



LEARNING SITE

SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT



City of
LAUNCESTON

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"We are not limited by what we don't have because what we do have is incredibly valuable."

– Erin Stone, Mowbray resident and former TasTAFE student.



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Leanne Mitchell Consulting

ABOUT THIS SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

In 2024 the City of Launceston commissioned a Social Impact Report on the ABCDE Learning Site program.

Complementing a Learning Site reflection which has been prepared separately by City of Launceston officers, this report aims to explore the kinds of social change that has occurred at five program Learning Sites - Ravenswood, Mowbray, Youngtown, Kings Meadows and Invermay. It focuses on assessing overall importance, effects, and value, with an emphasis on utilising local voices.

As one of the locations in Australia to adopt the principles of asset-based community development (ABCD), Launceston is uniquely positioned to demonstrate how this approach has influenced individuals and groups and contributed to community wellbeing. This review will help inform key decisions, drawing on social purpose, lessons learned, and future opportunities to ensure the program continues to deliver tangible benefits to the municipality.

The core objectives of this social impact project, as requested by the City of Launceston, was to explore whether the ABCDE Learning Sites are making a social difference by examining:

- **ABCD practice:** In what ways does asset-based community development praxis impact or influence individuals and groups?
- **Wellbeing:** How are we adding value to people's lives and enhancing their wellbeing?
- **Connectedness:** What are the benefits of connecting with other people and organisations?
- **Skill development:** Do participants believe their skills have improved, helping with future personal and professional aspirations, and in what ways?
- **Helping others:** Do people feel they have the capacity to play a role in helping others, and in what ways?

This work was completed by Leanne Mitchell Consulting between May and September 2024 and is based on a review of key documents, including the ABCDE Learning Site reports, budgets and statistics as developed by the City of Launceston, a series of 15 interviews undertaken by the consultant with program participants, as well as interviews and additional information gathered by the City of Launceston Community Connector, Liveable Communities.

It should be noted that this project is not a formal research study, but rather employs a combination of analysis and storytelling techniques to draw out key insights and themes. Through these narrative approaches, the report aims to capture the lived experiences and broader social impacts of the ABCDE Learning Sites, providing valuable insights into how the program is fostering social change and how the Council can keep contributing toward the wellbeing of the Launceston community.

*The initial ABCDE Learning Site at Rocherlea (2017) was not included in the impact assessment due to a lack of comparable data.

ABCDE LEARNING SITES IN LAUNCESTON

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) methodology was developed by McKnight and Kretzmann (1988) as a best practice methodology in working with community. It was introduced to Australia by Peter Kenyon from Bank of I.D.E.A.S.

The approach helps communities identify their strengths, build connections, and drive change by focusing on what's strong, not what's wrong. It empowers communities to define what matters most to them and provides the tools for transformation.

Over seven years, the City of Launceston has partnered with Bank of I.D.E.A.S to implement six ABCDE Learning Sites (the 'E' added to represent 'Effort').

These projects worked with wide cross-sections of each local community to identify, connect, and activate local assets to inspire action, foster positive change and shape the future.

Launceston is one of the first local governments in Australia to adopt the ABCDE Learning Sites model, setting a precedent for sustainable community-led development.

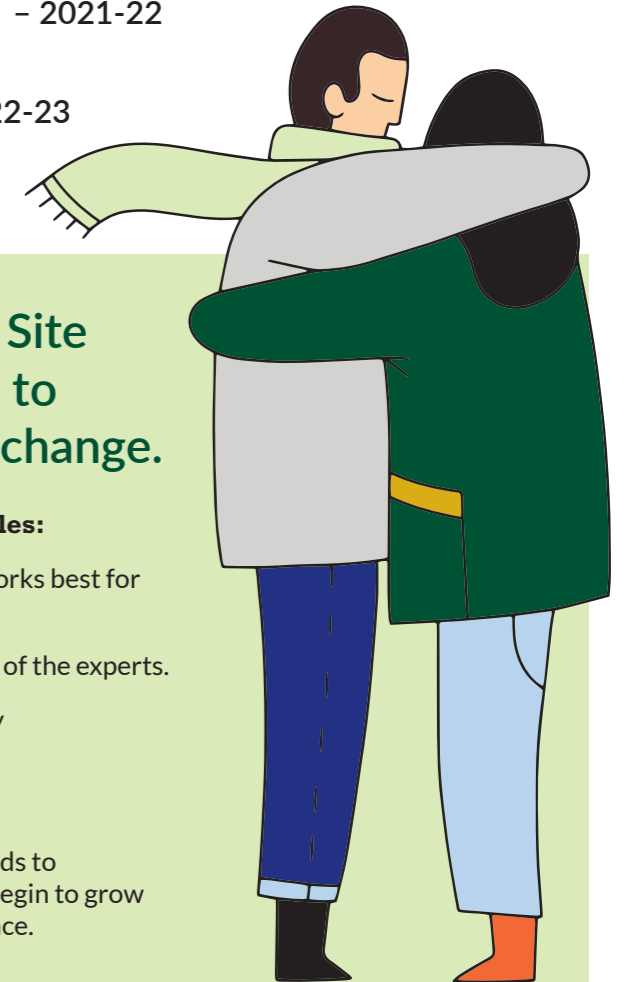
The six City of Launceston Learning Site locations are:

