the basis for ongoing assistance to the existing houses and also for further development of the neighbourhood houses program. Under the guidelines, the Department for Community Welfare became responsible for administering the program, although several interdepartmental committees were involved with provisions for neighbourhood houses (see (b) p. 39). The Interdepartmental Committee remained responsible for reviewing projects across a number of government departments, including Housing, Health, Education, Recreation, the Arts Advisory Board, and the Commonwealth Office of Child Care. The Deputy Directors of Housing and Community Welfare were to advise their relative Ministers and the Cabinet sub-committee of capital requirements and construction program priorities. The Department for Community Welfare also made provision for establishment, operation and running costs of houses.
Assistance with operational costs, including assistance with rent, telephone, electricity, postage, and stationery, insurance and audit was to be provided on the following conditions:

- grants were to be made on an annual basis, subject to annual assessment and report writing
- final decisions in regard to funding was to rest with the Minister (for Community Welfare)
- groups applying for assistance were required to comply with the neighbourhood house program guidelines
- groups were to be prepared to enter into an agreement with the Department of Community Welfare to carry out services for which they received funding and to abide by all audit requirements and special conditions determined by the Department
- groups were to be incorporated or take active steps towards incorporation

A number of methods were used for obtaining premises. Where there were no existing community facilities, the Department for Community Welfare and the Department of Construction would supervise private contractors in the building of premises on State-owned land. After this, control of the building would be transferred to the Lands Department. The house would then be leased to the house management body at market rental, with the Lands Department being responsible for maintenance. Alternatively, the house could be leased to the local council. Under a local council leasing arrangement, the local council was to be responsible for maintenance, and sub-leases of the property to the house management body.

Properties were to be usually leased for a 21-year period at a nominal rent (in 1985, $50 per year). Approval of the Minister was required in respect to groups to whom the building was sub-let, any change of purpose, and/or changes in the amount of rent paid.

(b) The Neighbourhood Houses Program since 1981

After the guidelines for the neighbourhood houses program had been accepted by the Cabinet, the program was to be managed by four separate but sometimes interrelated committees. These were to be:

- Interdepartmental Committee (as noted earlier in this section)
- Deputy Directors of Housing and Community Welfare
- Sub-committee of Cabinet (Ministers for Housing and Community Welfare)
- Officers within the Housing Division and Community Welfare

(i) Co-ordination of the Program: The Department for Community Welfare undertook the task of co-ordinating the Interdepartmental Committee, with the Supervisor of Community Work acting as co-ordinator. Subsequently, the Department developed a comprehensive operational manual which provided a set of criteria and guidelines for the aims and functions of the neighbourhood houses; the role of the Department for Community Welfare; the responsibilities of departmental officers; the provision of child care in neighbourhood houses; and the design of the houses (DCW, 1985a).

As defined in the manual, the purposes of the program is to:

- establish and strengthen local community networks
- promote the mobilisation of the resources of neighbourhoods
- develop the capacity of local residents to meet their own needs
- provide for services and activities that are responsive to the needs of local residents
- encourage the integration of community services and activities at the local level
- promote and develop a sense of participation in the local community (DCW, 1985a:1)

Factors to be taken into account when allocating resources to, and determining priorities in, the program include:

- Population profile and the degree of isolation of the area
- Needs of the area as shown by general social indicators and through a process of consultation
- The existence of special need groups within the local community; for example, single parent families, handicapped persons

. Extent of other social and community development services in the area
. Previous funding history
. Compliance with departmental guidelines
(DCW, 1985a:9)

(ii) Allocation of Resources: Assistance with resources falls into two separate categories; assistance with accommodation, and financial assistance with operational costs of the house.

Both Departments of Housing and Community Welfare make provisions for the construction of houses in communities where there are no existing community facilities that would be appropriate for neighbourhood house activities. In consultation with officers from the Department for Community Welfare, the Department of Housing has developed a 'standard' design for the houses to serve as a basic guide. House management committees are to be consulted with regard to site location and design features. Domestic details of size, scale, materials, equipment and colours, are to aim to achieve a 'non-institutional' effect. Spaces are to be made for multi-purpose use, and a provision for quiet 'withdrawal' areas suitable for counselling and small-group activities. Adequate space for such activities as food co-operatives, craft pursuits and storage is to be provided. Provision is also to be made for children's activities.

In the 'old' housing estates and country towns, preference is to be given to renting or purchasing suitable existing premises and then adapting them to neighbourhood house activities.

Assistance with operational costs includes a rental component, telephone installation and rental, electricity, administrative costs (including stationery and postage), insurance and audit, and a contribution towards the salary of the house co-ordinator. Grants are made on an annual basis, broadly on the conditions recommended by the committee which developed the guidelines. The grants are made mainly from the Department for Community Welfare and specific activities from other government authorities, such as Health, and the Divisions of Recreation and Further Education of the Department of Education (see **Funding**, pp. 53).

4.5 Assistance from Commonwealth Government

As noted earlier in this chapter, child care and family support services were perceived as an important issue by the groups seeking to establish neighbourhood houses in their localities. This was certainly the case with the first two houses to be established. These groups sought Commonwealth support to provide subsidies for such services, and other groups later made similar requests.

The first two groups applied for and were granted funds in 1978 and 1979. Assistance was provided by the Commonwealth under the Family Support and Counselling Services of the Children's Services Program. Grants were made for assistance with co-ordinator's salary ($10,500 and $11,500, respectively) and a 'one off' grant for equipment ($2,847 and $2,935, respectively, for each of the two houses). After the introduction of the State Neighbourhood House Program, assistance with co-ordinators' salaries and operating costs was taken over by the State Department for Community Welfare, except for one house which apparently continued to apply for and receive an annual recurrent grant of $11,000.

At the time our survey was conducted (1985), the Children's Services Program was funding four houses directly for child care. The grants were paid on a quarterly basis and were made of two components: staff and fee relief. The staff subsidy was determined on the basis of 75 per cent of salary of qualified staff and was dependent on the number of children attending a centre on an equivalent full-time basis. The fee relief was based on a standard income test used at the time by the Commonwealth Office of Child Care.

(a) Conditions for Funding Child Care

Funding for child care was provided on a recurrent basis and was obtainable for occasional care, outside school hours care, and holiday care. It was provided subject to State licensing requirements concerning staffing and suitability of premises.

(i) Occasional Care: Funding for occasional care was provided on condition that: a centre had to operate for a minimum of three days per week; it must service the needs of the public in the locality; priority of access was to be given to children with special requirements, i.e., children in need or at risk, children with parents in need of respite, children of single parents, children of low income families, and children of Aboriginal and ethnic families.

Qualified staff were eligible for staff subsidies. Wages for non-qualified staff were to be met from other sources.

(ii) Outside School Hours Care: One house only had consistently used this source of funding for activities. Services were run outside school hours and during normal working hours over the whole school year. Priority was given to children up to 12 years, of working parents, although children with 'special needs' were also considered. Supervisors were paid on a child ratio of daily attendance, with a minimum of 12 children. Fee levels were structured in accordance with income, with low income families not expected to meet all the costs.

(iii) Holiday Care: Funding was available through the State Education Department, administered by the Division of Recreation. A number of houses had used this source of funding to run holiday programs. Applications were assessed individually, with house committees expected to provide details of cost and proposed activities. Programs were destined to cater for children from 7 to 12 years. Requirements were for day care activities for children of working parents and children in special circumstances of isolation, handicap, and children of single parents. While priority was expected to be given to such children, the service (where practical) was open to the whole community. Fees were charged according to ability to pay, although encouragement was given to charging a fee which would reflect the cost of the program. Programs were expected to operate during school holidays (9.00 am - 5.00 pm) for 5 full days for a two-week period during the school holidays and a minimum of two weeks during the Christmas vacation. Funding was expected to cover the cost of the co-ordinator's salary. Volunteer staff were encouraged to assist, with costs such as travel being met with funding assistance.

(iv) Capital Costs: Two houses had attached child care premises; the capital costs of these premises had been met by the Commonwealth. This included construction, purchase and installation of the necessary furniture and equipment, as well as architectural and legal fees. Two other houses had separate premises for child care. Cost of construction, purchase of land and site works, furniture and equipment had also been met by the Commonwealth.

4.6 Assistance from Local Government

The role of local government in the establishment and on-going activities of neighbourhood houses has been rather limited. Some responsibility for these activities has been assumed from the time of first initiatives and in varying degrees has been accepted, but the extent of this responsibility has not been clarified. In one case the local council administered the funds of the neighbourhood house for some time, at the request of the house management committee. Liaison between neighbourhood houses management committees and local government bodies is dependent on initiatives from local and community groups. Response from local government varied, depending on the personal perceptions of and attitudes to community development by local councillors and on the resources available in a particular local government area.

CHAPTER 5

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES IN OPERATION

The operation of the neighbourhood houses in Tasmania described in this chapter records the situation as it was at the time the interviews with the people involved in the houses took place, that is, August-September 1985. At that time, the houses were at varied stages of development; some had been in existence since 1977 and others were relatively new. The time factor, as well as other factors noted in the previous chapter (e.g. locality, government support, etc.) undoubtedly played a role in the way the houses developed their operational structures and the extent of their activities and programs.

The data recorded here have come mainly from the interviews conducted with the people involved in the operation of the houses and from relevant documents we have examined. These included documents made available to us by the people we interviewed (e.g. minutes of meetings, annual financial statements) and documents obtained from the Department for Community Welfare. Information recorded refers to the management of houses, people actively involved in management and activities, the extent and types of activities and programs conducted at houses, and the sources and extent of funding of houses' operation.

5.1 Management

(a) Committee Membership and Positions

The data show that the day-to-day running of each house was organised by a management committee elected from the members of the neighbourhood house committee. Members were composed of local people from the community and were mostly women, although the people we interviewed emphasised that men were encouraged to join. In the vast majority of houses (18), office bearers had been elected at annual general meetings. At the time of our interviews, the remaining three houses had not yet held an annual general meeting, but intended to do so within the next three months. These houses had elected office bearers in an 'ad hoc' manner from interested members. The size of each house executive varied from two to seven members and was at a maximum composed of a president, vice president (numbers varied between one and three) secretary, treasurer and a public officer.

Only one house had a management committee whose members did not use the house, and operated as an advisory body. This committee was composed of the local school principal, a regional director from the Education Department, a member of the school Parents and Friends Association and a National Trust member. The house was situated in a country town where the local culture found authoritarian structures acceptable.

Most houses (18) held a general committee meeting once a month. Two houses met fortnightly and one house every three weeks with an executive meeting each week. Most executives met as the need arose. Committee meetings tended to be held more frequently during the establishment stage and before incorporation. Co-ordinators automatically became committee members on appointment, although there were some problems with this, in some houses.

(b) Allocation of Responsibilities

Responsibility for the operation of the house and the allocation of duties was a source of confusion for some interviewees. Some admitted they had not yet worked it out satisfactorily, one house committee admitting wryly that the present situation 'worked badly'. This house had reached an impasse with the co-ordinator who refused to consult the committee. Another committee had decided that staff members should not sit on sub-committees or have voting rights at meetings; this decision was due to the perceived overrepresentation by child care workers to the detriment of the neighbourhood house activities. In some houses, the president played an active and authoritative role in decision making.

Nevertheless, there appeared to be an implicit acceptance of collectivism in the decision making process of the majority of houses. Interviewees saw as positive the willingness of members to accept responsibility for particular jobs. This generally arose out of discussion about the day-to-day running of the house.

We identified five broad categories by which responsibility was distributed.

(i) discussion and consensus
(ii) volunteering and/or appointment of sub-committees
(iii) co-ordinators' responsibility
(iv) abiding by the rules, i.e. constitution
(v) president and committee decide

(i) Discussion and consensus: This worked well for three houses. All of these were located in public housing estates and appeared to have a clear idea of what they hoped to achieve and the means by which this should be accomplished. Welfare professionals involved in these houses were taking great care to consult and involve the local community and agencies. Two houses were from 'new' estates with intensely involved committees. The third house had not yet moved into premises and had a strong professional involvement.

(ii) Volunteering and/or appointment of Sub-committees: This was the most popular method for allocating responsibilities. Sometimes suggestions were made that particular people do the organising and at other times members volunteered. Four public housing estates, four country towns and both mining towns used this method. All houses at times co-opted people from outside the committee to perform tasks, particularly in areas where members did not have the necessary skills. Sometimes husbands and male relatives were persuaded to do general maintenance work. In the country towns where local skills were more 'visible', 'outsiders' (non-members) were more frequently asked to help. This was seen as a valuable exercise in involving the community, and sometimes new members who later joined the committee were attracted to the house by this method.

(iii) Co-ordinator responsibility: All co-ordinators were women and they played an active role in the houses. How this role was carried out varied, as did the perception of that position by committees and co-ordinators. In some houses, the co-ordinator and the management committee had totally dissimilar ideas as to how the role should be enacted. Some committees were concerned about delegating authority to the co-ordinator, and one co-ordinator told us she was restricted in her role by having to obtain approval from the executive for everything she did. Another co-ordinator told us she 'did most of the work', leaving to the committee the task of raising funds. However, not all co-ordinators thought the committee was restrictive; in one house the opposite was thought to be the case, as the co-ordinator refused to consult the committee on any issue and had successfully alienated a number of members.

