

update

Issue 82 • Summer 2017-18 •
Liveable Canberra

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ACTCOSS newflash

Have your say about ACTCOSS & our future direction:

- Annual Stakeholder Survey 2017
- Strategic Plan 2019-23 Survey.

Find out more:

www.actcoss.org.au



Liveable Canberra

By Susan Helyar, Director, ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS)

As Canberra goes through a once in a generation period of urban renewal, ACTCOSS wanted to provide space for our members to share their perspectives and insights on what makes a liveable city. Our contributors said:

- Partnerships between organisations and the communities they are built from and work with to amplify the lived experience and voice of people who are discriminated against or marginalised in mainstream debate and services are essential to creating a liveable city
- Representations and advocacy are core foundations for a liveable community that offers well integrated, fit for purpose and effective service design, urban development and policy reform
- Community development is integral to a liveable city. ACTCOSS defines community development as activities and investments to support people—especially those affected by poverty and inequality—to express their views, influence

decisions that affect them, shape the service system and influence the priorities of governments. Community development both builds and is built on:

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Partnerships for activism.

We have also included reflections on attitudes, behaviours and lifestyle choices that have enabled liveability following the disruptions and challenges of settling into Canberra when you come from a very different place, or from a group of people defined as different by the wider community.

In 2016, the ACT Government agreed that community services in the ACT should undertake community development to create social value, build social capital and improve living conditions. In 2017, ACTCOSS has advocated for increased focus on social planning and community development in urban renewal and future urban planning. In 2018, we will continue to build our advocacy messages and impact in this important area.

Exploring the strengths of Canberra's communities

By Lauren Bradley, Community Development Coordinator, Woden Community Service

Before moving to Canberra, I had the idea that it would have little to offer me, that it was a boring little place filled with politicians and public servants driving around roundabouts. People also convinced me that Canberra winters were so dire that they are something to be 'survived'. Turns out that there isn't much that needs to be 'survived' in Canberra; reality has shown me that there is a lot to be enjoyed and celebrated which is underpinned by a warm and welcoming community.

When we talk about a city or place being 'liveable', critical factors used to define this are: residents feeling safe, socially connected and included; environmental sustainability; and access to affordable and diverse housing options.¹ A liveable city is more resilient, in part owing to its competitive social, economic and environmental advantages.²

Canberra has a lot working in its favour, however, this can always be improved and expanded upon. By using an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, organisations can help residents identify and build upon the strengths that already exist in the community. Many organisations and institutions work from a deficits perspective which involves looking at a situation in terms of what is wrong and broken, what is missing and what needs to be fixed. It infers an expert, organisation or institution doing and acting 'for' a passive receipt. If we turn this around, we can apply an ABCD perspective which encourages the identification and acknowledgement of strengths, skills and cultural, social and material resources which already exist within a community.³

The great thing about an Asset Based Community Development approach is that not much is needed to get started. A community simply needs to draw upon the resources and assets that already exist—that is the whole premise of ABCD, after all. Get-togethers can be held at someone's kitchen table, at a local café, in the library—whatever works for people. Moreover, it is an all-inclusive process; everyone has something to offer. A group can start by mapping or brainstorming the assets that already exist within their community whether they be social, cultural or physical assets.⁴ People may be surprised once they start to actively think this through, just how much already exists within their reach to work with.

Another important factor of making a locality 'liveable' is the connection a person feels to that place. The concept of Placemaking involves reimagining and reinventing public spaces.⁵ The greater the sense of ownership people have for the place they live in, the greater the connection. By allowing and empowering a community-driven approach and allowing people to have, not only a say, but physical involvement, a stronger sense of belonging will be developed. Benefits of such an approach reach far and wide to the immediate and broader community.

There are endless possibilities of where strengths based and Placemaking activities can lead. Looking at what has been achieved in other parts of the country, the City of Onkaparinga Council in South Australia sets an example of a strong commitment by local government to community development and enhancing liveability of their region. They have gone as far to as to develop a Placemaking Strategy 2014-19.⁶

To see Asset Based Community Development and Placemaking initiatives in action across Canberra could result in some inspiring outcomes.

