



Thursday, 22 December 2016

As a great supporter of Neighbourhood Houses and the network of Neighbourhood Houses across the state we wanted to pass on...

## ***SOME VERY EXCITING NEWS!!!***

The Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania Board and staff are very excited to announce we have been successful in our bid to purchase our own property, a new base for NHT and the wider Neighbourhood House Network, at **16B Elmsleigh Road, Derwent Park. The Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania (NHT) Hub (that's the nickname for now!)**

- The 469 m<sup>2</sup> building is very solid besser block with great windows and lots of natural light and thermal efficiency. We can move in with minor modifications and clean up
- The building was previously an Education Department building, and was renovated in 2009. It received a new heating system and data and phone cabling networked throughout the building to a central server room.
- The building will easily offer us:
  - more than enough space for our current team of six staff working to support Houses, with room to expand to accommodate more staff and student placements as the organisation grows
  - a dedicated meeting/training room (7 metres by 7 metres!) that we can use to host regionals, training sessions or meetings by/for the network, or rent it by day to other community sector organisations. If your Board or staff want to get away to somewhere different for a planning day – you'll be able to use this space for free if you want!
  - a kitchen and a lunch room that is big enough to host meetings on its own
  - with some additional grants we'll be able to offer state of the art communication technology for remote access training, meetings, and professional support to members state wide. Basically it means we will be able to webcast and skype Houses around the state into any training being offered
  - it has full disability access.
  - several office spaces to rent to other like-minded community organisations. That rent income will be distributed to Houses for literacy funds forever!
  - space for us to create a community development library/centre of excellence to promote the core business of what you do every day.
  - The building is located on a 1700m<sup>2</sup> block with an outdoor area that we hope to populate with planter boxes, picnic tables (that we purchase/have made by a Neighbourhood House Shed hopefully) to create a green space.



After two years searching for the right place to both meet the needs of the organisation, and provide good rent returns, this building came for government tender in the middle of the NHT conference. But we got it so it was worth the stress!



## Background

In 2009 Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania was given by the Tasmanian Community Fund a \$1.5 million grant over 10 years to fund everyday literacy projects and literacy capacity building through the 35 Neighbourhood Houses within their communities. At our suggestion and with the support of the TCF board these funds were provided as an upfront lump sum to enable us to create a long term literacy future fund beyond the life of the grant. Our Board invested the funds prudently based on the ongoing independent financial advice of Stuart Barry from TasEthical. These investments have now, as we intended, created a substantial Future Fund which will fund community literacy projects in Houses in perpetuity. This is in addition to us providing \$1.5 million to local literacy projects in communities over the initial ten years.

Something the NHT board and staff are justifiably proud of and hope others note is that by investing in ethical managed funds – which means we were investing in companies that do the right thing by their workers, their communities and the environment – our investments over 6 years delivered around 15% per annum which was significantly better than the average stock market return over the period.

We are investing much of the Future Fund in this property which will deliver commercial returns. The rent we were paying to an interstate landlord, and future net rental income from the other community services tenants we can host will now be redirected back into literacy projects across the state in perpetuity. A great win win.

## What happens next?

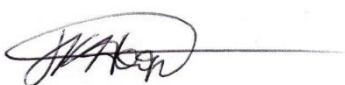
- We moved in on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December and the NHT team will occupy the building for six to nine months as we work out how to most appropriately and efficiently use the space for ourselves and other future tenants.
- Council will ask us to seal the car park so if anyone has any contacts with Civil contractors who might be willing to support our cause, let us know!
- While the building can be occupied now without any fit out we will get some plans drawn up and seek corporate and philanthropic grants to maximise the capacity and value of the space, particularly to host other tenants.
- The official launch of our new home will be on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May in Neighbourhood House Week 2017 of course to which you will of course be invited!

I want to congratulate the NHT Boards both past and present who've dreamed big and made this happen, and of course acknowledge the great support from the Tasmanian Community Fund.

Check out the floor plan and the pictures to get a sense of the new digs.

None of our current contact details – phones, postal address, emails – have changed at all – just our street address

We're really keen to show it off so pop in anytime!



John Hooper  
Executive Officer



Meeting space (above)  
Bathrooms/office/server rooms  
(below)

Kitchen and lunch room

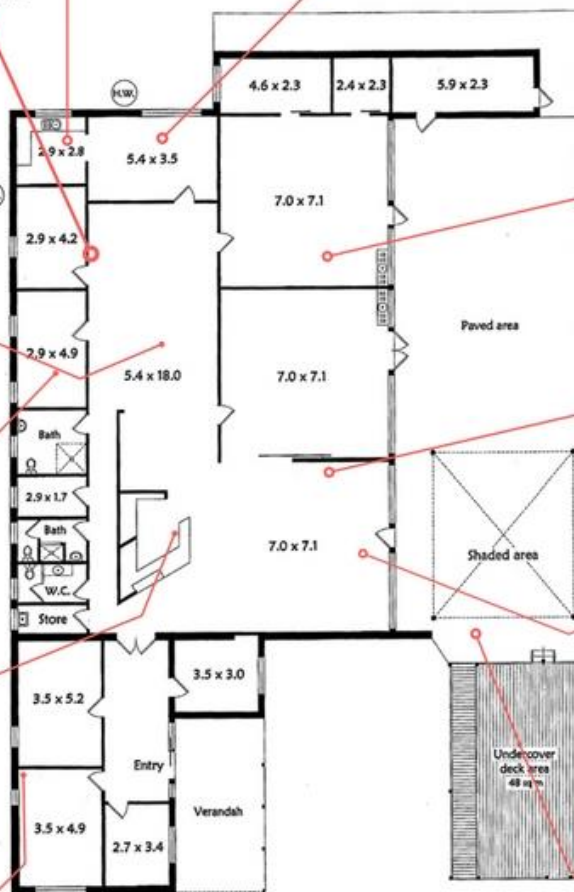
2nd area to rent out (above & below)



NHT Office space



Below is a four office separate space  
we intend to rent out



Car parking area



Above is our training room  
below is the main office space



Entrance (above)  
Front of building & car  
park (left/right)