It seemed to us that the personality and perception of the co-ordinator was of crucial importance. In houses where the character of the co-ordinator was dominant, outgoing, and with a degree of political awareness and a knowledge of community development, the house tended to reflect these traits in the outlook of its members, administration and choice of activities. Conversely, where the co-ordinator was inexperienced and lacked skills in administration and working with groups, a dominant personality within the committee usually emerged. In several houses, both committee members and co-ordinator had strong personalities, and tension and conflict were common. However, this was not necessarily a negative thing and in some houses it appeared to have positive effects because of the discussion and argument the conflict presented. Other houses suffered because of conflict, mainly due to factions arising within the community. Resolution depended considerably on local culture, the age of the committee and the locality. In one house there did not seem to be a dominant personality at all and the committee appeared to operate in a rather indecisive manner, with little success in involving the community.
While three houses said that the main responsibility rested with the co-ordinator, it was our impression that two houses where consensus was said to be the chief means of deciding

responsibility relied heavily on the co-ordinator to initiate and allocate responsibility. It appeared to us that part of the skill of the co-ordinators in the latter two houses lay in being non-directive. There was no doubt in our mind that these co-ordinators were the pivot around which the house revolved.

Two of the three houses in which the persons interviewed said that responsibility rested with the co-ordinator were located in public housing estates. One house was in a 'new' estate and had been initiated by a professional community group. Establishment of the house took less than two years. The other house had been initiated and established by a group of professionals who had received funding to 'facilitate a committee and drum up interest in the community'.

Neither of these two houses had developed from a grassroots level of the local community. The third house was in a country town. It was owned by the co-ordinator and rented to the management committee. The co-ordinator had used the house as a 'drop-in' and craft centre before the Department for Community Welfare offered funding for the house to be used as a neighbourhood house. In her role within the community, before the election of a committee for the neighbourhood house, she was committed to the concept of community development. Added to this, her creative, innovative and administrative abilities had been ably demonstrated.

(iv) **Abiding by the Rules:** The two houses in which people said they 'abide by the rules' of their constitution sought committee approval for each decision made. Houses were located in 'old' public housing estates, with degrees of conflict between the older and younger population. In one house 'personalities' were seen as a reason for discord, with older committee members bitterly opposed to younger 'radicals'. Committee members from the other house saw their 'aim' as mainly recreational and to raise money.

(v) **President and Committee decide:** In a house not yet established in premises, the committee decided everything without community consultation. In another 'new' estate, the committee decided how the house should operate and gave direct orders to the co-ordinator who was expected to follow up and arrange volunteers for the necessary activities. In the third house, the president 'did most of the work', leaving the committee to raise funds. This house had been established for over 6 years and the president appeared to have considerable power and influence.

From the answers we received and from our own impressions, it appeared that where the concept of community was a common aim, discussion and consensus was more likely to take place and people were more inclined to volunteer to take responsibility for activities and other tasks. Where this was not so, one or two people appeared to decide how a house should operate and what should be the important activities.

(c) Management Structure

The structure of management committees was not always clear. There appeared to be a degree of confusion over roles in some houses, and many committees complained of lack of administrative skills and meeting procedures. In some houses people did not feel their committees were sufficiently motivated and had trouble in delegating authority to members. People in houses complained of 'strong personalities' who held 'all the power' and alienated members and potential members.

In other houses people saw the early initiatives in establishing a house as a time of active involvement for many, and they thought that since then the community no longer 'had a cause' or a specific interest; consequently membership had declined.

In some houses people said they worked in a 'vacuum' and that skills and expertise learned in other older houses needed to be shared around. Houses often had 'big turnovers' in management committees where skills were 'lost and needed to be re-learned'. People involved in these houses were eager to form a State neighbourhood house committee and organise regional meetings which would be held regularly. At the time of the interviews, a region in the north-

west of the State had organised two regional meetings with members from four houses attending. They appeared very satisfied with this arrangement and had agreed to meet at a different house at three-monthly intervals for an exchange of ideas and discussion. People in other houses thought the Department for Community Welfare should display more interest in running management courses for committee members and said they needed direction from professional people.

Several houses had established links with resource people such as an auditor, solicitor and a number of 'key' people in government departments, from whom they regularly sought advice. People with particular skills were also used as resource people. Several houses in 'new' estates used politicians regularly to agitate on their behalf. Because of the smallness of the State and the easy accessibility to members of parliament, this was not difficult. People active in these houses said they had learned to 'play the pollies off against each other most successfully'.

In other houses the co-ordinator was expected to perform most of the administrative functions. This happened in areas where houses were still regarded with a degree of suspicion and where a welfare image was strong.

People in a number of houses saw their early struggles with bureaucracies and the administrative process as a valuable learning experience and expressed often quite emotional sentiments towards their 'personal growth' and the close bonding of the 'strength' found in 'unity'. In these houses sub-committees were seen as 'helping to keep up interest' and to 'involve' people.

(d) Public Meetings and Their Purpose

Public meetings had been held by all houses at some time. The purpose was to bring an issue before the community, and in the first stage of establishment this was a popular method for raising awareness and involving the community in the operation of the house. Most reasons for calling a meeting were directly related to house activities, such as child care and the needs of the house. One house had held a public meeting to agitate for a better garbage collection for the community. After establishment, public meetings were usually annual general meetings. Attendance varied from six to forty people, with an average of twenty.

Special meetings had been called by all but two houses. Management committees called special meetings to discuss specific issues, either because a crisis had arisen or to discuss some major problem. Perceptions of what constituted a problem varied and included submission writing for funding, provision of child care, educational programs and the appointment of staff. Some committees felt that general discussion was necessary on certain issues, even when the management committee thought they were competent to deal with the problem. Other management committees welcomed discussion. The two houses in which people had not had any reason to call a special meeting had committees who worked closely together and who saw one another almost every day. It seems likely that issues and problems were discussed by these people as they worked, thus obviating the need to call a special meeting.

5.2. Personnel and People Involved

Houses were funded to employ staff for day to day operation and administration. Selection and duties were the responsibility of house management committees and positions were advertised through the local press.

(a) Paid Staff - Part-time and Casual

Most people employed at neighbourhood houses worked either on a part-time or casual basis. All houses with the exception of one which was not yet established in premises, employed a co-ordinator, with working hours ranging from 12-20 hours per week. Three houses employed three people in one position with up to a total of 30 paid hours worked per week. One house had employed five people in one position and, at the time of interview, had decided to fill the position with one person working full-time. All committee members and a co-ordinator in that

house admitted that part-time co-ordinators were not able to fulfil their duties in the time allowed and most worked many hours in excess of the number for which they were paid. In other houses, some co-ordinators felt they were underpaid for the duties and responsibilities they performed and felt they were exploited 'like all caring jobs'.

Other part-time positions were occupied by cleaners (two houses) and one project officer was employed for a four-month period. Casual positions were offered by some houses for a gardener (one house), typist (one house) and a book keeper.

(b) Full-time Staff

One house employed a full-time development officer. The position was for a 12 month period and had been funded through the Commonwealth Employment Program (CEP). This house was situated in an 'old' housing estate with a conservative population, 'not used to having services' and 'used to neglect'. The purpose of employing a development officer was to promote community acceptance and use of the house. Another house received funding from the State Arts Advisory Board to employ a co-ordinator for the Arts. This position was for a limited period.

Recurrent funding from State and Commonwealth was possible for part-time employment only. Funding for full-time employment was sought elsewhere for a specific period and position.

(c) Volunteers

Historically, neighbourhood houses have relied heavily on volunteer labour for the day-to-day running of the house and, often, for inspiration and support. Although the dedication of volunteers in establishing houses was seen as a necessary and useful factor, people in the houses which had been operating for over 3 years, often had ambivalent attitudes to volunteerism. On the one hand, volunteers were recognised as necessary, given the constraints of funding and the motivation engendered by involvement. On the other hand, the rights of the individuals, particularly women on low-incomes, to receive payment for skills and sometimes plain hard work, was recognised. Volunteer labour in the latter case was seen as exploitation. In one house people stated they did not use volunteers at all, considering that the principle of unpaid labour was a 'bad policy'. In another house volunteers were seen as 'having rights' and people said that care must be taken not to 'abuse the functions' (of volunteerism).

In all, 19 houses used unpaid volunteers on a regular basis and 20 houses paid volunteers whenever possible. Payment was often nominal but was seen as an important principle in recognising skill and commitment.

(i) Unpaid Volunteers: In one house, in a public housing estate, the role of volunteers was seen as a positive step to gaining financial self-sufficiency and independence. Impetus was provided by a qualified dancing teacher (working at another day-time job) who gave 12 months' work to the house by running a dance school for children of house participants. Volunteers undertook to raise money to provide costumes, shoes and hire of a hall. Original hire of the hall was provided by the house which was able to use money for after-school activities ($195) and also gave a donation of $100 for costumes. Women made the children's costumes in sewing programs and sewed over a hundred intricate garments. The children achieved such a high level of performance that they competed in competitions and gave a number of concerts. Volunteers and the house committee designed the costumes and choreographed the performances.

At the time of the interview the long-term aim was to achieve self-sufficiency for this venture. Planning was in operation for the dance school to open from September 1985 in its own right and become fully self-sufficient, with fees to be charged for admission. The house involvement would then cease and mothers of children enrolled at the school would operate independently, as would the dance teacher, who was to run the school on a full-time paid basis.
The most common activities for volunteer involvement were child care, organising house activities when a co-ordinator was not available, fund raising, general maintenance and cleaning, cutting lawns and gardening, cooking lunches for children in child care, organising food and

clothing co-operatives, helping to run children's holiday programs, and helping to organise adult education programs. Less common was organising a Sunday school (one house), running a 'Kids' disco' (one house), organising a newsletter and letter boxing (two houses), making costumes for a dance school (one house) and establishing a laundromat (one house).

(ii) Visiting and Paid Volunteers: Neighbourhood houses became a previously untapped source for community education for both government and non-government agencies. There were indications that the private market had also tried to use houses to sell their products. Houses had been quick to encourage organisations to use their resources as a community facility whenever this was thought to be appropriate. One of the most popular users was the State Health Department, through child health sisters, with clinics held regularly where there were no health centres within easy access of the community.

Commonwealth and State government departments had provided guest speakers to nearly all houses. There was no charge for this service. Commonwealth departments had supplied information and speakers from Social Security, Community Services, CYSS (Community Youth Support Scheme), Ethnic Affairs, and the Australian Legal Aid Office. The State had contributed speakers from Departments of Housing, Police (Drug Squad), Probation and Parole, Health (Community and Mental), Community Welfare (Homemaker service, domestic violence, child care). Non-government agencies such as Family Planning, Red Cross and St.Johns Ambulance Service had used houses for meetings, discussions, and courses for some of which fees were charged.

Recreational, educational, church groups and groups concerned with special disadvantage or disability were encouraged to use the houses where possible. Community groups were free to use houses as venues for meetings. In most cases, no charge was made, unless the group stood to profit financially from the meeting. Houses reserved the right to decide whether a particular group might be allowed to use the house.

Visiting course tutors were usually paid. Tutors were selected from the local community whenever possible and payment depended on house finances. This was considered important in 'inspiring confidence and self-esteem'. Child care assistants for back-up child care were paid on a casual basis, depending on the activities organised within the house.

In some cases neighbourhood houses have been used as venues for fieldwork education placement for students from Welfare Studies and Child Care courses (conducted by TAFE). Mutual advantage has generally been gained from this experience.

At the time of our interviews one house committee no longer invited guest speakers, because they thought that they (the local participants) 'were beyond that now' and concentrated on practical skills, such as cooking, budgeting and 'simply fun', e.g., games' mornings.

There seems little doubt that during the early stages of establishment, local communities expressed a need for information in terms of how their community operated. People wanted to know what resources were available, how to use them, who controlled what and what individual rights they had. Once this knowledge was freely available, local communities appeared to turn their attention and energies into recreational, educational and creative activities.

5.3 Activities and Programs

The range of activities and programs conducted at the 21 houses was very wide and diverse. In all, we recorded 155 types of activities and programs which had been conducted at the houses from the time of their establishment and/or were conducted at the time of our interviews. Some activities were short-term and if they proved to be popular they would be repeated; others were on-going programs, of a more-or-less permanent nature. We were assured by the people we interviewed that all activities had been, or were, organised in response to requests from, and

expressed needs of their local communities, and that no activity would be organised without community support.

We have classified the activities/programs into three categories (see Table 5.1):*

(a) Recreational and education
  (i) Arts and crafts
  (ii) Sport, recreation, social
  (iii) Cookery
  (iv) Health
  (v) Educational
(b) Family support
  (i) Specific areas or concerns
  (ii) Child care
(c) Other.

(a) Recreational/Educational

(i) Arts and Crafts: This category was broad and was more craft than art oriented. At the time of interviews 20 courses were in operation in 20 houses. Some houses were running several courses and a number of houses were running similar courses.

These were:
patchwork; advanced patchwork and quilting; sewing; knitting and crochetting; pottery; ceramics; macrame; floral art; crafts (general); making mud bricks (this was a weekend seminar); spinning and weaving; leatherwork; upholstery; toymaking; landscape gardening; budget sewing (remaking, mending and renovating); making Christmas decorations; china painting; woodwork; art classes (painting); bark painting.

(ii) Sport and Recreation and Social: This category was almost as popular as arts and crafts. It included 14 different types of activities:
bingo; fortnightly lunches; coffee mornings; netball; games mornings; girls' club; youth club; darts club; baton twirling; video nights; card mornings; know your car; gardening; badminton, women's indoor cricket.

(iii) Cookery: We considered this to be a special category as it was a very popular activity. In one house (public housing estate) chocolate making had become a financial proposition and homemade chocolates were packaged and sold through small shops specialising in luxury and imported food. Six different types of programs were offered in this group:
micro-wave cooking; budget-economical; cake decorating; chocolate making; cooking for men; Chinese cooking.

---

* In Table 5.1 the numbers of listed activities/programs refer to the total **number** of activities programs conducted in the 21 houses. In the description which follows in the following pages the numbers refer to the **type** of activity or program.