Across the country it is local councils who generally facilitate and implement support for Community Development and Placemaking initiatives. What we need in the ACT is a more strategic and collaborative approach among community service organisations, backed by appropriate support and resourcing from the government. Whilst the idea is for community to take ownership and play an active role in shaping the community they want to live in, the role community service organisations play is critical in walking alongside and supporting that journey to create a more socially connected and liveable Canberra.

If any of these approaches interest you, please feel free to get in contact: Lauren Bradley
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Woden Community Service: www.wcs.org.au

See page 11 for footnotes.



Liveability means accessibility

By Robert Altamore, Executive Officer, People With Disabilities ACT (PWD ACT)

People With Disabilities ACT has a vision for Canberra. We envisage Canberra as a place where people with disabilities have our voices heard and make our own decisions.

For us, as people with disabilities, a city is not liveable unless it is truly accessible in its physical environment and inclusive in its economic, social and cultural policies. An accessible and inclusive and thus liveable Canberra would have the following features.

Physical environment

The physical environment would be barrier free and universally accessible. Ramps, curbs and tactiles would comply with Federal Access to Premises Standards and Guidelines, and afford practical and safe access. Shared spaces would operate under policies which prioritise pedestrian safety and disability parking spaces would give access to homes and to the places people study, work, shop and socialise.

Housing

For people with disabilities, housing in a liveable Canberra means housing which is not only affordable but also accessible and visitable. Housing and a place to call home is the foundation of all other human rights. The home is the starting point from which a person with a disability prepares for their day and travels to and from their places of education, employment, healthcare, commerce and culture and

recreation. This is why PWD ACT has a housing policy statement¹ which calls for new housing in Canberra to be mandated to meet the Livable Housing Design Guidelines.

Employment

A liveable Canberra is one in which people with disabilities are employed, keep their jobs and progress in their careers. The ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Service recently inquired into and reported on the employment of people with disabilities in Canberra.² PWD ACT has held a public forum at which the Committee's report and recommendations were presented and discussed. The message from this forum is that people with disabilities want the ACT Government to follow through and implement the inquiry's recommendations.

Transport

A liveable Canberra is a city in which transport is fully accessible. Canberra is well on the way to achieving accessibility of its bus fleet by 2022 as required by the Federal Standards for Accessible Public Transport under the Disability Discrimination Act. But PWD ACT knows Canberra can do better. That is why in our transport policy statement³ we called on the ACT Government to make the bus fleet fully accessible by 2020. The light rail which is coming to Canberra needs to be fully accessible. Much can be done to improve access of people

with disabilities to taxis and other point to point transport services and the travel experience of people with disabilities who use Canberra airport can be improved.

Social policies

A liveable Canberra is also a city in which social policies promote positive attitudes to people with disabilities, which in turn support their inclusion and participation in the economic, social, cultural, sporting and recreational life of our city. PWD ACT sees the implementation of the National Disability Strategy⁴ in Canberra as the way forward to achieving our vision for Canberra as a liveable city. The Strategy is Australia's response to the UN Convention on the Rights of People With Disabilities and focuses on achieving outcomes in six key areas: Accessible and inclusive communities; Rights protection, justice and legislation; Economic security; Personal and community support; Learning and skills; and Health and wellbeing.

Liveable Canberra?

The ACT Government has set the bar very high for liveability in Canberra. The Lonely Planet Tourism Guide recently proclaimed Canberra the world's third best city to visit. But for many people with disabilities who live in Canberra, it is neither liveable or accessible. There's a lot more work to be done to make Canberra the liveable city that it promises to be and could be for us.

Join PWD ACT

For people with disabilities living in the Canberra region, joining PWD ACT is online, easy and free via www.pwdact.org.au. You can also follow us on twitter via @PWDACT2, look us up on Facebook or sign up to receive monthly updates by email.

We're located at the Pearce Community Centre and can be contacted via 02 6286 4223.

PWD ACT is supported by the ACT Government through the Office for Disability.



See page 11 for footnotes.

A carer friendly Canberra: What would it look like?