- 📍 **Rocherlea** - 2016-17
- 📍 **Youngtown** - 2020-21
- 📍 **Ravenswood** - 2018
- 📍 **Kings Meadows** - 2021-22
- 📍 **Mowbray** - 2019-20
- 📍 **Invermay** - 2022-23

The core strength of the Learning Site approach is that it enables people to change practice by practicing the change.

In essence the approach operates based on six principles:

1. Every context is different, the challenge is to learn what works best for each unique location.
2. The wisdom of local people always exceeds the knowledge of the experts.
3. Relationship building is viewed as the fundamental activity of community building.
4. The process starts with 'what's strong, not wrong'.
5. Through a cluster of Local Learning sites, the approach tends to proliferate (as distinct from scaling-up) as local examples begin to grow in confidence and share their stories and learning experience.
6. Peer to peer learning is actively encouraged.



HOW LEARNING SITES WORK

What is Learning Site?

At the City of Launceston an ABCDE Learning Site enables a community to identify their assets, build connections, and create change in the heart of the community with a focus on 'what's strong, not what's wrong.'

Each Learning Site is a partnership between the City of Launceston as the Community Connector, the Bank of I.D.E.A.S as the creators of the model and local Community Builders, who are committed to make positive change and directly shape their community's future.

What happens at a Launceston Learning Site?

The development of a Learning Site is often a 12 to 18 month process in a community. The City of Launceston employs a place-based Community Connector who guides a group of identified Builders through a community-led, flexible process based on the Bank of I.D.E.A.S' methodology.

The Community Connector identifies local individuals, businesses, schools, groups and organisations and forms connections.

From there, a team of Community Builders meet regularly throughout the process and are supported as they develop their vision and plans. The team shares what they care about in their community and build connections with others through activities and social interactions.

A community's involvement in an ABCDE Learning Site is determined by the community itself - it's not a one size fits all approach.

The expectation is that asset based community work will be sustained throughout a Learning Site by the very fact of exposing a community to the program, aided by plans put in place by Council's Community Connector and the Community Builders once a project ends.

This social impact study aims to explore what ongoing impacts, if any, have been achieved in the Launceston communities that hosted Learning Sites.



THE LEARNING SITES A PROGRAM SNAPSHOT²

	All Sites	Ravenswood	Mowbray	Youngtown	Kings Meadows	Invermay
Years	2018-2023	2018	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Engagement	31	Community Workshops 3 Asset mapping 1	Community Workshops 8 Builder time 3 Big ideas 1 Asset mapping 1	Community Workshop 1 Builder time 1 Big ideas 1 Asset mapping 1	Community Workshop 1 Builder time 1 Big ideas 1	Community Workshop 1 Builder time 6
Number of Projects	59	7	10	18	12	12
Number of Program Participants	7,728	730	1,593	1,690	1,064 (Plus 12,000 residents engaged through the bin sicker project)	2651
Total contribution by Council <small>Rounded and excluding wages</small>	\$233,500	\$32,000	\$41,500	\$40,000	\$51,000	\$69,000

²Data used in this section was collected through public and in-house reports developed by the City of Launceston. Please note that due to limited comparable information and community contacts, the first ABCDE Learning Site at Rocherlea was not included in the review.

ARE WE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

City of Launceston asked: Are we making a social difference through the ABCDE Learning Sites?

Through the delivery of approximately 60 projects over five years with participation by more than 7,500 community members, it can be observed that the asset-based approach has made a positive contribution in building pride, encouraging participation and fostering connections.

Participants also valued the opportunities that projects provided them to build skills. They recognised impacts on confidence and looked forward to the longer-term impacts of new collaborations.