(iv) **Health:** Community awareness of health and responsibility for individual health was evident in this category. It included 13 different types of programs, most of them oriented to practical aspects of health maintenance:

keep fit classes; yoga and relaxation; body awareness; shift work hazards; home safety; women's health; fitness and health; ante-natal classes; beauty and grooming; aerobics; hairdressing ($2 per trim; $10 per perm); gentle exercises; weight watchers; self defence.

(v) **Educational:** Educational activities appeared to be almost in as great a demand as creative ones, and included 16 different types of programs:

adult literacy; learning skills within the community; first aid; women's access group (access to further study, personal growth, self awareness); book discussion group; budget management; children's guitar class; music for beginners; child development; discussion group with visiting speakers; migrant English; drama group; preparation for returning to study; know your computer; driving lessons.

(b) Family Support and Child Care

(i) **Family Support:** Activities in this category included specific programs aimed to impart knowledge and/or skills, and on-going support activities which aimed to provide support to groups whose members experienced a particular condition or problem. Other activities were aimed to provide support to families and individuals who needed advice and counselling on various problems.

Support Groups: We recorded 12 different types of programs, some of general interest, others aimed at specific groups of people.
These were:

parents' anonymous; support group for parents with hearing impairment (or parents of children with hearing impairment); support group for special needs children' coping with stress; agrophobic group; play groups; grief counselling; parent support group; life skills; parenting; school leavers and unemployment; savings and loans (if saved $2.00 pw for 16 weeks, eligible for interest free loan of $100).

Advice and Counselling: People in all established houses mentioned the use made by community members of house staff as an advice and problem solving service. No special times were allocated for this activity, and people arrived to discuss problems or seek advice whenever the houses were open. Advice sought ranged from relatively simple questions regarding household management and information as to the best place to shop, to more complicated issues of health, law and welfare. Almost without exception, those seeking assistance were women. Problems encountered were relationship-oriented and were concerned with marriage, partnership, children, relatives and friends. Some house staff and committee members encouraged the use of the house as a place where people could give support, and saw merit in listening, discussing and trying to assemble a knowledge base for advice. Other house staff felt they were inadequate to cope with more difficult aspects of relationships and thought the 'counselling' side of the house was to be discouraged.

TABLE 5.1 : ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS CONDUCTED IN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

Type of Activity	All Houses	Public Housing Estates	Country Towns	Mining Towns
Neighbourhood Houses in the Study	**21**	**14**	**5**	**2**
Total Number of Activities/Programs	**155**	**100**	**34**	**21**
Recreational/Educational	**102**	**64**	**26**	**12**
Arts and crafts	31	21	6	4
Sport, recreation, social	20	16	3	1
Cookery	18	9	6	3
Health	17	9	6	2
Educational	16	9	5	2
Family Support	**32**	**22**	**4**	**6**
Specific areas/concerns	14	10	-	4
Child care	18	12	4	2
Other	**21**	**14**	**4**	**3**

In all houses people agreed that this type of work was time consuming and emotionally draining. Several co-ordinators mentioned the potential for control in this type of activity and said they were concerned by this aspect of 'counselling' and problem solving. Nevertheless, people in most houses saw 'counselling' as an inevitable part of house activities and, with the exception of one house, did not wish to involve professionals, except in extreme cases, such as child abuse, domestic violence and incest. Generally, house staff appeared to consider that communication and 'consciousness raising' helped people to solve their own problems and, thus, should be encouraged.

(ii) **Child Care:** Limited child care facilities were provided within houses. There were two types: back-up child care (informal) and occasional child care (formal).

Back-up child care took place to enable parents, particularly mothers, to enrol in classes or take part in activities offered by the house without the distraction of children. There was no payment for the service, provided the parent was engaged in house activities. The service was unlicensed.

Occasional day care: This form of child care enabled the parent/s to leave the child/children at the house and go away to do something else. Payment was usually nominal and the service was licensed because parents were not on the premises. Houses were licensed to care for up to 15 children and the service was open to the public for two-to-three mornings per week. The service was used extensively, with some parents using it regularly.

Both types of child care employed staff on a part-time and casual basis. Hours of employment ranged from 10-30 hours per week for part-time, with casual staff used as required. At the time of our interviews, 39 part-time paid staff were employed by the houses with 15 staff employed on a casual basis. One house operated after-school care and employed two part-time staff to supervise.

Holiday Programs: As our interviews took place during the school term, no holiday programs were in operation. However, 17 established houses ran programs for children during school holidays and employed people (depending on numbers of children) to co-ordinate the programs. The programs were organised from two-to-six weeks and positions were generally filled by the local community. House committees had a policy of employing local people where possible, seeing it as part of the integration of skills and the development of community participation.

Child Care Centres: Services were also provided in premises especially designed for the purpose. Four centres were actively associated with houses, and two houses had joint child care and house committees. Liaison between houses and centres was on a daily basis. Qualified staff must be employed in the centres and staff numbers were tied to strict staff/child ratios, required under the terms of Commonwealth funding and State government regulations.

It was interesting to note that although the original aim and early initiatives of a number of houses was to provide a comprehensive child care service, the specialised nature of the centres was now regarded as too inflexible to fit within the concept of community development. We formed the impression that people involved in the houses would be happy to disassociate themselves from the formal child care structures and would like to see them as a separate and different service. At the time of our interviews, this had already happened with one house in a public housing estate.

(c) Other Activities/Programs

We recorded 21 programs/activities of wide-ranging types, most of which were aimed to improve the economic conditions of their communities. People involved in the houses, particularly those operating within public housing estates, were very conscious of the low incomes of most of the people living in their communities. There appeared to us to be a desire, often unstated but implicit, on the part of most house committees to see that local communities should not be denied many benefits and experiences of life that the more affluent sections of the society took for granted. An improved quality of life seemed to be an implicit aim in many of the activities that houses organised. This was evident in the organisation of co-operative efforts in food buying, clothes recycling and renovation, the provision for borrowing gardening tools and lawn mower hire. One house was in the process of organising a laundromat (not yet in operation at the time of interview).

5.4 Funding

Prior to 1979, groups seeking to establish houses depended on individual initiatives in making submissions to government bodies for funding support. Groups without professional support found this exercise difficult and tended to 'go it alone', as many people lacked the necessary skills and information to seek financial support. The result was that house committees were spending much of their time and energy in fund raising activities.

After the introduction of the Neighbourhood Houses Program by the Department for Community Welfare, guidelines for establishment and funding of houses were clearly spelled out. With conditions defined and complied with, groups were reasonably confident of receiving financial support. Since 1980, establishment grants and on-going subsidies for administrative and salary costs, have been of primary consideration. Funding for running activities and programs has developed on a more individualistic level, depending upon the needs of the community and the resources and information available to groups.

Through interdepartmental liaison, a multiplicity of funding arrangements were made, mainly from the State government but also from the Commonwealth government. These are best exemplified in the following budget allocations of 1984/5:

(a) State Grants

Department for Community Welfare	
Neighbourhood Houses Program	$159,408
Sundry Social Services Grants	1,000
Holiday Programs for Children	6,308
Department of Education	
Direct Grant	18,370
Department of Recreation	
Vacation Care (indirect grant)	8,370

(b) Commonwealth Grants

Office of Child Care	
Children's Services and Family Support	
One house - co-ordinator's salary	11,000
Child care (four houses)	81,980
Department of Employment and Industrial Relations	
Community Employment Program	
One Development Officer	17,750

(c) Other Grants

Australia Council	
One Arts Co-ordinator (four months)	6,700
Craft Council of Tasmania	
Material for one house	240

TAFE funding for non-formal adult education was available on a submission-based model which varied with need and requirement.

Local government bodies had been reluctant to give direct funding, allowing houses use of resources and providing administration in some cases. In the year ended 1984, one local council made a donation of $980 towards gymnastics equipment for one House.

(d) Self-raised Funds

At the time of our interviews, 14 houses were engaged in various fund-raising activities. Several houses did not raise funds at all. Amounts raised in the previous year varied from $24 to $7,000. People in a number of houses were unsure of the exact amounts, as sometimes funds were raised for a specific purpose and spent immediately. Records of small amounts were not kept by all houses. A conservative estimate of all funds raised during 1984-85 was $14,590. This probably excluded rent revenue of $1,320 from one house that rented space to a local CYSS group.

CHAPTER 6

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES : PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES AND EFFECTS

In the previous two chapters we have discussed, mainly in descriptive form, the processes and events in the establishment of neighbourhood houses in Tasmania, and their operation as we recorded it in 1985. In this chapter, we aim to examine their performance and the effects of their achievements, as well as to identify some of the problematic areas encountered by the people involved in the houses. As far as this was feasible, we have recorded these observations in the perspectives conveyed to us by the people we interviewed in our study. Nevertheless, our own interpretation of data has been included in this account, whenever we thought this to be necessary and appropriate.

6.1 Trends and Directions in Development

In evaluating the data obtained in our survey, three aspects of trends and directions stand out as the most significant: the role played by women; the significance of localities in which the houses had been established; and the role of professionals in the establishment and on-going activities of the houses.

(a) The Role of Women

Community focus in the establishment of houses has tended towards women as the initiators and as the predominating influence in management, as well as the main users of neighbourhood services. This factor has been significant in all houses.

Traditionally, in Australia at least, despite the 'key' work women perform in communities, most women remain as marginal figures behind usually formal male organisations. To understand the change in the case of neighbourhood houses, it is important to understand the place women, especially working class women, occupy within the community. Everyday life experience of women with young children is concerned with a personal, practical understanding of family and social relationships and in some cases, economic relationships within the family. It has long been accepted in traditional analyses of community organisation that the main 'constituents' of community work are women and children, but little attention appears to have been paid to a theory which acknowledges this. Quite often women are seen as 'supports' to a collective structure, with their capacity for independent initiatives unrecognised, sometimes by the women themselves, as well as the rest of the community.

In initiating moves to establish neighbourhood houses, women extended their primary areas of domestic interest in family and children into the local neighbourhood. To them, these were issues of familiarity as well as need, and motivation was provided by common experiences and a possibility of improvement in their situation. Lack of family supports tended to supply the necessary impetus.

Age factor was significant in these initiatives. Younger women, generally, were more likely to provide ideas and initiating moves. With the exception of several well established 'community leaders', older women did not, in general, participate in initiatives. Several reasons appear to have been responsible for this. Older women were unlikely to need child care, and their family supports tended to be more solidified, whether satisfactorily or not. They were more likely to uphold the values of the 'status quo' (whether in terms of welfare professionalism, the church, or industrial interests). They were likely to have less energy and less enthusiasm. Life experiences of poverty tended to make them introverted in some cases and to take a cynical attitude towards any help from government authorities. In accepting that something needed to be changed, some older people saw this as a criticism of their own role in the acceptance of the lack of community services. Ambivalence was expressed towards younger women for 'not accepting their lot'. Nevertheless, there was a paradox in that older people tended to put a great deal of emphasis on

'welfare handouts' to younger women and remained oblivious to their own necessity for dependence on government pensions. Even when aware that younger women had a family to 'baby-sit', older women were critical of younger 'gadabout' women who left their children to be cared for by strangers. These attitudes were similar to those observed in another study, by D'Abbs (1982:31).

(b) Significance of Locality

It was our impression that during the period of establishment, working class women in an urban environment did not consider they would be capable of managing any structure other than that related to family concerns. This would explain why local government was often approached to deal with the financial and administrative issues. The boundaries of possible action were set by the women themselves.

In country towns, women tended to have more status, although there were strong divisions between gender roles. Family support and networks were generally stronger and emphasis in four towns was on access to resources. Social stratification was less gender oriented and the initiators were seen as middle class 'leaders' within the community. At the same time, houses tended to be treated as women's concerns, with women seen as providing the 'soft' options of community life, such as educational and social opportunities. The fifth country town took a more political perspective, seeing initiatives in establishing a house as necessary to overcome social and class disadvantages. Four country towns were very conscious of stratifications within the community. Divisions related to birth, property, money and education and were the subject of much acrimony. In two towns, establishment of a house was perceived as a way of informing and empowering people to overcome these divisions. In the other three towns, middle-class women saw establishment of a house as a method of overcoming disadvantages created through lack of educational and service resources. Three country houses appeared more concerned with 'a place in the sun' for the local community, rather than with developing the personal potential and empowerment of the local population through participation in house activities.

In one mining town, the position of women was similar to the urban public housing estates. The other mining town house was established by middle-class women with a wide knowledge of resources and services. Initiatives were taken to overcome isolation and to help provide a congenial environment. Interestingly, in this town, men were active in the house and supported the women in a number of ways. Men also attended a number of programs and used the house as a meeting place, although women were responsible for and retained overall control over administration and programs.

(c) The Role of Welfare Professionals

Establishment of the early houses relied heavily on professional advice and expertise. The difference between those houses which were successful in encouraging participation and the houses where this did not occur was that, in the former, professionals encouraged local groups to make decisions and acted only, or mainly, in a resource capacity. In houses where the professional role has been strong, the most successful in terms of community participation have been where the professional had acted initially in directing groups towards self reliance, allowing houses to make their own mistakes but also to claim their own successes. The 'start and depart' professionals have been keen to teach skills and delegate authority. A measure of their success was the affection with which they were remembered.

In places where welfare professionals' initiatives were instigated without 'grass roots' participation, the initiatives were regarded by the community with a form of passive resistance. In the three estates where professionals identified the community as 'socially disadvantaged' the majority of residents tended to ignore initiatives to 'get them involved'. Professionals were regarded as part of 'welfare'. This attitude may have been due in part, to the fact that all three estates were 'old' with an older population, where 'welfare' was still regarded with a certain amount of shame. In these estates changing attitudes, typical of 'new' estates, where 'welfare' was perceived as more of a right, were not apparent. In one house there was active attendance at bingo evenings, but other than participation by a small nucleus of 'welfare hangers-on', who

'helped out' in a volunteer capacity, or came to drink coffee, lack of enthusiasm and involvement was most noticeable. Community leadership appeared to be non-existent.