By Colleen Sheen, Senior Policy Advisor Carers ACT

Liveable Canberra or, more accurately, 'If Canberra was carer friendly, what would it look like?' was the theme for the deliberative democracy process occurring in September and October this year to develop an ACT Carers Strategy, which was a commitment by the Chief Minister and Treasurer in the 2017-18 ACT Budget.

Family or friend carers in our community are ordinary people doing extraordinary things – they are parents, partners, sons or daughters, neighbours or friends. Some begin their caring role as young children and others at different life stages. Some care for a few hours a week and some for 100 or more hours. Collectively, they provide over 70% of aged, health and disability community care in Australia. The estimated annual national value of this unpaid care in 2015 was \$60.3 billion, and it sustains Australia's formal care sector.

Caring can be rewarding, but it can have a significant personal cost—personal wellbeing, employment, education, financial, relationships and isolation—whether you're an unpaid family or friend carer, or a foster or kinship carer.

The ACT Government, in partnership with Carers ACT and democracyCo, undertook to develop the ACT Carers Strategy through a deliberative democracy process involving unpaid family and friend carers, foster and kinship carers and the wider community to ensure that the Carers Strategy reflected the diverse needs of carers in the ACT. Carers and members from the wider Canberra community were

invited to contribute to this process—they could respond to an online survey and nominate to be part of the Carers Voice deliberative panel.

The online survey findings informed the deliberative panel about what would make a carer friendly Canberra. The ACT Chief Minister and Cabinet received outcomes from the deliberative process, that set out the framework for the development of the ACT Carers Strategy. The deliberative panel focused on providing Government with the vision, outcomes and priorities towards developing a carer friendly Canberra.

The development and implementation of an ACT Carers Strategy is a welcome and important opportunity to change the culture of caring in the ACT and to achieve a more caring and carer-supportive community for its nearly 50,000 unpaid family and friend carers, as well as foster and kinship carers.

As many carers care for more than one person, it is estimated that at least 25% of the ACT population also would benefit from the ACT Carers Strategy.

The use of deliberative democracy processes in formulating the vision, outcomes and priorities for the strategy was a challenging, rewarding and innovative way of starting on the path towards a Canberra that cares for carers. Both the process and the outcomes have helped to start to build an inclusive and liveable Canberra for carers. For the first time, the people directly impacted by

government and agency policy and actions have had control over the content and direction. A liveable Canberra for carers is a community that recognises and acknowledges the role carers play, is inclusive of people with a disability or health condition and provides support and access to opportunities for carers to maintain their wellbeing and participate in the community.

Deliberative democracy processes allow people to consider complex issues, to gain insight into varying views and to be part of forming decisions and solutions. In the case of the Carers Strategy, there needed to be a strong and clear expression from carers about what they need followed by a clear systemic response which commits to addressing these needs. By providing an opportunity for carers to be involved in the development of the clear expression, we took one step forward in creating a liveable Canberra.

A liveable community, at its essence, involves, includes and acknowledges the members of the community as central to everything. Deliberative democracy has enabled the voices, stories, talents, intellect and passion of carers to be central to the

actions that will work towards forming a Canberra that cares for carers.

For more information about the ACT Carers Strategy consultations and the *Make Your Voice Count Online Survey Report* see www.carerstrategy.org.au

Carers ACT supports, connects and empowers unpaid family or friend carers to maintain their caring role and enhance their personal wellbeing. We also provide advocacy support to Canberra's many foster and kinship carers who care for children and young people in out of home care. We are the peak body for carers in the ACT and work with industry and government to make Canberra a more carer-friendly city.

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ACTCOSS learning & development opportunities

Building Better Boards: The ACTCOSS Governance Workshop Program

ACTCOSS governance workshops are designed to meet the needs of people interested in, or who have recently been, appointed to a board member position with an ACT NFP. This training targets people who have never been on a board or who have limited experience on boards.

The governance workshop will be broken into two parts – the morning session on board governance and strategy, and the afternoon session on financial management. Participants can come to either session, or the whole day.

