

## **The Whittlesea Community Engagement Project – information for organisations**

The Whittlesea Community Engagement project (WCEP) is a new initiative of Whittlesea Community Connections funded by the State Government through the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC), and supported by the City of Whittlesea (Council). The project aims to strengthen and expand levels of community involvement, participation and volunteer activity in Whittlesea's growing and diverse municipality.

The WCEP is based on the belief that when people in their local communities have opportunities to participate in the life of their community, by having a say and being involved in the work of local community organisations and governments, healthier and stronger communities are created.

### **Aims of the WCEP?**

Specifically, the WCEP is a community development project aimed at:

- Strengthening community engagement locally, ensuring that residents contribute to local plans, strategies and service delivery
- Developing a Community Engagement Framework that, when endorsed by stakeholders will guide and enhance the active participation, connection and empowerment of Whittlesea residents.
- Working with local people and stakeholders to develop and implement projects on the ground that have been identified through the process of developing a community engagement framework.
- Strengthening and extending volunteer participation and other community involving activities by Whittlesea residents and community groups that contribute to the development of quality services and facilities within Whittlesea.

### **How the WCEP will work?**

The WCEP will involve consulting with Whittlesea residents and groups to identify ways in which local people would like to participate in their community - this may be through volunteering, attending community groups or having a say in how local services are delivered. The project will then work with local community organisations and government to ensure opportunities for community involvement reflect community needs and aspirations, and are of benefit to Whittlesea residents, groups and the broader community.

Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) will oversee the 2-year project with input from the project reference group, which is made up of local community members, community organisations and representatives from local government (Council).

### **How will local agencies & government be involved?**

Local community agencies & government are in a unique position to engage and involve the community in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the services they provide in the community. The WCEP will involve key local organisations and government departments by;

- Consulting with staff as to their views, experiences, barriers and potential of community participation within their own program or service
- Providing feedback following community consultation to communicate the needs and aspirations of community members wanting to participate in Whittlesea,
- Supporting agencies to adopt the processes and outcomes articulated in the Whittlesea Community Engagement Framework, and,
- Providing practical information and training to support staff engage the community in ways that are meaningful to local communities.

**For more information or to get involved, please contact Emma Sampson at Whittlesea Community Connections  
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