

Nillumbik Shire Council

Nillumbik Community Planning Think Tank – community consultation and capacity building

Justification - why do the project?

The aim of this project was to engage and support community members, in partnership with council officers, to develop and pilot a model for sustainable, township-based community consultation for the continuing implementation of the Nillumbik Public Health Plan (MPHP).

Methodology - how we did it

- Community volunteers of Nillumbik's Community Planning Think Tank were supported by council officers to plan aspects and stages of the project, such as hosting forums.
- Community forums were held in each major township of Nillumbik's three geographic areas.
- *The forums used a framework based on the **Four Environments for Health** to seek residents' comments and generate discussion.*
- Collected data was collated and analysed. Forum findings were used to develop local area community action plans that address key themes and issues from the forums.
- Follow-up consultations were conducted to check the accuracy of findings from the forums. Key actions have been included in the MPHP annual Action Plan 2004–2005.

Partners - who was involved?

The project involved council staff in collaboration with volunteers - the Community Planning Think Tank.

Outcomes - what changes have occurred as a result of the project?

Outcomes have included:

- greater numbers of people involved in the MPHP consultation process
- improved processes for disseminating council information and gaining feedback from community
- creation of a model for a sustainable process of community engagement and participation, with a focus on including people from rural and isolated areas of the shire
- development of local area action plans for the three pilot locations.

Where to now?

New directions include:

- local area consultation and local action plans will provide the basis for the Nillumbik's new MPHP, to be developed in 2005
- a joint research project with Swinburne University of Technology, called 'Community Consultation and the Hard to Reach', will investigate better ways to engage traditional non-contributors in council planning processes
- a proposal is being considered for council to develop an over-arching Community Plan in partnership with local communities, based on local area planning.

Contact

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