- Board Governance and Strategy - 7 February 2018, 9.30am-12.30pm
- Financial Management – presented by Betty Ferguson - 7 February 2018, 1.15pm-4.30pm

Emerging Leaders Program

This program consists of a number of workshops to build the capability of managers and team leaders in the community sector. They equip participants with sound foundational leadership skills that are consolidated through their work in the sector and engagement in peer networks.

Upcoming workshops include:

- Effective Communications - 27 February 2018
- Developing Teams - 11 April 2018
- Managing Performance - 11 April 2018
- Facilitation Skills - 13 June 2018
- Managing Uncertainty - 20 June 2018

You may register for one, multiple, or all of these workshops.

Find out more and register at the ACTCOSS website: www.actcoss.org.au

Why democratic participation in urban planning is critically important

By Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy (CAPaD)

Urban planning and development is not just about real estate—it is really about how people live; their access to work, leisure, facilities and services; and their impact on the world around them—importantly, it is how people feel about the quality of their city and their lives.

No interest group or government has a magic solution for an ideal urban form. Rather, urban planning for a city has to encompass the physical, aesthetic, social and environmental aspirations of its people. The execution of the built and urban form is long lived and must be based on wise decision making reflecting the values of the city's inhabitants.

This requires engagement of the community as an equal partner in the oversight of the planning and development process. Critically, this requires:

- Early engagement of the community in all facets of the processes that influence urban planning
- A structured hierarchy of consultation from the Territory Plan through to Master Plans resulting in continuity of principles and development of codes and requirements, right

down to the development application (DA) level, including documentation of the consultation

- Planning authorities/ developers to have regard to these principles and requirements and be required to have prior consultations in preparing their DAs and then undertake further consultation on the specifics of their proposals
- Information presented for public consultation be fit for purpose and be presented with the assistance of an independent professional facilitator to ensure balanced community input. The issue of the resources required for genuine public consultation needs careful consideration
- Demonstrated adherence to these principles be an essential part of the government/developer approvals process with independent audits of the processes carried out from time to time
- Promotion of best practice consultation as the expected norm throughout the ACT Government and developer community

- Capacity building and support for the community to engage at an appropriate level with planning and development, and associated technical matters
- Establishment of a compact between the government and the community represented by Community Councils, Residents Associations and related groups, covering the points above and related issues, akin to the Social Compact for the community services sector.

Failure to adequately address community concerns and needs can result in a dysfunctional social environment with winners and losers, and exacerbation of social disadvantage with its accompanying costs in inefficiency and service failure. In contrast, incorporation of community views enhances social wellbeing, promotes economic and service efficiency, and builds social cohesion through time.

We cannot afford not to do it.

Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy:
www.canberra-alliance.org.au

Contact: Beth Slatyer, Co-Convenor
convenor@canberra-alliance.org.au



Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy
CAPaD: Awakening Democracy

Working together: The relationship between community organising & policy development

By Majka McLean-Engström, A Gender Agenda (AGA) & Isabel Mudford, AIDS Action Council

The principles behind robust policy and legislative reforms for diverse groups of people are best grounded in the communities they serve. While grouped together as one acronym, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) people are immensely diverse populations whose politics, experiences, needs, and wants vary greatly. Indeed, current key issues for communities in the LGBTIQ grouping vary from attaining marriage equality, to accessing affordable and empowering health care services, to ending non-consensual unnecessary surgeries for intersex people. Despite our differences and different needs, we share experiences of the discrimination that comes at the hands of not meeting society's expectations of bodies, desires and identities. Therefore, we often find solidarity working together to systematically challenge these issues. A Gender Agenda (AGA) and the AIDS Action Council (the Council) share this space in the ACT community sector and work together to provide appropriate and sensitive responses to LGBTIQ policy and programming needs in the ACT.

Like any diverse population, the complexities and nuances of LGBTIQ communities are often only visible and articulable by the people who live these experiences and are part of these communities. While policy and program areas are often separated in larger organisations, in community organisations, such as the Council and AGA, these work areas are inherently intertwined. This article provides an introduction to our organisations as well as an understanding of the relationship between our programs and our policy development. While representing different communities within the LGBTIQ acronym, the Council and AGA share a history of community development in the face of stigma and discrimination. While our community groups have grown and changed over the years, it is our continued commitment to grassroots community building at both organisations which provides us with a wealth of knowledge on the needs of the local LGBTIQ populations.