An analysis of the six Learning Site summary reports and 15 stakeholder interviews undertaken by the consultant between 21 May and 6 June 2024 identified 14 impact themes which are outlined in the word cloud below. The remainder of this report summarises impacts according to the City of Launceston's inquiry guidelines and finishes with 11 case studies from across sites that highlight community voice.

What the community values:

- ✓ Positive approach
- ✓ Asset-mapping activities
- ✓ Valuing the local community
- ✓ Place-based Community Connector
- ✓ Getting to know neighbours
- ✓ Opportunities to collaborate
- ✓ Stronger connections with the council
- ✓ Skills building opportunities
- ✓ Hope for the future



IMPACTS SUMMARY

The City of Launceston asked: Are we making a social difference through the ABCDE Learning Sites?

ABCD practice:

By access to asset-based community development theory and practice, do participants change their view to focus on what's strong? To what extent?

"A lot of people who do community development focus on what is missing and on the gaps. Now I have changed my thought processes to focus on what is good and what the assets are. Then things just happen."
- Jane Chapman, TasTAFE

- ✓ The ABCD methodology was highly valued for its positive approach, particularly in locations that due to ongoing disadvantage have become accustomed to focusing on negatives.
- ✓ Participants recognised and appreciated the value of talking to community and finding out what mattered to them.
- ✓ The initial workshops, facilitation and structure brought community together and were positive experiences.
- ✓ Small seed funding that was sometimes available through the council was valued.
- ✓ Practice of identifying assets was positive and encouraging for people and organisations who were recognised.

Wellbeing:

How are we adding value to people's lives and enhancing their wellbeing?

"It's not just about growing vegetables. It's about growing connections, confidence, and a new life in a new place."
- John Ali, Migrant Resource Centre

- ✓ Many projects sought to involve marginalised and harder to reach community members, offering activities that interested them and/or met their individual needs.
- ✓ Many participants recognised and valued how projects improved wellbeing. They noted how activities brought people back into their communities, helped them keep physically and mentally active, fostered new connections and built confidence.
- ✓ Both the process of participating as an organiser as well as a program recipient were valued as contributors to wellbeing.

Connectedness:

What are the benefits of connecting with other people and organisations?

"As one person you can't do everything, but you find others and it's amazing what you can get done. Something like this brings people together to fulfill their dreams."

- Rodney Spinks, Vinnies

Skill development:

How do participants believe their skills have improved, which may help them with future personal and professional aspirations?

"I can look back at my study - what it got me to and where I am now with further career and development. These days most of what I do goes back to the community I am in."

- Erin Stone, Mowbray resident and former TasTAFE student

Helping others:

Do people feel they have capacity to play a role in helping others and in what ways?

"Yes, there are challenges, barriers and difficulties here, but people look after each other ... this is a very connected community with lots of great people willing to help each other."

- Nettie Burr, Former Manager Starting Point Neighbourhood House, Ravenswood

Other observed impacts to note:

Identity: Many interviewees commented on how the program positively influenced identity and pride in their local communities, combatting generations of discrimination.

"There was a change in how people saw the place where they lived. It drove confidence in the way that local people thought about the location."

- Kim Schneiders, Interweave Arts

Positivity about the future: All interviewees noted positive impacts and expected lasting legacies.

"The project has given people confidence. To my knowledge, the centre had not previously been used for any exhibition for the Launceston community and then this opened up all kinds of things."

- Jenny Phillips, The Manor resident

Sustainability: While some programs were "one-off" and others ongoing, many participants recognised the embedded skills and longer-term benefits to their communities

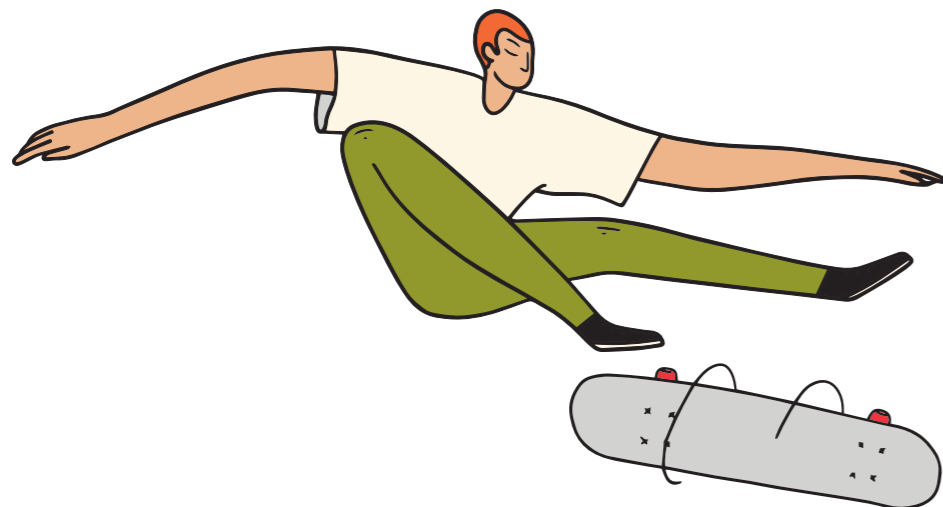
"It is good that the ABCDE program runs for a limited time because now I have the connections, and I can do it."