6.2 Changes Over Time

At the time we conducted our interviews, the houses had reached varied stages of development. The earlier-established houses also had experienced certain changes in their activities as well as in the attitudes of their participants. We were thus able to examine the processes of change that had taken place in the development of the whole neighbourhood house program. Among the main relevant factors in these changes, we have identified the role of government; the perceptions of the people active at the houses; the perceptions of houses in their communities; and what appeared to be a common factor in each of these - the length of the houses' existence and operation.

(a) The Role of Government

One of the most significant changes has been the formal recognition by the State government of the role of neighbourhood houses. This was legitimised by the State Department for Community Welfare with the implementation of the Neighbourhood House Program and the increased and continued funding for houses. Policy for houses was now a vital part of departmental activities, with specialist officers employed to oversee the Program. Policy has become structured with clearly defined parameters. The Housing Department, after some early misgivings as to its role, began to provide houses as part of the building program for new estates and has also built houses in some well established estates. Similar attitudes were apparent in regard to funding allocations from the Departments of Education and the Division of Recreation. Other government departments had taken advantage of houses for information dissemination, group discussion and the running of their own programs.

The Interdepartmental Committee, which was set up to provide guidelines for the houses, played an important role in 1979-81 but although technically still in existence, had not been convened for some time. At the time of our interviews, there were indications that the Committee was going to be brought back into active operation (DCW, 1985b). To all sense and purpose, responsibility rested with the Department for Community Welfare. Ad hoc discussions of house use and operation by community groups and welfare professionals had given way to structured annual submissions with clearly spelled out guidelines.

The Commonwealth government had refined its policy, concentrating on children and child care services, but no coherent policy emerged from these quarters with regard to neighbourhood houses as such (SWPS:1983).

The role of local government had not altered very much, with initiatives mainly concerned with administration of funding for new houses and occasional grants for specific purposes.

(b) Perceptions of Participants

To raise women's interests and involve them in neighbourhood house activities was not always an easy task. The tendency of women's self-image to be identified strongly with domesticity (Oakley, 1974) presented, superficially, an obstacle to intensive involvement in neighbourhood house activities. However, this was not always the case. Loneliness and the monotony of housework and children were frequent complaints, and neighbourhood houses brought in a new dimension to daily life. 'Going to the house, doing a course, talking to other women mitigated the daily round of household tasks. Women said they were better mothers, more tolerant and understanding - 'I don't get so angry (with the children) now I go to the house regularly.'

It would be easy to take such statements as re-enforcing the domestic role of women. However, doing so, would mean to undervalue the very real contribution women have made to the development of houses and to the concept of a neighbourhood house. It would also mean taking an unrealistic view of the human capacity for change. Prior awareness of the need for change is

fundamental to an understanding of change, and women's groups which took initiatives in the 1970s towards establishing neighbourhood houses played an important role in creating such awareness.

The process of 'consciousness raising' was an equally important element in most activities once a house had been established. A small supportive all-female group was well suited to discussing issues or personal attitudes and values, and many houses were involved in such groups. Often, a group 'just happened' when one person asked advice over a domestic issue. Occasionally, groups were structured and grew out of the earlier recognition of a problem. Active participation in the administration and financial areas of house management, because there was no 'expert' to do the job, gave greater confidence in approaching agencies and funding bodies. Early success was important and was treasured.

(c) Activities and Programs

Emphasis on the significance of, and interest in, the types of activity conducted in the houses also showed certain changes. Once women had participated in the management and operation of houses, they tended to gain greater confidence and a wider perspective of house activities. Well established houses, especially those who had experienced the early 'struggles' for recognition and funding, were less inclined to show continuous intense interest in child care, play groups and related family support programs. After these programs had been established, they continued in a more-or-less routine manner, and the scope of programs had widened. Interest began to be expressed in management and administration courses, financial and accounting skills and more 'expert' counselling techniques. Some houses began to choose, employ and pay their own tutors for courses and talked of severing connections with TAFE. People in the established houses appeared to have less need to invite information-giving from outside 'experts'. They knew where to go for information and how to get it.

Some houses had moved away from the co-optation of volunteers, while other houses had delegated fund raising activities to special sub-committees. As previously stated, people in a number of houses had an ambivalent attitude to volunteerism, and hoped to move away from using local volunteers. For example, jobs such as cleaning and cutting lawns, previously performed by house members and volunteers tended to be seen as 'paid' positions as time went on. Nevertheless, there was a distinction shown in the category of voluntary labour. Houses tried to pay local volunteers generally but showed a willingness to ask professional people for a 'free' service in organising talks, and discussion groups. The rationale presented was that professionals received 'good salaries' and 'didn't need the money'.

(d) Perception of Houses in the Community

There is no doubt that the community and government agencies had used neighbourhood houses as venues wherever possible. The promulgation of houses as a community resource had been the work of professionals in a number of urban communities. Professionals tended to use houses as a resource for house-bound and lonely women. Community 'word of mouth' and newsletters also helped in alerting the public to services such as child care. However, although most communities were aware of the existence of houses, not all people in the community seemed to know what the houses did. The newer the urban estate, the more favourable the impression of the house appeared to the community. In some localities, people said, the neighbourhood houses had originally been seen as 'women's houses', and the image had not disappeared. Inhabitants, in the 'older' estates were inclined to be more disparaging and less knowledgeable as to their uses. Older people frequently saw houses as having a 'welfare image' and catering only for young 'women's lib' groups.

In country and mining towns, with smaller populations and better communication, neighbourhood houses were often spoken of proudly as a community resource. This would seem to relate to the purpose of their establishment as information and resource centres. In addition, 'welfare' did not appear to have the same connotations in the country as in urban areas. Country

houses were often seen as women's houses, although men frequently helped out and sometimes took part in activities. However, there did not seem to be any resentment; as one woman put it 'men have the Lions and the Masons, we've (the women) got the House'.

(e) Length of Establishment

Length of time of establishment appears to have had a distinct bearing on how houses were perceived, both by the people who used the house and by the public. However, time was not only related to house establishment, but to the age of the community and, in the case of urban housing estates, to the length of time the estate had been established. Older estates, with older populations, were far less amenable to the idea of a neighbourhood house. In estates with a mixture of age groups, open conflict as to how the house was to be used, what the house was supposed to accomplish, and why the house was there, was apparent between older and younger women.

In two older estates, attempts had been made to establish houses for a period of eight years. People in one of these estate had moved into a house at the time of interview. Older women appeared to hold the values of the 'establishment' and of welfare services, and did not like the idea of developing services themselves. They continually asked advice (or wanted to ask) from government welfare agencies and made numerous rules and regulations in relation to the operation of the house. Some of the rules were rather petty and were resented by the younger women. The struggle for leadership in these estates was clearly based on a 'cultural gap' between generations.

In estates where the mixture of generations was not apparent, there were two distinct directions. 'New' estates with predominantly young inhabitants were brought together by common needs, based on domestic issues of home and family. The longer the house had operated, the greater the commitment to house ideals appeared to be. Early struggles for resources, funding and recognition appeared to act as a unifying element, with conflict used creatively. This was apparent not only in dealing with government agencies but among house members as well.

In 'old' estates, the direction of activities conducted in the houses was less cohesive. Houses had difficulty in attracting members and participation was low, except for recreational activities such as bingo and card games. Older residents used houses as a place to drink a cup of coffee or tea and did not appear to think the house was 'their' property.

In the 'old' estate, welfare involvement was also higher than in 'new' estates. Residents of 'old' estates treated professionals with a degree of deference, which was not obvious in the 'new' estates where the relationship between the community and the professional was based more on friendship and mutual respect. If this did not happen, 'new' estate residents were unlikely to have much to do with professionals and, indeed, many of the 'new' estate houses, had 'black lists' of unsympathetic professionals.

6.3 Achievements, Effects

More often than not, the achievements which were communicated to us in interviews and those we ascertained from various documents were more suitable to record in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. While in some aspects, the achievements were clearly visible to the observer; in other aspects, the subjective views of the people interviewed were equally, or more, significant. The three main areas of achievements that we identified were 'personal growth' of the participants in neighbourhood houses' activities; the growth of their awareness of wider political issues; and the establishment of regional networks which led to a degree of integration of houses into something akin to a 'social movement'.

(a) Personal Growth

The importance attached to the concept of 'personal growth' was clearly inferred from the content of conversations with the people we interviewed. Generally, house members tended to see their main achievements in individual terms. This was particularly so the longer the house had been established. People involved in house activities had acquired the language of welfare professionals. They tended to have a greater familiarity with terms such as 'participation', 'self-image', 'self-esteem', 'personal growth' and 'empowerment'. They spoke glowingly, and sometimes with emotion, of their growing awareness of power structures, the position of women in society, their rights as citizens and the need for change. Most of these people saw change as starting with the individual and thought lack of self-esteem inhibited people, at first, from taking action. Through participation in house activities, people's self-esteem increased and they were able to participate more actively. The people we interviewed also spoke of the need to make people aware of what they had learned. It was through such approaches, they said that the 'empowerment' of people took place.

However, this was not the case with all houses established for longer than three years. Country people were less likely to talk of their feelings and did not use terms such as the above. This might have been because they had had less contact with professional jargon, and also because of the cultural side of rural life where self-reliance and stoicism was stressed. To talk of lack of self-esteem and self-image meant to them a lack of individual coping mechanism, which was culturally unacceptable. Nevertheless, we do not claim that the attributes which were evident in some of the 'new' estates did not exist in country towns, merely that they were not expressed as existing. However, it needs to be noted that such terms as 'lack of self-esteem' are part of professional jargon which is imposed on (and often adopted by) the 'welfare clients'.

Indeed, 'personal growth' was not always perceived in the same terms. For example, in one house, established for over six years, people considered personal growth in terms of individual advantage and saw empowerment as 'empire building' in personal terms, rather than as a community resource to be shared. This perspective was however not general.

In houses where establishment was under a year, members were concerned mainly with the operation and interpretation of funding policy. The members saw the need for the house more as a means of helping those less fortunate than themselves. Houses were sometimes seen as a means of employment, especially in child care areas. Confusion as to aims was expressed and commitment was not as high. In two of the houses in urban estates, we formed the impression that a neighbourhood house was initially seen to be part of the estate and it was expected that it would be used, although later people appeared uncertain about its aims. People involved in these houses seemed pre-occupied with fund raising and 'balancing the books'.

Similarly, people in the older estates did not talk in terms of personal growth. Houses tended to be seen as part of a 'status resource', with no clear understanding of its use. Change, whether in personal or public terms, was inclined to be viewed with a degree of negativity.

(b) Political Awareness

The extent of political awareness appeared to be related to the length of establishment, the personal perspectives of the co-ordinator and house members and, in one case, professional involvement. Inter-house contact also provided a certain political element in methods of approach and strategy.

Length of establishment did not of itself guarantee politicisation of attitudes and perspectives. However, the four longest-established houses had moved from a 'pre-political' state to one of greater awareness of who controlled what, and how strategies could be developed to consult and manipulate the powerful, that is, the people who made decisions in the allocation of resources. We identified this state of development as one of political awareness (Riessman, 1985).

Reasons for establishment and original interest and initiatives were not manifestly politically motivated at the grassroots local level, although political motivation was evident in the activities which led to the establishment of the Interdepartmental Committee (see Chapters 4 and 5). The arguments expressed by local residents in support of the establishment of a neighbourhood house often implied a wish for autonomy, that is, positive attitudes towards self-help and negative attitudes towards bureaucracy. Such arguments, with the emphasis on pro-community and self-help, were political constructs, although they were not always recognised as such.

At the time of our interviews, political awareness appeared to rest in the manner in which the houses continued to deal with such issues. On the whole, perception of, and interest in, wider political issues did not appear to be widely present. Political awareness was contained within the parameters of house operation and direction, with limited community perspective focused on local issues.

Participation in the affairs of the local community did become, in the main, a source of 'therapy' and personal satisfaction and did not appear to have brought about any great interest in structural aspects of society which could be related to the source of the problems experienced by the people in the housing estates or in isolated country or mining towns. It seems, people were able to see the source of their problems in outside forces but had difficulties in seeing similar sources in other people's problems and working with them towards alleviation or resolution of these problems.

Nevertheless, a number of benefits had been obtained through the process of consultation with government agencies and with the intervention of politicians. As people in one house admitted, they had learned to 'play the pollies against each other' for reasons of obtaining extra resources and facilities. To that extent, awareness of political structures appeared to us to have brought greater knowledge of how society functioned in terms of the powerful. This awareness had brought some positive results for the communities concerned, but it had little effect on the allocation of resources at the State level.

(c) Regional Network

Some of the longer established houses had initially operated in isolation from one another, even when geographically located within not-too-distant housing estates. People in some houses had tried to share knowledge, through telephone calls and newsletters, but generally, knowledge-sharing had been inadequate and infrequent.

Before the availability of State guidelines for neighbourhood houses, the first formal interaction took place at a weekend seminar which was arranged by professionals for the purpose of setting up a network for house members. Several house members attended, and discussion resulted in a number of resolutions aimed at establishing better interaction and sharing of information among the houses.

Within the last two years prior to our interviews, newly established houses had urged the Department for Community Welfare to arrange regional meetings among the houses. Houses in the north west of the State had arranged a number of such regional meetings and found them to be a valuable exercise in sharing experiences of operation. Suggestions had also been made that the Department should issue a regular newsletter and arrange training courses in management and administration. These suggestions had been apparently received by the Department without enthusiasm. The Department took the view that any initiatives must come from the houses themselves and stated that policy and funding agreements did not allow for a budget for either State or regional meetings. However, at the time of our interviews, a State meeting of co-ordinators and members had been funded by the Department (DCW, 1985b).