The Council and AGA both represent different but overlapping communities within the LGBTIQ

acronym. The Council was established in 1983 as the HIV/AIDS epidemic was presenting itself as a serious social and medical issue in Australia. The need for community embedded responses and social support was clear, not only to provide care to those living with HIV, but to facilitate community-led safer sex messaging and practices which are responsive and sympathetic to the communities they target. The partnerships between community-led organisations, governments, and public health experts have been credited as the reason Australia's response to HIV/AIDS was one of the most effective in the world.¹ As they continue to be deeply embedded in the communities they serve, AIDS organisations such as the Council continue to lead policy advice and strategy on the roll out of new treatments, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and keeping people informed of the current situation of people living with HIV in Australia.

The Council works predominantly with people living, impacted and at risk of HIV including tackling HIV stigma and discrimination. Many of those living with, impacted or at risk of HIV are members of LGBTIQ communities. Therefore, the Council extends its mandate to work with and represent the broad interests of LGBTIQ communities in the ACT regardless of their HIV status. This important work includes counselling, peer support, sexual health and relationship programs, youth enrichment and network building, and community education.

AGA works with intersex, transgender and gender diverse communities, as well as their families, friends and allies in the Canberra region. AGA provides social support programs for these communities which include a monthly families' dinner, youth group and numerous groups based around art and wellbeing. AGA was established in 2005 to build a community for intersex, gender diverse and transgender people in the ACT. AGA was envisioned as a community organisation that would build a community base to combat the significantly high rates of social isolation experienced by gender diverse people,² as well as develop a base from which policy and law reform could be collectively tested and critiqued. Since

its establishment, AGA has been integral to several policy developments, law reforms and legal decisions regarding the human rights of intersex, transgender and gender diverse people; such as the 2014 reforms to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act which has allowed for people to change their registered sex without invasive and unnecessary surgeries.

AGA has a symbiotic approach to policy and community building meaning that the programs that are run provide its communities with the knowledge and skills to make liveable the policies and laws to which the community has contributed. For example; when the Commonwealth, with the advice of AGA, changed their policy regarding gender markers on passports to ensure people could be accurately represented in their documentation, AGA ran a series of workshops on how members could utilise the changes.

AGA has just employed its first intersex project worker who is working to build a community of people with variations of sex characteristics. Building that community in Canberra, not only creates opportunities for intersex people to find peer support, but allows unique opportunities to support intersex activism within the ACT at both local and federal levels.

As the ACT Government, and organisations throughout the ACT, increasingly recognise the need for policies that are inclusive, and protective, of the whole of the LGBTIQ community, Canberra is becoming a more liveable city for all people represented by the LGBTIQ acronym, including intersex, transgender and gender diverse people. In Canberra's bid to be the most LGBTIQ inclusive city in the country, it is important that these communities are accurately represented in policy development. More than anything, it is important for government, and all other organisations working to become more friendly and accessible to the LGBTIQ communities, to work with these communities directly to truly support them and their needs.

A Gender Agenda: www.genderrights.org.au

AIDS Action Council: www.aidsaction.org.au

See page 11 for footnotes.



Liveable Canberra?

By Megan Jackson, Secretary, Diversity ACT

Liveable means different things to different people. For the white, straight, fully employed, middle class owner of independent means of transport, Canberra is indeed a wonderful city. In general, these people have the financial means and the capacity to access Canberra's wonderful services, attractions and social infrastructure. But what is the experience of other Canberrans?

For sexuality and gender diverse people, there is more to a liveable city than just the quality of the public transport, health and housing systems, or the amount of green space. A liveable city for LGBTIQ+ people also involves questions of public awareness and acceptance of the range of sexuality and gender diversity. How liveable is a city in which gay, lesbian, trans or intersex people feel unsafe in holding their partner's hand when walking in a public space? How liveable is a city in which a non-binary school student chooses not to eat or drink all day, so that they don't

need to use the toilet at school, and thus don't expose themselves to ridicule, harassment or even worse, assault?