- Jeff McClintock, University of Tasmania

- ✓ Participants got to know each other. The process built and renewed connections that people had with others in their local community.
- ✓ Various activities offered opportunities for refugee and asylum seeker communities and other community members to get to know each other. This overcame fears, shyness and misconceptions.
- ✓ The role of the ABCDE connector, in being community based and able to bring people together, was highly valued. Many commented favourably on the officer's way of working and personal traits.
- ✓ Many valued the closer connection established with the council.

- ✓ The personal growth opportunities offered were highly valued.
- ✓ Many participants recognised the value of exchanging knowledge and the opportunities offered to learn - from vocational skills to gardening, art and sports skills.
- ✓ Opportunities for intergenerational connection and learning were valued.
- ✓ Student videos taught skills and built confidence, removed hierarchies and provided ways for children to express their feelings about their local area.
- ✓ Numerous internships - with Council and community organisations as well as volunteering opportunities helped build job and life skills across the community.

- ✓ Very high levels of satisfaction expressed regarding the ability to identify needs and build activities and programs that helped the wider community.
- ✓ Many locally embedded programs encouraged and opened opportunities for connections between diverse communities. People who might not have normally connected had the opportunity to come together on their own terms.
- ✓ Several activities recognised and met chronic community needs - including homelessness, food insecurity and social isolation.
- ✓ Volunteering opportunities provided a way for community members to give back.



WHY DID SOME PROJECTS END EARLY?

The ABCDE Learning Site concept invites community to suggest project ideas and offers a limited amount of assistance to trial and pursue these ideas. While it was not within the scope of the Social Impact Report to understand how and why projects failed to continue, a small selection of projects were investigated to catch a glimpse into what happened and why.

This will assist future program planning and delivery.

“Sometimes what you think a project will be is not what it turns out to be. It might not reach the outcome you planned, but nothing was lost through the process and there may be connections and perspectives gained.”

– Helene Boyer, Invermay Resident

1 Launceston Tool Library

The idea: A library enables a sharing economy by providing short-term access to a selection of tools. After 21 months there were only a few memberships.

Learning: Organisers said Launceston wasn't ready for a tool library. They suggested it might be better suited to big cities, like Melbourne and Sydney with high rise living where they don't need tools often.

3 Women's Workshop

The idea: a community space where women can get together to create, make, build, fix and learn. Fostering connection and belonging at any stage of life.

Learning: Three workshops were run with the South Launceston Football Club, but there was not enough community assistance and the person initiating the project was unable to invest the time needed to keep it running.

2 Grief and loss reflection space

The idea: Working with City of Launceston, establish a compassionate care and wellbeing centre in the Carr Villa Cemetery.

Learning: Despite considerable effort to make connections, financial resourcing was a challenge and the project needed someone skilled and dedicated to make it work. It was not suited to be a volunteer project.

4 Self Help Workshop

The idea: Staff and participants from Self Help Workshop (for people with disabilities) attended ABCDE activities to build collaboration with local organisations.

Learning: COVID hindered activities. While Self Help Workshop was very pleased to be recognised by their community as an asset, they found unstructured community meetings difficult to navigate and ultimately did not initiate or participate further.

REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Program plans

In 2024, through a series of meetings and workshops with key internal and external stakeholders, the City of Launceston evaluated and then agreed on five big steps to strengthen and progress the next phase of the ABCDE Learning Sites model. These were:

1. Progress to an independent self-governing programming model. Key changes include program name, resources and facilitation support.
2. Rename the ABCDE Learning Site to LAUNNIE CONNECTING COMMUNITY which resonates with the community.
3. Maintain a physical site in a suburb two years to enable authentic relationship building, with the option to incorporate thematic and demographic focus areas.
4. Strengthen the Community Continuity Plan with a focus on Community Builders' development beyond the site duration, utilising findings from the Social Impact Report.
5. Stronger project collaboration between Council teams to embed the asset-based community development approach more widely across the organisation.