There appeared to be a number of difficulties associated with knowledge sharing among the houses. The first difficulty related to lack of money for travelling and accommodation. Urban houses were located in low-income areas and although country and mining towns did not experience the same degree of poverty overall, they still did not have extra money for travel.

Time and the necessary skills to produce a regular newsletter, coupled with the cost of production, was another constraint. People in several houses also expressed reservations about government involvement in knowledge-sharing, seeing it as a method of control, but generally people considered that the Department for Community Welfare should provide a liaison officer, with access to administrative and clerical help.

6.4 Problematic Areas

The main problematic areas that we identified in our study related to five aspects of management of houses and provisions of on-going activities and programs. These were: the age of participants; leadership; the different attitudes between the earlier 'pioneers' and the later 'followers'; the roles and perceptions of (welfare) professionals; and the limitations of voluntary effort.

(a) Age Factor

As previously noted in this study, one of the most conspicuous areas of difference arose in perceptions and attitudes between the inhabitants of 'old' and 'new' urban estates. This factor was particularly evident in relation to attitudes toward bureaucracy, professionalism, expectations of what was achievable in personal terms, and to what could be loosely termed, the welfare state.

A number of writers have drawn attention to the 'apathy of the poor', describing it as an attribute of the 'culture of poverty'. From our interviews, 'apathy' appeared more prevalent in older estates, where there was less likelihood of people's ability to escape from the cycle of poverty. In 'new' estates, where poverty was obvious, especially among single parent families, the younger women were more motivated to participate in the activities conducted in the houses. However, this fact cannot only be treated as significant in relation to the houses. It may well be that only the motivated and more energetic were compelled to involve themselves in house activities. Unlike their mothers and grandmothers, these young women had experienced change and even disintegration of family life, which was seen by them as much a threat to the social order as industrial action or economic recession. It is no wonder then, that economic disadvantage aside, life experience was analysed by them in relation to these changes.

Where there was a mixture of old and young, conflict over the operation and the activities of the house was common. Older women tended to dislike unstructured activities and collectivities. The paradox was that most of these women had held subservient positions in society and had suffered from authoritative institutions (e.g. bureaucracies, welfare services) all their lives, but now tried to impose similar structures in an atmosphere where it was neither necessary nor expected. Some younger women held similar attitudes but appeared more able to accept new ideas of operation.

In one old estate, where few younger women were involved, older women tended to seek help and advice from welfare professionals and appeared loath to act upon their own initiatives. The most well-attended activities were recreational (bingo, card games) and both men and women took part regularly. The house operated more as a club than as a neighbourhood house.

In view of the above, it appeared to us that older people were more used to social control and felt unable to operate without emulating the authority structures with which they were familiar. We did not consider these factors to be generational so much but rather a manifest effect of the class structure.

(b) Leadership

Oblique references were made to leadership difficulties in terms of 'strong personalities' but as our interview schedule did not ask a specific question on this issue we did not pursue the subject to any great extent. However, we did form the impression that this was an area of contention

which house members were not easily prepared to discuss. We thought people committed to and involved in house activities wished to present an 'ideal type' house and thus were inclined to gloss over difficulties.

Elites were freely mentioned, mainly in country towns and in relation to class structure. One house member told us that the 'workers' (i.e. the working class) did not use the house, and that Adult Education courses were run for 'the more intelligent and the National Trust'. This example was the most blatant; people in other houses talked of elites but did not identify such a definite stratification, with the exception of a mining town, where representation from the 'managerial class' was 'expected' on the house management committee. In some country towns, 'alternate lifestyle' people tended to see themselves as an elite. People in some country houses resented this attitude but used the 'alternates' as tutors in a number of cases. We formed the opinion that 'alternates' did have an impact on a number of country towns and that there were certainly potential areas of conflict, but we were not able to study this in more detail.

(c) 'Pioneers' and 'Followers'

Another problematic area was in the differing perceptions between houses established for over three years and the recently established houses. 'Older' house members tended to see themselves as 'pioneers' and 'trail blazers' for the new houses. Complaints were made by 'older' house members towards 'newer' houses, saying that new houses had not needed to struggle for existence and were thus inclined to accept institutional control. People in 'older' houses saw this as dangerous to the autonomy of the neighbourhood houses and also expressed fears over competition for scarce financial resources.

(d) Roles and Perceptions of Professionals

Professionals in areas of welfare, law, medicine, bureaucracy and politics were criticised by people in ten urban houses, two mining town houses and two country houses. The main complaints related to use of unintelligible language, not listening to what people were saying, paternalism ('don't worry, dear, I'll fix it for you'), promising to do things and never being heard of again (this was particularly so in regard to politicians), and giving wrong advice to people who were not in a position to make rational judgments. This last criticism was levelled at lawyers in marital disputes and custody cases; at doctors who prescribed anti-depressants for grief; and at welfare professionals and bureaucrats who followed institutional rules.

Such criticisms and complaints are, of course, familiar to most social and community workers. The difference existed in that older established houses had attempted to tackle some of the problems by running courses in health care, informing themselves of bureaucratic procedure and (as noted earlier) keeping 'black lists' of unsympathetic professionals. Well established houses also attempted to prepare people for areas of possible conflict but complained of the difficulties through lack of time.

Five houses did not consider professionals to be a problem, and people in one country house wished to obtain full-time services of a welfare professional, stating that they did not have time for 'counselling work'.

Some people complained of the problem of separating the personal problems of individuals from the daily activities of the house. Because people in so many houses were disenchanted with professionals, they were often reluctant to refer people with personal problems to them, except in extreme cases. Time, lack of expertise and house aims were the principal reasons for dislike of intensive involvement in people's personal problems in a 'casework' fashion.

In terms of welfare professionals' involvement in the on-going activities and operation of houses, professionals who 'hung on' to houses were not seen as a problem by house members.

Our impression was rather different. In the two houses where professional involvement was strong, we were struck by the lack of motivation, personal power and decision making, general apathy and lack of participation by the local community. In these houses, decisions on the local

needs, activities of the house and its general operation were made by a committee composed of welfare professionals who generally appeared to take little part in the day-to-day activities of the house.

As mentioned earlier, the 'start and depart' professional approach appeared to be the most effective form of involvement. In establishing a house, groups quite often needed encouragement to undertake certain tasks, as well as professional assistance in preparing submissions and helping to identify resources. While this type of professional help was not a prerequisite for effective operation, one house had suffered through lack of professional expertise. This house was situated in a depressed urban area with a high welfare profile. The extent and range of activities provided at the house were limited, mainly through lack of knowledge of what was possible. Professional assistance might have helped in overcoming this problem.

(e) Limitation of Voluntary Work

A problem encountered in all houses was in the limitation of voluntary work. This problem was evident both in relation to the amount of time people were able to give to house management and activities, and to the financial means they were able to generate in the locality.

Physical and emotional exhaustion was an area of concern to most house members. Paid hours were on a part-time basis and people in all houses stressed they worked longer hours than those for which they were paid. Pay was considered inadequate and salary-funding conflicted with what was expected. Houses were heavily dependent on volunteer workers, with people in many houses objecting to the expectations of government that an unpaid workforce was to subsidise the already inadequate salaries. Nor was it possible for people in a number of houses to raise much money themselves; as one worker pointed out, 'this is a poor community and we're trying to provide better services and facilities at minimal cost already - how then, can we ask people to give what they don't have?'

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter we have attempted to relate our findings on the experience of Tasmanian neighbourhood houses to the concepts of community development and self-help, discussed in Chapter 2. We have attempted to interpret our findings in the light of an understanding of the inter-connections between government and self-help groups, and in discussing the extent of independence and/or autonomy of the houses.

First, we examine the development of the houses and their performance in relation to the concepts of community development. Then, we look at them again in relation to the notion of self-help. We note next that after the introduction of the Neighbourhood Houses Program by the State government, the houses began to acquire the characteristics of a 'welfare' service, and we consider the effects of this change. Finally, we consider the implications of these various perspectives for the future of the neighbourhood house movement.

7.1 Neighbourhood Houses as Community Development

As discussed earlier in this report (Chapter 2), community development has been defined in a variety of ways but, in practice, it has been perceived either as an intellectual concept or as a program of action. Both these notions are related to the concept of neighbourhood as the basic unit of a community, but the rationale and goals for community development programs are usually established outside of the neighbourhood. Discussions take place among the theorists, bureaucrats and professionals, and policies and programs of action are then imposed in the neighbourhood 'from above'. Furthermore, in common with broader issues of policy, planning and administration of services has in practice resulted in the neglect of 'grass roots' neighbourhood work (Thomas, 1983:146-155). Indeed, some writers concerned with the practice of community work (e.g. Henderson and Thomas, 1987) argue that even to this day there is little of what may be called a theory of community work.

In Tasmania (as in Australia as a whole), until the early 1970s, community work was regarded as an appendage to social work practice, without any significant emergence of ideas about the meaning and importance of the concept of community or neighbourhood. Even in the later 1970s, the concept of community work would be interpreted as a form of intervention or advocacy on behalf of certain group interests or issues. The exception was the work of a few social workers who perceived community development as a movement 'from below', and endeavoured to apply this concept in practice, on their own initiative, without any particular model to follow. In due course, this approach led to the concept of a neighbourhood house, a place which would become a focus for community development and self-help activities of the surrounding neighbourhood.

In the early 1980s, after the introduction of the Neighbourhood Houses Program by the State government, neighbourhood work became a widely practised form of community work in Tasmania. It also became an important part of social welfare work in the Department for Community Welfare. The aim of our study was thus to examine these activities and to relate them to the concepts of community development (see Chapter 2).

Our findings indicate that, on the whole, the houses have followed an integrative approach to community development, as defined by O'Brien (1975). In that approach, change is perceived to take place, at first, in areas of personal motivation and expectation, and is based on elements of common concern to the local population. This approach may be called 'process' orientation. The approach was evident in the initiatives taken for the establishment of the first neighbourhood houses. Common areas of concern, such as the need for child care, social support, and a meeting place were articulated and became a motivation for action. In the later-

established houses, there were differences between concerns in the housing estates and country towns, but a commonality of interest was present in each locality. It was the identification of common interest that led to change in attitudes and to action.

These observations are congruent with the views of Perlman and Gurin, who have noted,

> The thrust of community development is to generate change in attitudes, relationships and behaviour at the local or community level. Its major strategy is to develop activities and to foster wide participation in them in the hope that people will be convinced **through their own experiences** that collective effort is necessary, desirable, and effective as a way of making improvement in their lives... Community development stresses collaboration, not opposition or conflict. (1972:101; our emphasis)

In this view, change begins to take place in individual perceptions and with programs designed to focus on the personal needs of neighbourhood members. Such programs also serve as a framework for planning future activities.

However, in the Tasmanian neighbourhood houses another level of activity was required to obtain the resources necessary for the establishment of houses and for subsequent activities. This was the level of social action which, until that time, had been mainly the forte of the professionals and of more capable middle-class interest groups. This action had to be directed at institutional targets. It was organised as a co-operative effort between professional social welfare workers and community groups, and it was eventually successful in obtaining accommodation and some financial support. In due course it resulted in the State Neighbourhood Houses Program.

Both levels of activity, whether they were focused on individual response and participation or on attempting to provide resources for the community, hinged on initially recognising that certain problems existed. It is apparent from the experiences of houses that problem identification was at its most successful when defined at the neighbourhood level but resolution of the problem depended on access to knowledge and resources. It was also most successful in those 'new' estates where the professional workers enabled and and assisted the local groups to identify their own needs and priorities. In the 'old' estates where professional people alone defined disadvantage and need, professionals were met with apathy and passive resistance in attempts made to reform and revitalise neighbourhoods. It seems that younger people were more likely to see professionals as 'helping persons' rather than seeing them as 'authorities' from which not much could (or should) be expected.

Achievements from local groups who acted alone appear to have been quite limited. Self-help groups found no difficulty in coming together through common interests, but lack of knowledge and information regarding resources and financial avenues was an inhibiting factor in developing a service. On the other hand, it is clear that professional activity would not have been successful had it been taken by professionals alone in isolation from the neighbourhood.

This poses a dilemma between self-help groups who want 'to go it alone' and professional planning and organising, which often takes place in isolation from the people who are to be provided with services. Clinard (1966, in Perlman and Gurin, 1972:107-108) has pointed out that groups require clearly defined goals before common action for change will take place.

As a form of social action aimed at community development, the activities developed and conducted in neighbourhood houses (by 1985) remained at a level that in Riessman's definition (1985) indicated a 'pre-political' stage. Our findings have shown a propensity for the majority of people active in the houses to be influenced by amenities rather than underlying economic and social inequalities. Because houses were not organised on a basis other than that of

neighbourhood, people were not able to align themselves with any movement for social reform or to develop strategies which would influence political and policy decisions. Houses were seen (and appreciated) as amenities which improved the quality of life in the neighbourhood, but not as means for a wider change in society.

In the activities conducted in the houses, interest had focused on 'personal growth', 'empowerment', and the acquisition of skills, with little or no attention paid to wider issues of community development. Perspectives tended to focus on means, and discussions would usually take place around immediate effects rather than on the overall purpose and longer-term ends. Both house members and professionals involved in houses' activities projected these attitudes, and most debates revolved around these issues. Longer-term ends were assumed rather than deliberately pursued.