Over time, Canberra has made great gains in the public arena in regards to awareness and acceptance of gender and sexuality. Our overwhelming 'yes' vote in the marriage equality survey is one very obvious example of this. But even the 74% vote in favour leaves us with a situation where LGBTIQ+ Canberrans see that 26% of the people in Canberra who voted do not believe that we deserve to be equal. Imagine being at a public event like Carols by Candlelight or the Canberra Show, and being worried that 26% of the people there felt that you were not worthy of equality, that you are somehow different, less than, unworthy? How liveable would that situation be for you?

Canberra is a great place to live. The LGBTIQ+ community have seen the rainbow flags flying

throughout the marriage equality survey period, and we have felt loved and supported and welcomed. But at the same time, members of our community in Canberra have experienced abuse—one of us even had his car vandalised! So Canberra is not a perfect city in which to live. But it is our city too.



DiversityACT

Diversity ACT:
www.diversityact.org.au

Working toward successful settlement in Australia

By Hongsar Channaibanya—arrived in Canberra from Burma (Myanmar) as a young man in 1997. He shares his reflections on what he has found made Canberra a liveable city

Connecting with others

- I listen to the previous people on how they settled in the first year.
- I read as much as I can in English everyday at home.
- I enjoy going out with Australian friends.
- I ask my friends if I am doing that I am not sure whether it is for good reason or not.
- I call friend when I feel bored and drink at the pub for social conversation.
- I helped other people as much as I can when they newly arrived to town.
- I admit if I have done wrong to someone.
- I seek advice from senior or mentor if I need help.
- I love to stay out on the weekends when the time is right.
- I share my idea with friends if I think it is good to share.
- I do what I can and I don't what I can't to other needs.
- I try to be humble but only when I can be in respectful equal relationship.

Being informed

- I listen to radio at home that informs me daily news and current affairs.

- I ask my teachers and staff at school if I don't know what to do.
- I read weekly newspaper to inform me big story.
- I visit some place that I think good for me to know things around me.

Work & finances (just get a job!)

- I work casual and part time while I am attending English language class.
- I live in simple way and I don't have new equipment at home.
- I save money that I need to buy my valuable books.
- I live a simple life but in meaningful ways.

Spending time

- I don't have spare time to waste if I think there is nothing for me.
- I plan year by year what I can do and how I can do it.
- I decide what I can do and how I do it decisively with sense of purpose.

Health

- I eat good and fresh foods that keep me healthy.
- I also balanced my diet weekly.
- I drink a lot of water when I angry to something (self-cared!).

Emotional wellbeing

- I don't blame anyone else if I am not doing well nor do myself.
- I share my thinking with friends if I can do it with them.
- I always try to avoid personal conflict with anything if I can find the way out.
- I miss my parents but I know that I have to survive here in new country.
- I don't look back all the time but I look forward all the time.
- I think about my homeland but I think about my daily living too.
- I do not afraid to challenge if I think it is wrong.
- I live in quiet if I can and read the books that I like.
- I made mistake first but I do not repeat this mistake again.
- I love music that keeps me strong.
- I balance between me and my social needs.
- I know I am doing the right things and I am not afraid off failure.
- I admire people who are doing well in the city.
- I conceal my own anger when I can at all time.
- I only do only what I can.

New ACTCOSS Committee, annual report & the year ahead

Committee

At the ACTCOSS Annual General Meeting on 21 November 2017, the new Committee for 2017-18 was deemed elected.

We welcome back Camilla Rowland (Marymead) as President; Martin Fisk (Menslink) as Vice President; Lee-Ann Akauola (Relationships Australia Canberra and Region) as Treasurer; Glenda Stevens (Associate Member) as Secretary; and Ordinary Members Roger Munson (ADACAS), Peter Dwyer (Religious Society of Friends Canberra), Alicia Flack-Konè (ACT Down Syndrome Association), Beth Slatyer (Associate Member), and Dalane Drexler (ACT Mental Health Consumer Network).