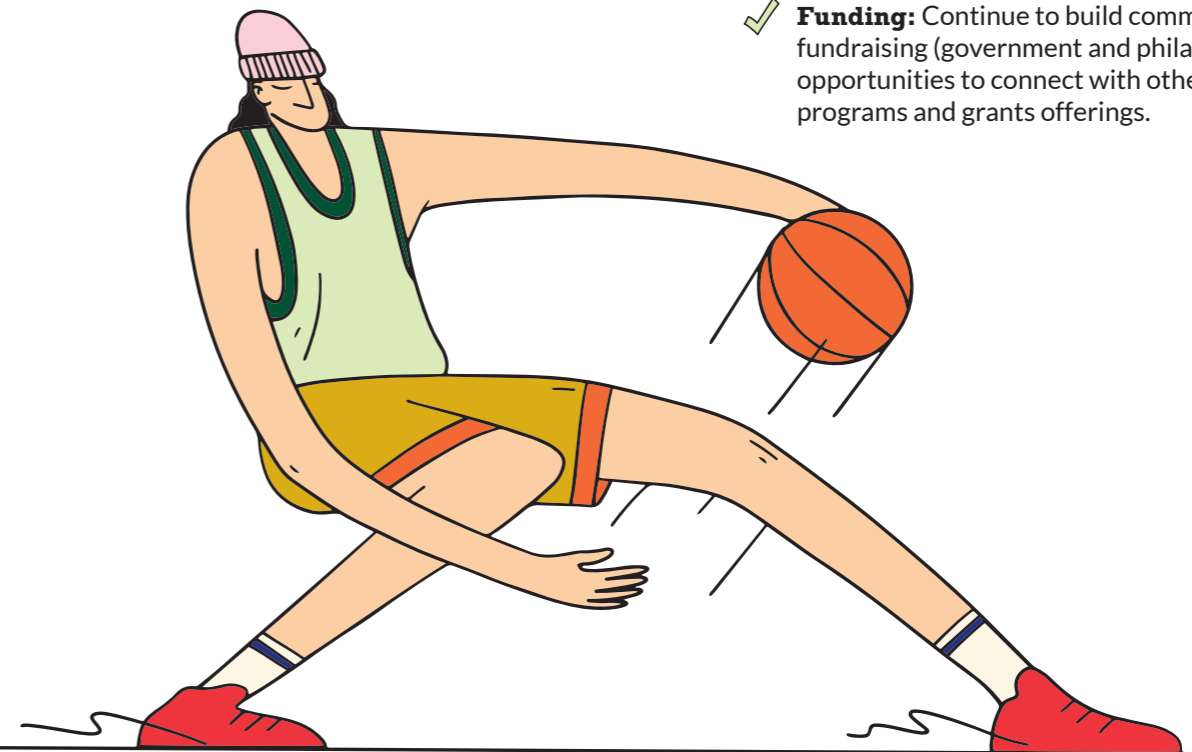
Reflections and next steps

Building on what the community values

- ✓ **Workshops:** The asset-based approach works. Initial workshops are collaborative, positive and impactful - community would like to see that continue.
- ✓ **Community connector:** Role and current incumbent is highly valued - being locally based, accessible, active and well connected contributes to program success. Consider future proofing of role and undertake succession planning to ensure long-term viability.
- ✓ **Council involvement:** A bottom-up, community led strengths-based approach with council involvement is highly valued and is seeing results. Keep the balance.

Strengthening program delivery

- ✓ **Connections:** Enable connections between Learning Sites - not only to deliver activities but to build skills and knowledge and share program learnings.
- ✓ **Program portal and training:** Establish suite of simple tools and training (online) that can be accessed by community when needed to plan and deliver successful programs.
- ✓ **Funding:** Continue to build community skills in fundraising (government and philanthropic), opening opportunities to connect with other council run programs and grants offerings.





COMMUNITY STORIES

Art builds community pride

When a successful community art project, run over a decade before, was identified as an asset at an ABCDE Learning Site workshop, the Mowbray community jumped at the idea of a revival. The Love Mowbray project began as an effort to connect a community long overlooked, turning public spaces into vibrant displays of local pride and togetherness.

The community reimagined the project through a budget-friendly sticker paste up, centred around a local bus shelter. The project asked local people what Mowbray meant to them and what it was like to live there.

"We included students and asked people locally to be gatherers - to get stories and quotes - and then another artist and I made the stickers."