One issue that had been successfully pursued was the understanding of the role of women. It needs to be noted that the initiatives for the establishment of neighbourhood houses, and the activities conducted in them, have been almost exclusively in the hands of women. While it would be incorrect to suggest that the neighbourhood houses worked in a framework of feminist thinking, certain elements within the women's movement were identifiable and were used in discussions of theory and practice. Regardless of the theoretical implications, a number of women began to consider seriously how they worked with women and how their own personal lives reflected, or did not reflect, the efforts to change the position of women and their families in society.

It is true that community work has been and continues to be 'women's work'. However, much of that work as well as social action in community development has been a prerogative of educated, professional middle-class women. The significance of the neighbourhood houses in Tasmania is that working-class women have demonstrated abilities in community work which, until then, they were not thought (by welfare professionals and government bureaucrats) to have.

7.2 Neighbourhood Houses as Self-Help

In considering the role of houses as self-help initiatives, a number of significant factors emerged in the course of the establishment of houses and in their subsequent operation. The most important of these factors appeared to be:

(i) The nature of neighbourhood work
(ii) The place and effect of individual and group initiatives
(iii) Personal development and social awareness.

These factors are likely to be present in any similar situation, and for this reason they need careful consideration by community groups contemplating such initiatives, and are of particular significance for professional welfare workers who see self-help activities to be important in community development, especially in low-income, working-class areas, such as public housing estates.

(i) The nature of neighbourhood work is by definition local, with issues and needs reflecting the characteristics of the neighbourhood. While the state may initiate some programs and provide 'needs-based' resources, 'communities' are, by implication, supposed to accept responsibility for the delivery of services. This has certainly been the thrust of the Tasmanian houses.

Local activity is manifestly encouraged by the States and the Commonwealth. The emphasis of the present Federal government is on 'national consensus' under which all sections of the community are expected to be working together for the 'common good'. Who is to be included in the consensus is a debatable point. This rhetoric fits in neatly with much of the professional and agency view of welfare work, where the literature is full of such terms as self-help,

participation, personal growth and self actualisation. Definitions are seldom made and criticisms even less so. Language has helped to shape an ideology of community work, without much attention being paid to what such terms and concepts mean. The notion of self-help, in particular, has become popular, being promulgated on both sides of the political spectrum.

The federal Labor government of the early 1970s promoted regionalism and localism with the Australian Assistance Plan (AAP) and other regional and participatory programs. Local social action was popular in disadvantaged urban areas, with government and professional support proliferating. However, in the mid-1970s, a new form of conservatism became evident in government policies. Funds available for participatory community programs had been reduced and existing programs had to rely more on the philosophical base of self-help rather than on the more class-threatening concepts of community development.

In Tasmania, most houses have been established in low-income, poorly serviced working-class areas, with a high percentage of residents dependent on government pensions and benefits. Public housing estates frequently were (and still are) labelled with a 'welfare image' and indeed, welfare involvement was high. Country and mining town houses were less visibly concerned with economic disadvantage, although it undoubtedly existed. In these towns, material differences in life style tended to be seen in terms of personal eccentricity, 'luck' and class.

Thus, in effect, all houses have been located in areas of disadvantage of some kind. For a professional welfare worker this means that community work in such neighbourhood houses means work in areas of disadvantage. This is not an easy task, especially if the worker is committed to the concept of community development 'from below' rather than to extending the network of welfare services 'from above'. As Henderson and Thomas note, 'community action is often a long process, and achievements are rarely immediate'. In such situations, there is a temptation for the worker to 'take over the leadership role, simply to get things done'. This temptation, the authors agree, must be resisted because failure to do so defeats the main purpose of neighbourhood work - the enhancement of people's autonomy. They say,

> The challenge faced by professionals in fields such as housing, health, social work and education is to realise that they must seek just to deliver services to meet people's needs but to do so in a way that enhances people's autonomy, self-respect and their ability to work together to solve common problems. (1987:7)

The Tasmanian experience in the establishment of neighbourhood houses has shown that these developments had been most successful in the localities where professional workers had shown in practice a commitment to these principles. As previously noted, professional people who were either unwilling or unable to motivate local residents to a 'perception of needs', were unlikely to obtain much ongoing and regular co-operation. In houses where this happened, local residents used house services such as after-school and holiday programs for children and took advantage of markets and food co-operatives, but had no active involvement in the house. If this happens, the house is 'out there' like any number of services provided by the state and is not perceived as 'belonging' to the community.

(ii) Individual and group initiatives: At the initial stage of a community project, such as the establishment of a neighbourhood house, the role of the initiator(s) is important in demonstrating the need for the project by focusing on an issue of common concern, such as the need for child care. The core of ongoing commitment and interest, however, lies not with the initiator of action but with those who experience the need and become motivated to do something to change the situation.

Success in attaining original aims is important. If this is removed from individuals, interest declines. In early initiatives, vision is often limited to a single goal and if this fails to materialise, interest is hard to re-awaken.

In houses where one or two individuals had an idea of how the house was to operate and were unwilling to delegate decision-making, the house remained a neighbourhood unit without a community focus. On the other hand, houses with groups making decisions collectively, and often with conflict, moved progressively from a local focus to a wider perception of community need. These houses questioned economic and labour market policies and the effect of these on the local population.

However, the balance of power between the house and the rest of the community is fragile and has possibilities for elitism. It was not possible in this study to gauge community reaction to houses, although one house told us that interest of the media was concerned only with portraying house activities in a welfare and disadvantaged way and not in terms of success and self-determination. People in two houses commented that initially community reaction had been negative, but as the activities offered by the house attracted more attention, this had been gradually overcome.

(iii) Personal development and social awareness: Neighbourhood houses were established to deal with lack of family support. Under normal circumstances, emotional intimacy provided by family and close friends was a way to offset the vicissitudes of life. The greater the isolation (both social and geographical) the stronger the need for emotional support became. The readiness of women to share experiences of crisis was personally helpful and was useful in developing strategies suited to life style and situation. This applied to their personal lives as well as to the way they lobbied for services and funding.

The longer-established houses were able to trace distinct stages of development. The first stage was mainly one of confusion, with slowly emerging skills and ideas of operation. At that stage, house members relied on advice from professionals and agencies. The second stage was a questioning of many societal and community values, as well as discussion and argument. The third stage (three houses were at this point at the time of interviews) appeared to be a movement towards political awareness of power structures and the ability to use politicians to the best advantage. Because of the small population, Tasmanian houses were admirably suited to face-to-face confrontations with politicians and were helped by the Hare Clark system of electoral boundary distribution. Economic concerns as to who gets what and why were important. Parallel to this was a non-economic concern with the quality of life. Recreational and creative interests assumed greater importance to people once they became involved in house activities.

The effects of localism were used to advantage by welfare professionals, who did not have any model of organised community work in Tasmania. The first 'pioneers' were very successful in that regard. However, other welfare workers who followed tended to see community work as a 'radical alternative' without establishing a conceptual perspective within which to operate. 'Radical alternatives' generally fell into a 'therapy' mould, with style and name (like fashion) changing to suit the social climate. Hence, most professionals have been fairly easily co-opted into using new methods and techniques without being aware that these methods of working might be simply a 'rehashed' version of traditional 'therapeutic' methods of treatment.

7.3 Neighbourhood Houses as a Welfare Service

The general direction of welfare services is determined by national policies which operate through the provision of specific services and programs, mainly under the auspices of State authorities which adapt national policies to their own policies. Some services are also provided by non-government organisations, with or without support from government, but functioning in the overall framework of national or State policies.

Interaction between local community organisations and government is thus central to the understanding of the neighbourhood houses in Tasmania. Although at first initiated and sponsored by the community, at the time of our study the houses were mostly regarded as the province of government, more specifically as the extension of the Department for Community Welfare.

In the initial stages, the Commonwealth had a close association with the first-established houses by providing funds for child care and for some other activities which could be loosely defined as community development. Since then, the role of the Commonwealth has been confined mainly to the provision of formal child care services, and has not been significant in the neighbourhood houses themselves.

In considering neighbourhood houses as a welfare service we have attempted to link the wider perspective of social welfare with the localism of small groups and to highlight the issues inherent in this relationship, as well as examining the values upon which the relationship is built. Human well-being and concern for the individual can be limited and distorted by structures that reinforce the very problems that services hope to address in the first place. To see if this was an issue for neighbourhood houses, we were guided by a number of questions, such as:

(i) How were the assumptions of need and self-reliance determined?
(ii) What was the role of the government?
(iii) How adequate were existing funding levels?
(iv) What was the role of the professional worker?

(i) Assumptions of Need and Self-Determination: Neighbourhood work contains within its conception a certain romanticism, where the abilities of the poor are developed and the poor are 'empowered' to manage their own lives, through realising individual capabilities for self-determination. The question arises, then, how are needs determined and by whom. The assumption in the concept of self-determination is that people are free to determine their own private needs in isolation from public values. This may happen, but more often, the acknowledgement of private needs usually signifies an acceptance of public values. Galper (1975:35) following Wright Mills' concepts (1965) has drawn attention to public definition of private need and the translation of private lives into the arena of public principles and ideologies.

The philosophy of liberalism carries within it the principle of individualism, 'the dignity and worth of human beings and a struggle to determine individual wellbeing and self-determination'. This is the core element of welfare services and programs. However, individual need has important social determinants. People assess their needs through interaction with others and through other people's perception of self-interest. Thus, need is socially determined. An example of this is the need for child care and the desire of parents to pursue areas of individual interest. This is not to argue that this is not a worthwhile aim but rather to point to the fact that encouragement of people's need for independence may create an illusion of choice while imposing another form of restriction in the direction of how the choice is determined. It may be argued that this issue had emerged in the neighbourhood houses once the State government accepted responsibility for the whole program.

(ii) The Role of Government: The funding and responsibility for administration of houses emerged in response to community and professional pressures. At the same time, political pressures to cut welfare spending, growing disenchantment with traditional welfare services, with emphasis on remedial and residual casework, forced agencies to look for ways to diversify their activities.

Support for neighbourhood houses and the co-ordination of their activities became a significant part of the State welfare services. As defined by the Department for Community Welfare, its activities in that area were

> ... directed towards social enhancement and development of families and individuals and the provision of broad community welfare services which link persons in need of care with available social facilities and resources. (DCS, Annual Report 1982:7-8)

The Department thus defined the functions the neighbourhood houses were expected to perform within the overall structure of State welfare services.

The houses established prior to 1981, held within their early operation and struggles a greater possibility for change and decision-making from the 'bottom up' than later houses. The activities and management of the early houses had more input into strategies and more consultation at the 'grass roots' level. Professionals and groups alike were learning and working together to form structures that suited local conditions. With the formal recognition of the neighbourhood house concept by the State, much of the early flexibility had gone. The early commitment of the first houses was still there, but in a modified form; people were now inclined to see answers to dilemmas in more institutional terms such as the ability to acquire counselling, administrative and management skills. This was described as having greater access to the policy-making process.

In our interviews with the people involved in the neighbourhood houses, criticisms against the Department for Community Welfare were few. Houses established for more than three years did not consider the Department helped them with advice and operation. Only one house complained of social control in the Department's method of operation. Most houses accepted referrals from agencies to visit and help people in crisis situations, although complaints were made as to the time needed to do this work and lack of expertise. In none of the houses did people see such work as a transfer of welfare services. This attitude could be interpreted as acceptance of a social control function in that isolation of individuals was interpreted personally, and solutions were perceived to be within existing institutions and values.

Houses established under three years were more inclined to view their role as part of a welfare network, particularly in new urban estates. Consequently, institutional attitudes and values were more internalised, especially with paid workers. This was not so in country towns, where bureaucracy was treated with a degree of scorn.

The Department for Community Welfare described the function of neighbourhood houses as an integrative process, with the 'emphasis on getting people together to help each other to take joint action on common problems and needs'. Houses were also seen as places that 'provide for the co-ordination of services and activities in the local area' (DCW, 1985a:2).

The assumption that must be made here is that the integration of neighbourhood houses into the State network of welfare services would help people to adapt to, and play a role in, the maintenance of social order. Any initiative from the 'grass roots' that would attempt to change that order, under these conditions, would be rather unlikely to succeed.

(iii) Funding: As neighbourhood houses were drawn into the overall framework of State welfare services, the expectations of financial support from the State also increased. While the State support became assured with the adoption of the Neighbourhood Houses Program, the funds made available were (in 1985) far from sufficient to cover the expenses of administration and conduct of programs. Furthermore, the need for funding had to be established on the State authorities' criteria and allocation of funds would be made according to the authorities' priorities.

By becoming a part of welfare services, the neighbourhood houses also became a new form of welfare volunteerism. During our interviews, we were told repeatedly of the extra hours worked without payment and the necessity of volunteer labour. A number of houses attempted to pay local volunteers wherever possible but most remuneration was token. There was a dilemma within the notion of funding. On one hand, labour was not rewarded financially; on the other, there were many activities which required volunteers and created a reason for many people to participate in house activities.

(iv) **The Professional Worker:** The State has drawn heavily on social work values in the provision of welfare services but influence has been reciprocal in that, generally, workers have accepted the agency perspective of maintaining the status quo. Nevertheless, for some workers, the price of acceptance has resulted in feelings of malaise with remedial casework and of 'unfinished business' in dealing with the recipients of their casework. Thus, neighbourhood work was welcomed as a way (for some workers) of making professional life more rewarding. The emphasis on the de-institutionalisation of services and the focus on individual empowerment was seen as a way of helping the client to achieve greater autonomy as well as providing 'relief' from the authoritarian component of agency work.

However, the professional worker found great difficulty in aligning what in effect were two different ideologies. The result has been that the worker had turned to helping processes that were familiar, such as designing systems and social policies within the existing structures and incorporating the non-institutional into the institutional framework.

To manage the interaction between the two, it was necessary to have the co-operation of the neighbourhood group, in ways that were not obvious control measures (such as funding allocations). Some measure of this development could be seen in those houses that wished to embrace techniques of specialisation such as counselling and administration techniques. Thus, in effect, professional welfare workers became, unwittingly perhaps, instrumental in drawing the neighbourhood houses into the overall structure of State welfare services.