We welcome new members to the Committee as Ordinary Members: Lynnice Church (Australia Red Cross ACT), Karen McKernan (Mental Health Foundation ACT), and Petrea Messent (Dementia Australia ACT).

You can see the full list on the last page of this journal.

We farewell and thank Ordinary Members Leith Felton-Taylor (Mental Health Community Coalition ACT) and Alex White (UnionsACT) for their work on the Committee over the past two years.

If you would like to contact members of the Committee, please email actcoss@actcoss.org.au or call the ACTCOSS office on 02 6202 7200 and we will put you in touch.

Annual & financial reports

The ACTCOSS Annual Report 2016-17 is now available as PDF and text only accessible Word format on our website. The report highlights some of the great work and outcomes we achieved during the last financial year, including ACT election campaigning around housing and homelessness, education equity, transport disadvantage, and more! The Financial Report 2016-17 is also on the website for your review: www.actcoss.org.au

The year ahead

We are looking forward to 2018 when we will continue to work with members and community peak bodies to advocate for positive social change in our city and region.

Some of our focus areas will be:

- Further developing our service offer in workforce and organisation development
- Advocacy aligning with the priorities outlined in the Community Shared Statement for the 2016-20 term of the ACT Government, particularly:
 - Housing and homelessness
 - Cost of living issues
 - Investment in community development
 - Building advocacy partnerships that sharpen and strengthen our advocacy
 - Closing gaps and strengthening the service system.
 - Implementation of sector wide workforce development investments under the Industry Strategy
 - Ensuring community organisation insights and priorities are central to development of the procurement agenda for ACT Government
 - Working with our COSS colleagues on national service delivery, income support and regulatory issues
- The Gulanga Program developing a tool and evaluation framework to increase recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers in community organisations.

We look forward to member views and expertise shaping and refining our efforts. Please contact us by phone on 02 6202 7200 or email actcoss@actcoss.org.au. To stay in touch, please sign up to our eNotices newsletter service via our website: www.actcoss.org.au

Staff welcome



Ruth Ragless
Policy Officer

It has been great to welcome Ruth Ragless to work again in ACTCOSS as a Policy Officer. Ruth is filling Eliza Moloney's role for a period of extended leave, and will be focusing on policy work and sector engagement that informs our advocacy on education reform and justice system issues. Ruth has worked previously with ACTCOSS so has picked up the reigns quickly. We have really valued her quiet, confident, 'getting on with it' approach.

Let us know what you think!



Annual Stakeholder Survey 2017

This is your chance to provide feedback on ACTCOSS' performance over 2017 and make suggestions about how we can better serve you and the ACT community. Closes 22.1.18.

Access the survey:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/actcoss-stakeholder-2017

Strategic Plan 2019-23 Survey

In this survey, you have the opportunity to reflect on the past 4 years of our 2014-18 Strategic Plan, and identify emerging issues that should inform our Strategic Plan development into 2019-23. Closes 31.1.18.

Access the survey:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/actcoss-strat-plan

Article footnotes

Exploring the strengths of Canberra's communities, p. 2

1. M Davern & B Giles-Corti, 'How do we create liveable cities? First, we must work out the key ingredients', *The Conversation*, 2015, accessed 30 October 2017, <<https://theconversation.com/how-do-we-create-liveable-cities-first-we-must-work-out-the-key-ingredients-50898>>.
2. *ibid.*
3. B Missingham, 'Asset-based learning and pedagogy of community development', *Community Development*, Vol. 48 (3), 2017, pp. 339-350.
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Update Issue 83, Autumn 2018 edition

People led outcomes

Members are welcome to contribute articles on the theme.

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The ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS) is the peak representative body for people living with low incomes or disadvantage, and not-for-profit community organisations in the Australian Capital Territory.

ACTCOSS acknowledges Canberra has been built on the land of the Ngunnawal people. We pay respects to their Elders and recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. We celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures and ongoing contributions to the ACT community.

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Update is a quarterly journal that provides an opportunity for issues relevant to ACTCOSS' membership to be discussed and for information to be shared. Views expressed are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy views of ACTCOSS.