"People loved seeing their work up ... It made art so accessible and very empowering."

"Often people are just wondering around looking at their phones, but this created new engagements."

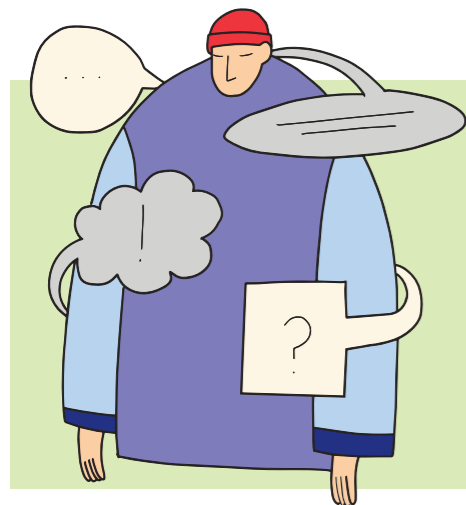
"The quotes from people who live there were very respectful and that had a lot of power."

- Kim Schneiders, Interweave Arts



"There was a change in how people saw the place where they lived. It drove confidence in the way that local people thought about the location."

- Edwina Dick, New Horizons, Tasmania 2015-2023



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Highlighted the positive - what the community valued.
- ✓ Built community pride.
- ✓ Challenged negative perceptions.
- ✓ Instilled interest and togetherness.
- ✓ Renewed and reimagined an identified community asset.

History links people and place

Community initiated history projects, supported through the ABCDE project, are capturing the lives and stories of everyday people, sparking interest and a new sense of pride in some of Launceston's more forgotten corners.

Helene Boyer, who had watched her neighbourhood in Invermay transform significantly over two decades, brought an idea to collect a few stories and photos to her community's ABCDE kick-off workshop. The idea sparked local interest. A book is now in production,

as well as a Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery exhibition and community events planned.

Across town a love of history and a life spent around the Launceston region made five-time author Tony McCormack the right local resident to document the histories of the Youngtown and Kings Meadows communities. He attended an early ABCDE workshop where the idea of exploring local history was born.

"Swampie was a derogative term used towards the people living in the area that used to be called Inveresk and is now part of Invermay. The term now holds a sense of local pride."

"Every time I tell a little story about our history people are entranced. I believe producing an entertaining history of the place you live helps build a sense of who you are and where you live - and the project can act as a catalyst for individuals to do more."

- Helene Boyer, Invermay Resident



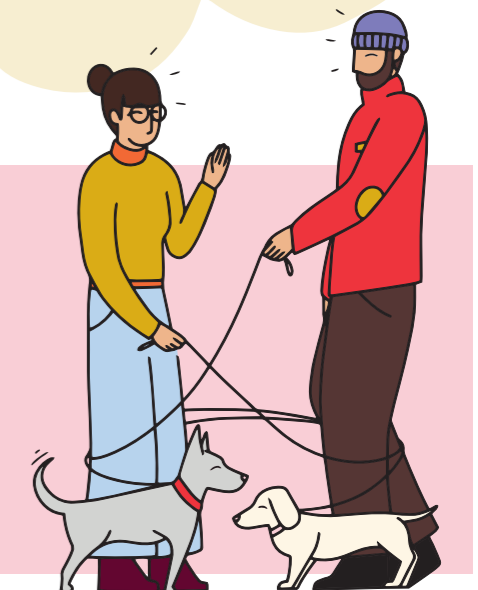
"There were things going on in our community before the ABCDE project, but this work has helped highlight what is being done and increased what is being delivered."

"Knowing local history connects people in the place they live, and it lifts community spirit. If you know where you came from then you can see where you are at. If you know where you are at you can progress forward."

- Tony McCormack, Youngtown Author

Community Impacts:

- ✓ Strengthened connections between residents.
- ✓ Grew local knowledge and pride.
- ✓ Tapped into community interest in local history.
- ✓ Captured stories of exceptional people and places that had been lost.
- ✓ Invited community members to identify what was important to them.



Free soccer connects a community

When Eduardo Batalha attended an ABCDE community mapping workshop in Youngtown, he didn't expect that he'd end up running the activity he suggested - a local soccer program.

Eduardo and his family are from Brazil, and they moved to Launceston seven years ago. He suggested soccer at that workshop because it was something he loved and something he wanted to start doing with his son. But in the end the experience gave him a lot more.

"I played soccer - that was my preferred group activity, and my son was just getting into sports. I saw this as a way for me to spend some time with him and connect with people in the community."