7.4 The Future of Neighbourhood Houses : Community Development, Self-Help, or a 'Welfare' Service?

Tasmanian neighbourhood houses developed from the unforeseen consequences created by State housing authorities in building new estates. Through building cheap housing for low-income families in concentrated housing estates which were often geographically isolated from other built-up areas a whole new set of social problems was generated. So while the welfare state was responsive to the problems of inequality generated in the market economy, it also inadvertently created new problems for the families it ostensibly attempted to help. People living in socially isolated public housing estates, devoid of resources which elsewhere would be taken for granted, became more and more dependent on the State.

The acceptance of responsibility for neighbourhood houses as a component of welfare policy was an attempt to redress this issue with the additional benefit of decentralisation of service delivery.

Professional welfare workers responded by nurturing self-support groups as a new form of making the world better. There is no doubt that satisfaction was to be found in mutual help, both for the professional and in local effort.

The frustrations experienced by welfare workers in attempting to find personal and bureaucratic solutions to problems that were based on economic policies and ideologies, frequently appeared insoluable. Thus, welfare transfers to neighbourhood houses were pushed by local policy makers with enthusiasm. While self-help was not cheap and was heavily dependent upon the broader economic and social environment, local programs were seen as an important alternative to the more traditional services.

In that process, the original aims of the community groups which initiated the moves for the establishment of neighbourhood houses, and of the welfare professionals who assisted them in these efforts, had later changed. Our findings indicate that by 1985 the direction of neighbourhood work generally reflected social attitudes, and expectations were becoming more closely tied to government requirements.

In government agencies, the perceptions of problems and funding priorities tended to be those that were electorally acceptable, such as child abuse, domestic violence and more recently, drug addiction, with attention paid to manifestations of the problem, rather than to its structural causes. With the involvement of State-employed welfare professionals in neighbourhood houses, community participants began to acquire the perceptions of social problems.

The value of a central bank of knowledge being retained at the agency level is best reflected in the authoritative knowledge of child care and child development exercised by professionals engaged in child care centres. The skills and knowledge of child rearing, inherent in the family and particularly in motherhood, are giving way to an 'appropriated' professional knowledge with the accompanying levels of stress and anxiety, as failure becomes more public. Old skills have to be re-learned and the value of experiential knowledge becomes increasingly difficult to maintain.

Neighbourhood houses have been established in 'welfare areas' where the traditional institution of the family had been weakened by people's necessity to depend on government for support, rather than family structures. The assumption appeared to be that houses represented a 'new' form of extended family, with in-built supports of self-help. This expectancy was difficult to resist, especially with neighbourhood commitment to help local people. These perceptions of neighbourhood houses as 'family substitutes' may well see houses becoming a victim of their own effort of change, rather than a force in their own right.

Country houses are less likely to see houses as an 'alternative' family and more as a means of attaining benefits and services. However, if this is so bureaucratic control will also be more likely. With mining towns, the position of the population is tied to the industrial controls of the 'company' and demands for better services are aligned mainly with the labour movement.

However, houses have the potential for other directions. Their political orientation in the long range will be tied to how house members understand themselves and how they understand issues, especially the issues of structural inequality. Understanding of these dimensions will determine future action. In our study, there were indications that in some houses at least people saw the need for collective State-wide analysis of their work, where the 'personal becomes the political' or where inequitable distribution of resources was discussed. If this direction became more widely spread, the potential of the neighbourhood house movement for becoming an instrument of social change may be realised.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SOCIAL WELFARE COMMISSION
(1973), **The Australian Assistance Plan**, Discussion Paper No.1, Canberra, AGPS.
(1974), **The Australian Assistance Plan**, Progress Report, 30 August-31 December 1973, Canberra, AGPS.

BRYSON, L. and THOMSON, F.
(1972), **An Australian Newtown : Life and leadership in a new housing suburb**, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

COLEMAN, M.
(1978), 'An idea before its time' in A. Graycar (ed.), **Perspectives in Australian Social Policy**, Melbourne, Macmillan, 144-156.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SHARING SERVICE
(1983), **Information Pamphlet**, Sydney, March, Government Printer of NSW.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SHARING SERVICE
(1983), **Information Pamphlet**, Sydney, March, Government Printer of NSW.

COMMUNITY SERVICES, VICTORIA (Department of)
(1985), **Annual Report 1984-1985**, Melbourne, Government Printer
(1986), **CSV Links**, 12, November, Melbourne, CSV.

COX, F.M., ERLICH, J.L., ROTHMAN, J. and TROPMAN, J.
(1979), **Strategies of Community Organisation : A Book of Readings**, Third Edition, Itasca, Ill., Peacock.

D'ABBS, P.
(1982), **Social Support Networks : A Critical Review of Models v. Findings**, Melbourne, Institute of Family Studies.

DANIELS, D.W. and MARRIS, B.R.
(1985), **Reform of Statutory Welfare Services in Tasmania : A View from the Inside**, Paper presented at the Conference of the Australian Social Policy and Administration Association, 'Community Welfare services in the Australian States', Melbourne, 16-17 August.

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
(1985, 1987), **Annual Reports 1985, 1987**, Perth, Government Printer.

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA
(1985), **1984-85 Annual Report**, Adelaide, DCW.
(1986), **1985-86 Annual Report**, Adelaide, DCW.

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE, TASMANIA
(1981), **Guidelines for State Government Assistance to Neighbourhood Houses**, Hobart, DCW.
(1985a), **Neighbourhood Houses Programme : Manual**, Hobart, DCW.
(1985b), **Neighbourhood Houses Conference 26-28 June 1985 : Summary of Proceedings**, Hobart, DCW.
(1982-84), **Annual Reports 1982, 1983, 1984**, Hobart, DCW.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES, QUEENSLAND
(1986), **Annual Report 1985-1986**, Brisbane, Government Printer.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION
(1981), **Discussion Paper for Management Committee of Housing Division**, Hobart.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, NSW
(1985), **Neighbourhood Centres Programmes : Policy**, Draft Policy Document, September, YACS (mimeo).
(1985, 1986, 1987), **Annual Reports**, Sydney, YACS.

EVERS, A., NOWOTNY, H. and WINTERSBERGER, H. (eds)
(1987), **The Changing Face of Welfare**, Aldershot (UK), Gower Publishing Company.

EVERS, A. and WINTERSBERGER, H.
(1987), 'On the future of the welfare state or towards a policy of lifestyles', in Adelbert Evers, Helga Nowotny and Helmut Wintersberger (eds), **The Changing Face of Welfare**, Aldershot, Gower, 141-166.

FIRESTONE, S.
(1970), **Dialectics of Sex : The Case for Feminist Revolution**, New York, William Morrow.

GALLAGHER, A.
(1977), 'Women in community groups', in M. Mayo (ed.), **Women in the Community**, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 55-75.

GALPER, J.H.
(1975), **The Politics of Social Services**, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall.

GARDNER, R., JAMROZIK, A. and TODD, M.
(1979), **Social Issues in Rural Communities**, Hobart, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education.

GOODIN, R.E.
(1985), 'Social reliance versus the welfare state', **Journal of Social Policy**, 14(1), 25-47.

GRAYCAR, A.
(1979), **Welfare Politics in Australia : A Study in Policy Analysis**, Melbourne, Macmillan.
(1981), 'Australia's social wage', **Social Policy and Administration**, 15(1), 78-82.

GRUNOW, D.
(1986), 'Debureaucratisation and the self-help movement : Towards a restructuring of the welfare state in the Federal Republic of Germany?', in Else OYEN (ed.), **Comparing Welfare States and their Futures**, Aldershot, Gower, 192-204.

HENDERSON, P. and THOMAS, D.N.
(1987) [1980], **Skills in Neighbourhood Work**, Second Edition, London, Allen and Unwin.

JAKUBOWICZ, A.
(1974), **Community Development and Community Training**, Australian Government Social Welfare Commission Discussion Paper, Canberra.

JAMROZIK, A.
(1978), 'Issues of social policy and social planning', in A. GRAYCAR (ed.), **Perspectives in Australian Social Policy**, Melbourne, Macmillan, 76-84.
(1974), **Can Suburbs Become Communities?**, Paper presented at a seminar arranged by the Housing Department, Hobart, 23 October.

JAMROZIK, A., McCAULEY, J. and CAMILLERI, P.
(1976), **The Children's Services Field Officers' Programme - The Tasmanian Experience**, Hobart, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education.

LOCAL COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION (NSW)
(1986), **LCSA Directory**, Sydney, August. **Information Pamphlet**, Sydney (Undated).

LOEWENBERG, F.M. and DOLGOFF, R. (eds)
(1974), **The Practice of Social Intervention : Goals, Roles, Strategies**, Itasca, Ill., Peacock Publishers.

McMULLAN, R.F
(1984), **Australian Labor Party Platform, Constitution and Rules** (as approved by the 36th National Conference, Canberra, 1984), Canberra, ALP National Secretariat.

MAYO, M.
(1975), 'Community development - a radical alternative?' in R. BAILEY and M. BRAKE (eds), **Radical Social Work**, London, Edward Arnold.

MENCHER, S.
(1974), 'Ideology and the welfare state', in F. LOEWENBERG and R. DOLGOFF (eds), **The Practice of Social Intervention : Goals, Roles and Strategies**, Itasca, Ill., Peacock, 136-147.

MILLER, S.M. (1985), 'Reformulating the Welfare State', **Social Policy**, 15(3), Winter, 62-64.

MILLS, M.O. and GOLDSMITH, P.L.
(1984), **The Family Centre Book : The Joys and Pain of Self-Help in the Community**, Perth, Western Institute of Self-Help.

MOWBRAY, M.
(1985), 'Consensual practice, consensual state : community work in Australia, **Community Development Journal**, 20(4).

OAKLEY, A.
(1974), **The Sociology of Housework**, Martin Robertson.

O'BRIEN, D.J.
(1975), **Neighbourhood Organisation and Interest Group Process**, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

PERLMAN, R. and GURIN, A.
(1972), **Community Organisation and Social Planning**, New York, Wiley.

PILISUK, M. and MINKLER, M.
(1985), 'Social Support : economic and political considerations?', **Social Policy**, 15(3), Winter, 6-11.

RIESSMAN, F.
(1985), 'New dimensions in self-help, **Social Policy**, 15(3), 2-5.

ROSE, H. and HAMMER, J.
(1980), 'Making sense of theory', in P. HENDERSON, D. JONES and D.N. THOMAS (eds), London, George Allen and Unwin, 80-86.

SANDERS, I.T.
(1958), 'Theories of community development', **Journal of Rural Sociology**, 23, March, 2-3.

SHIRLEY, I.
(1979), **Planning for Community**, Palmerston North, N.Z., Drummond Press.

SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY SECRETARIAT
(1983), **Community Development in a Social Welfare Context**, Canberra.

TASKER, L.J.
(1978), 'Class, culture and community work', in P. CURNO (ed.), **Political Issues and Community Work**, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 219-238.

TITMUSS, R.M.
(1976) [1958], **Essays on 'The Welfare State'**, Third Edition, London, George Allen and Unwin.

THOMAS, D.
(1983), **The Making of Community Work**, London, George Allen and Unwin.

TRATTNER, W.I.
(1979) [1974], **From Poor Law to Welfare State : A History of Social Welfare in America**, Second Edition, New York, The Free Press.

UNITED NATIONS
(1985), **Social Development Newsletter**, 22, January-June, Vienna, Department of International and Social Affairs, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

YODER, J.A. (ed.)
(1985), **Support Networks in a Caring Community : Research and Policy, Fact and Fiction**, Dordrecht, Martinus Nijhoff.

YOUNG, D. and JAMROZIK, A.
(1982), **Community Groups in Action for Change**, Kensington, Social Welfare Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

P.O. BOX 1 • KENSINGTON • NEW SOUTH WALES • AUSTRALIA • 2033
TELEX AA26054 • TELEGRAPH: UNITECH, SYDNEY • TELEPHONE 697.2222
EXTN. 5151

PLEASE QUOTE

SOCIAL WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE

SURVEY OF NEIGBHOURHOOD HOUSES IN TASMANIA

House _____ No _____

Address _____

_____ Telephone No _____

Contact Person _____

Position _____

Persons interviewed

1. Name _____ Position _____ Date _____
2. Name _____ Position _____ Date _____
3. Name _____ Position _____ Date _____
4. Name _____ Position _____ Date _____
5. Name _____ Position _____ Date _____

(If joint interview, mark accordingly)

Interviewer _____ Date _____

NO.

ENVIRONMENT

Locality (e.g. Suburb, Housing Estate, Country Town, other

Services (public)

Schools

Health

Welfare

Child Care

Others

Services (private)

Shops

Banks

Other

Distances to:

Main Shopping Centre

Other services

Main Urban Centre

ENVIRONMENT (cont)

Public Transport _____

_____

Comments/observations (eg. particular characteristics, local issues, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

POPULATION *

Number _____

Age groups (describe or give numbers, if available) _____

_____

_____

Family structures/eg. two-parent, one-parent, etc.) _____

_____

_____

Education _____

_____

Occupational groups _____

_____

_____

Participation rates in labour force

Men _____

Women _____

* If available, the data will be filled in from ABS and/or other sources (eg. DSS, DCW, etc.)

POPULATION (cont)

Unemployment rates

Men _____

Women _____

Income (income levels, sources of income, etc.) _____

Comments/observations on population characteristics (e.g. educational standards, occupations, employment/unemployment, income, family units; also any specific characteristics, local issues, problem areas, etc.)