"At first the idea was to have my family involved but then I was very happy to see kids who had divorced parents or no parents at all come and do this activity."

"I have heard people say the only role model that some of these children had outside of their daily routine was me. It was something I didn't expect from it, but it was the most rewarding."

"It was great to hear that for some people - parents and kids - that this was the only physical activity they were doing. And it was great to see some mothers becoming more confident to play."

"Sarah was honest and open about everything. She said the idea was to let me run this. They came in to help when we really needed it, but the project is very much focused on community taking action."

- Eduardo Batalha, Youngtown



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Promoted health and exercise.
- ✓ Offered sport for free and made it available to everyone.
- ✓ Encouraged parents and children to connect.
- ✓ Built individual and team confidence.
- ✓ Established community connections.
- ✓ The focus on assets was positive.

Gumboot Gala builds connections and pride

An idea to combat loneliness and increase food security on a university campus grew into one of Launceston's most unusual and loved events of 2023. The University of Tasmania's Community Garden Coordinator, Jeff McClintock wanted to attract more students to his project. He suggested the 'Gumboot Gala' at an ABCDE Learning Site workshop.

Jeff's vision was an event that fitted with its location. His concept drew on the Invermay area being built on a swamp and a history of people living in the area being called 'Swampies', originally a derogatory term that had evolved locally into a badge of pride. The event would bring many parts of the campus, including the community garden, together.

"I thought that one thing I could offer was starting a new event from scratch. I didn't want to be heavily involved. I wanted other people to work with me. When I proposed Gumboot Gala there were about half a dozen people interested."

"It was an eclectic group. There was a lady called Lois who is older and lives locally. She was a writer and amateur historian, bringing a lot of local knowledge."

"Logan who operated the trams really loved being part of this. He did a risk management plan to run the tram and organised a sausage sizzle."

"The Interweave people were the heart of it. I instinctively knew that they were the key to the success. We needed the vibrancy colour and craziness that they bring to anything that they do."

"The community groups already existed but we wouldn't have come together in the way we did through the ABCDE program. That helped make connections."

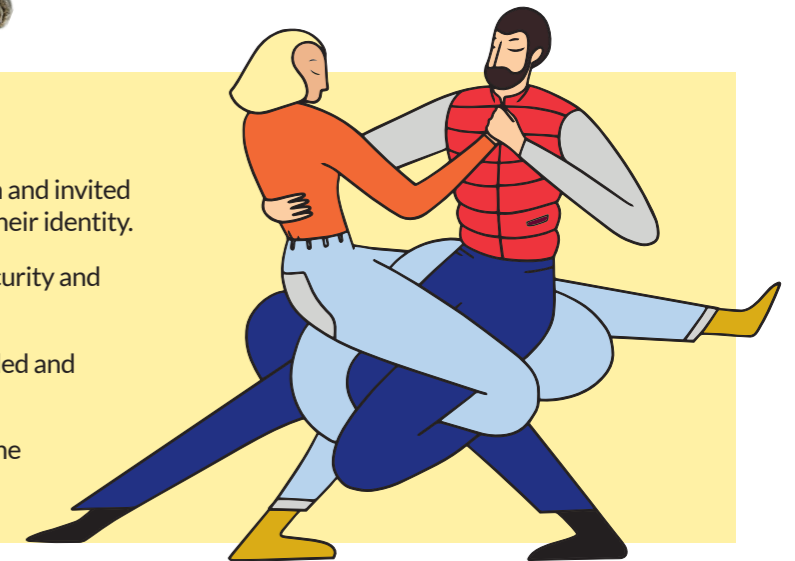
"In terms of sustainability it is good that the ABCDE program runs for a limited time because now I have the connections, and I can do it."

- Jeff McClintock, University Of Tasmania



Community Impacts:

- ✓ A quirky event idea captured local imagination and invited residents to connect, celebrate and embrace their identity.
- ✓ Program met wider aims to address food insecurity and loneliness in the community.
- ✓ Established connections are now well embedded and bring ongoing community benefits.
- ✓ ABCDE focus on assets and what works was the program's absolute strength.



Kings Meadows:

Multi-stakeholder efforts address homelessness

With homelessness increasing in Kings Meadows, and few places for people to turn to for support, Rodney Spinks had one small idea on his mind when he came across the ABCDE program - finding ways to get local people who were experiencing homelessness a warm shower.

The closure of an existing building and a job change saw Rodney leading a new collaboration between the City of Launceston and the St Vincent De Paul Society (Vinnies) offering daily showers, meals and laundry services to meet growing local needs.