HISTORY

When was the House established _____

_____

On whose initiative _____

_____

Government involvement/assistance _____

_____

_____

Other involvement/assistance (if any), eg. Local Government,

other bodies/organisations _____

_____

Length of time from first initiative to establishment of premises

_____

_____

Changes over time/significant events _____

_____

Comments/observations _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

MANAGEMENT

Committee membership (numbers, positions)_____

How elected/how often elected _____

How often meets _____

How it works (eg. allocation of duties/responsibilities)_____

Are public meetings held YES ☐ NO ☐

IF YES, how often_____

Are meetings well attended (give estimates of numbers)

Are any special meetings held YES ☐ NO ☐

IF YES, how often, for what purpose_____

Comments/observations _____

PERSONNEL

Paid staff (numbers, positions, full-time, part-time, casual etc

Volunteers (numbers, what do they do? etc.)

Visiting (paid, volunteers, what do they do? etc.)

Comments/observations

SOURCE OF FUNDS (past 12 months, or last financial year)

Source	Purpose/activity	Amount
Commonwealth		
State		
Local Government		
Other source(s)		

Self-raised (if so, how)

ACTIVITIES	Activity 1	Activity 2
Frequency		
People using		
(Groups, age, number)		
Provided/organised by		
Fees charged (if any)		
Other details		

	Activity 3	Activity 4
Frequency		
People using		
(Groups, age, number)		
Provided/organised by		
Fees charged (if any)		
Other details		

ACTIVITIES (cont.)	Activity 5	Activity 6
Frequency		
People using		
(Groups, age, number)		
Provided/organised by		
Fees charged (if any)		
Other details		

Other activities and Comments/Observations

Any planned/projected activities

PERFORMANCE/EFFECTIVENESS/CONSTRAINTS/ PROBLEMATIC AREAS/OTHER ISSUES

(Record here all relevant data, statistical/descriptive/ impressionistic, as appropriate; preferably under specific headings).

SWRC Reports and Proceedings

No. 1 J. Moller (ed.), **Data for Welfare Decision Making**, September 1980, 51 pp. $4

No. 2 Peter Saunders (ed.), **The Poverty Line: Methodology and Measurement**, October 1980, 54 pp. $4

No. 3 Michael Morrissey and Andrew Jakubowicz, **Migrants and Occupational Health: A Report**, November 1980, 92 pp. $3

No. 4 Jan Carter, **States of Confusion: Australian Policies and the Elderly Confused**, January 1981, 50 pp. $3

No. 5 Adam Graycar and David Kinnear, **The Aged and the State: A Working Paper**, Revised edition, September 1982, 119 pp. $4

No. 6 Michael Liffman, **Immigrant Welfare: A Research Perspective**, April 1981, 40 pp. $3

No. 7 Bettina Cass, **Unemployment and the Family: The Social Impact of the Restructuring of the Australian Labour Market**, April 1981, 55 pp. $3

No. 8 Adam Jamrozik and Marilyn Hoey, **Workforce in Transition: Implications for Welfare**, May 1981, 74 pp. $4

No. 9 Robert V. Horn, **Fiscal Welfare Effects of Changes in Australian Income Tax, 1972-73 to 1980-81**, May 1981, 59 pp. $3

No.10 Concetta Benn, **The Developmental Approach: Demonstration Programs in the Brotherhood of St. Laurence**, May 1981, 20 pp. NO LONGER AVAILABLE

No.11 Bettina Cass (ed.), **Unemployment: Causes, Consequences and Policy Implications**, August 1981, 72 pp. $3

No.12 Adam Jamrozik and Robin Beck, **Worker Co-operatives: An Evaluative Study of the New South Wales Worker Co-operative Programme**, August 1981, 178 pp. $5

No.13 Robert V. Horn, **Extra Costs of Disablement: Background for an Australian Study**, September 1981, 25 pp. $3

No.14 P. R. Kaim-Caudle, **Cross National Comparisons of Social Services Pensions for the Elderly**, September 1981, 47 pp. $3

No.15 Adam Jamrozik, Marilyn Hoey, Marilyn Leeds, **Employment Benefits: Private or Public Welfare?**, November 1981, 138 pp. $3

No.16 Linda Rosenman, **Widowhood and Social Welfare Policy in Australia**, January 1982, 75 pp. $3

No.17 Adam Graycar and Wendy Silver, **Funding of Non-Government Welfare: Agencies Serving Disabled People in Western Australia**, January 1982, 89 pp. $3

No.18 Vivienne Milligan and Margaret McAllister, **Housing and Local Government: An Evaluation of the Waverley Community Housing Officer Project**, February 1982, 109 pp. $3

No.19 Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik, **Services for Young Children: Welfare Service or Social Parenthood?**, March 1982, 144 pp. $4

No.20 Adam Graycar (ed.), **Aged Care - Whose Responsibility?**, March 1982, 49 pp. $3

No.21 Bettina Cass, **Family Policies in Australia: Contest over the Social Wage**, May 1982, 41 pp. $3

No.22 Tania Sweeney, **An Analysis of Federal Funding of Children's Services - A Sourcebook**, May 1982, 62 pp. $3

No.23 David Kinnear and Adam Graycar, **Family Care of Elderly People: Australian Perspectives**, May 1982, 63 pp. NO LONGER AVAILABLE

No.24 Carol Keens and Bettina Cass, **Fiscal Welfare: Some Aspects of Australian Tax Policy. Class and Gender Considerations**, September 1982, 55 pp. $3

No.25 Jill Hardwick and Adam Graycar, **Volunteers in Non-Government Welfare Organisations in Australia: A Working Paper**, September 1982, 41 pp. $3

No.26 Robert Pinker, **Theory, Ideology and Social Policy**, October 1982, 23 pp. $2

No.27 Adam Jamrozik and Marilyn Hoey, **Dynamic Labour Market or Work on the Wane? Trends in the Australian Labour Force 1966-1981**, December 1982, 100 pp. $4

No.28 Adam Graycar, **Government Officers' Expectations of Non-Government Welfare Organisations: A Discussion Paper**, December 1982, 93 pp. $3

No.29 Jan Carter, **Protection to Prevention: Child Welfare Policies**, January 1983, 76 pp. $3

No.30 Peter Travers, **Unemployment and Life-History: A Pilot Study**, June 1983, 75 pp. $4

No.31 Jo Jarrah (ed.), **53rd ANZAAS Congress: SWRC Papers**, June 1983, 118 pp. $4

No.32 Andrew Jones, **Selectivity in Children's Services Policy**, June 1983, 68 pp. $4

No.33 Ian Scott and Adam Graycar, **Aspects of Fiscal Federalism and Social Welfare**, July 1983, 80 pp. $4

No.34 Jo Jarrah (ed.), **Child Welfare: Current Issues and Future Directions**, July 1983, 89 pp. $4

No.35 Carol Keens, Frances Staden and Adam Graycar, **Options for Independence: Australian Home Help Policies for Elderly People**, December 1983, 119 pp. $5

No.36 Diana Encel and Pauline Garde, **Unemployment in Australia: An Annotated Bibliography, 1978-83**, January 1984, 152 pp. $5

No.37 Stuart Rees and Anneke Emerson, **Disabled Children, Disabling Practices**, January 1984, 129 pp. $5

No.38 Chris Rossiter, David Kinnear and Adam Graycar, **Family Care of Elderly People: 1983 Survey Results**, January 1984, 100 pp. $5

No.39 Randall Smith, **Meals on Wheels in New South Wales: A Discussion Paper**, March 1984, 48 pp. $4

No.40 Bettina Cass and Mary Ann O'Loughlin, **Social Policies for Single Parent Families in Australia: An Analysis and a Comparison with Sweden**, March 1984, 86 pp. $4

No.41 Adam Graycar (ed.), **Accommodation After Retirement**, April 1984, 51 pp. $4

No.42 Linda Rosenman and Marilyn Leeds, **Women and the Australian Retirement Age Income System**, April 1984, 102 pp. $5

No.43 Ian Manning, **Measuring the Costs of Living of Australian Families**, April 1984, 70 pp. $4

No.44 Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik, **Perspectives in Child Care: Experiences of Parents and Service Providers**, April 1984, 201 pp. $5

No.45 Ann Harding, **Who Benefits?: The Australian Welfare State and Redistribution**, April 1984, 147 pp. $5

No.46 Andrew Jakubowicz, Michael Morrissey and Joanne Palser, **Ethnicity, Class and Social Policy in Australia**, May 1984, 125 pp. $5

No.47 Rosemary Hooke (ed.), **54th ANZAAS Congress: SWRC Papers**, June 1984, 231 pp. $5

No.48 Graeme Brewer, **The Experience of Unemployment in Three Victorian Regions**, August 1984, 103 pp. $5

No.49 Ugo Ascoli, **Analysis of the Italian Welfare State: Some Implications for Current Australian Issues**, August 1984, 58 pp. $5

No.50 Chris Rossiter, **Family Care of Elderly People: Policy Issues**, December 1984, 83 pp. $4

No.51 Vivienne Milligan, Jill Hardwick and Adam Graycar, **Non-Government Welfare Organisations in Australia: A National Classification**, December 1984, 189 pp. $5

No.52 Richard Chisholm, **Black Children, White Welfare? Aboriginal Child Welfare Law and Policy in New South Wales**, April 1985, 150 pp. $5

No.53 Bruce Bradbury, Pauline Garde and Joan Vipond, **Bearing the Burden of Unemployment - Unequally. A Study of Australian Households in 1981**, August 1985, 102 pp. $5

No.54 Adam Jamrozik (ed.), **Issues in Social Welfare Policy 1985: Perceptions, Concepts and Practice** (SWRC Papers at ASPAA and ANZAAS), September 1985, 149 pp. $5

No.55 Adam Jamrozik (ed.), **Income Distribution, Taxation and Social Security: Issues of Current Concern**, January 1986, 150 pp. $5

No.56 Bruce Bradbury, Chris Rossiter and Joan Vipond, **Poverty, Before and After Paying for Housing**, February 1986, 101 pp. $5

No.57 Adam Jamrozik, Sarah Drury and Tania Sweeney, **Innovation and Change in the Child and Family Welfare System**, February 1986, 139 pp. $5

No.58 Diana Encel, **Unemployment in Australia: An Annotated Bibliography, 1980-85**, March 1986, 225 pp. $5

No.59 Ruth Errey, Carole Baker and Sarah Fox, **Community Care of the Aged: A Working Model of a Needs-Based Assessment Unit**, May 1986, 139 pp. $5

No.60 Adam Jamrozik (ed.), **Provision of Welfare Services to Immigrants** (Proceedings of SWRC Seminar, 26 May 1986), July 1986, 80 pp. $4

No.61 Adam Jamrozik (ed.), **Social Security and Family Welfare: Directions and Options Ahead** (Proceedings of SWRC Seminar, held in Adelaide, 4 July 1986), July 1986, 140 pp. $5

No.62 Jan Carter, **In Debt and Out of Work**, August 1986, 39 pp. $3

No.63 Don Stewart, **Workers' Compensation and Social Security: An Overview**, November 1986, 179 pp. $5

No.64 David Wiles, **Living on the Age Pension: A Survey Report**, June 1987, 108 pp. $5

No.65 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik (eds), **Social Welfare in the Late 1980s: Reform, Progress, or Retreat?** (Proceedings of a conference held in Perth, Western Australia, on 27-28 March), June 1987, 180 pp. $5

No.66 Jill Hardwick, Jenny James and Fiona Brown, **Accommodation, Employment Policies and Services for People with Disabilities**, October 1987, 130 pp. $5

No.67 Peter Saunders (ed.), **Redistribution and the Welfare State: Estimating the Effects of Government Benefits and Taxes on Household Income.** (Proceedings of a Workshop held at the University of New South Wales on 13 May 1987), August 1987, 77pp. $5.

No.68 Sara Graham, **The Extra Costs Borne by Families Who Have a Child with a Disability**, September 1987, 146 pp. $5

No.69 Peter Saunders and Peter Whiteford, **Ending Child Poverty: An Assessment of the Government's Family Package**, December 1987, 86 pp. $5

No.70 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik (eds), **Community Services in a Changing Economic and Social Environment**, December 1987, 165 pp. $5

No.71 Caroline Alcorso, **Migrant Workers and Workers' Compensation in New South Wales**, March 1988. 168 pp. $5

No.72 Bruce Bradbury, Diana Encel, Jenny James and Joan Vipond, **Poverty and the Workforce**, March 1988. 125 pp. $5

No.73 Donald Chandraratna and Michael Cummins, **Ethnicity and Ageing: The Anglo Asian Experience**, June 1988, 61 pp. $5

No.74 Elizabeth Dean, Cathy Boland and Adam Jamrozik, **Neighbourhood Houses in Tasmania: A Study in Community Development and Self-Help,** July 1988, 88pp. $5

No.75 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik, **Community Services Policy: Economic and Social Implications**, (Proceedings of a conference held in Hobart, Tasmania, 27 May 1988), August 1988, 89pp. $5

No.76 Sara Graham and Peter Whiteford (eds), **Support and Services for People with Disabilities** (Proceedings of SWRC Conference held in Sydney, 23 September 1988), February 1989, 55 pp. $5

No.77 Alan Jordan, **Of Good Character and Deserving of a Pension**, March 1989, 64 pp. $5

No.78 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik (eds), **Social Policy and Inequality in Australia and New Zealand** (Proceedings of a Joint Conference with the New Zealand Planning Council, held in Wellington, New Zealand, 10-11 November 1988), September 1989, 194 pp. $5

No.79 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik (eds), **Social Policy in Australia: What Future for the Welfare State?**, (Proceedings of National Social Policy Conference, Sydney, 5-7 July 1989), Volume 1: Plenary Sessions, November 1989, 111 pp. $5