"The wait for housing is three to four years. We can't solve all those problems, but we can give people some dignity and a little bit of respect."

"We came up with the idea of doing a shower service... It was working for about a month before the YMCA lost funding and closed down."

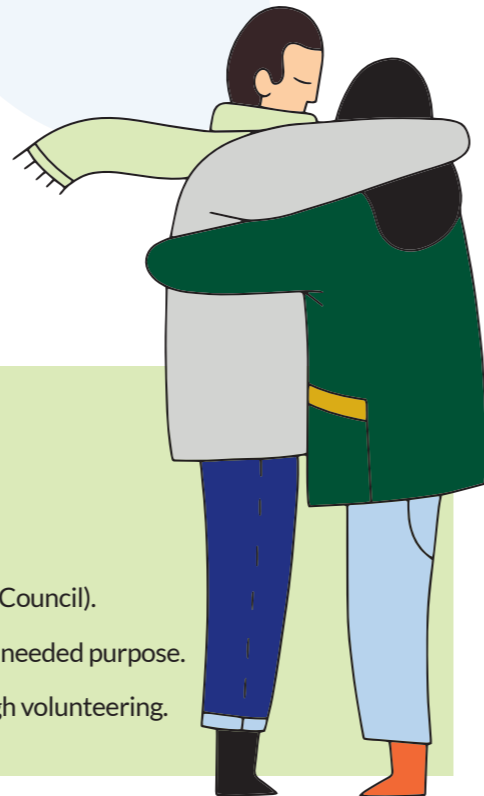
"Council said if they could get a funder involved, they'd keep it going... The service closed on Friday and reopened as Vinnie's on Monday."

"I knew it was possible because all the research done through the ABCDE program said that this was a valuable asset to the community. It was really helpful focusing on what the community values."

"I think the real value of this project has been the connectivity. The way it brought people together to get things started and get things done."

"Quite often big things grow from little things. It's the little conversations. An introduction to one person can lead to a conversation with another and then all of a sudden you get something going."

- Rodney Spinks, Vinnies



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Established much needed assistance for at risk communities.
- ✓ Facilitated community connections.
- ✓ Broke silos and found the right people to get a job done (including inside Council).
- ✓ The process articulated what the community valued and provided much needed purpose.
- ✓ Opened opportunities to give back to the community - especially through volunteering.

Ravenswood:

Sign taps into the spirit of Ravenswood

A Hollywood-style sign in one of Tasmania's most disadvantaged locations has brought a community together, building local identity and raising pride.

that has had huge impact. Nine local organisations, including a child and family centre, a school, a church and a community sports group, helped create the large-scale letters. Six years on the sign remains a valued landmark, welcoming people to Ravenswood.

It was a simple suggestion at an ABCDE Community Building workshop, by local resident, Sharon Leonard,

"Ravenswood has been stigmatised for many a year and people were just sick of those stereotypes."

"Yes, there are challenges, barriers and difficulties here, but people look after each other. On a whole this is a very connected community with lots of great people willing to help each other."

In six years, we have only replaced one letter after a car accidentally hit it, but the sign has not been vandalised. I think that's about community pride and having so many people involved."

"Being proud about being in the community and where we are is so important. We say we live in Ravenswood it's a great place to be."

"Being a Neighbourhood House, we work on that (strengths-based) principle as part of our ethos. Building and strengthening community is what we do, but through the ABCDE program it was great to see others valuing that as well and not getting caught up on the negatives."

"We have also learned about what good consultation is and it has got better as a result. We have a much closer connection with council as a result."

- Nettie Burr, Former Manager Starting Point Neighbourhood House



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Good, deep, genuine consultation - finding out what the community really wanted - saw great results.
- ✓ A simple idea - a tangible asset celebrating community and place highlighted the intangible aspects of the community's spirit, that locals valued but often others did not see.
- ✓ Opened new opportunities for community collaboration.
- ✓ Drew on the community's strengths and re-established local pride.
- ✓ Program success strengthened connection with the Council

Growing a new life in Launnie

A connection made through the ABCDE program has seen a Council-owned community garden in Invermay become an invaluable location for migrant communities who are making Launceston their home. The existing garden was identified through the ABCDE Program as a community asset. This led to a collaboration with the local Welcome

Cultural Services that would engage and support new residents as they transitioned into life in Tasmania.

John Ali, who oversees the Heritage Forest Community Garden knows the challenges of settling into a new community. He moved with his family to Tasmania from Sudan more than 20 years ago.

"The garden ticks many boxes. It ticks the box of being self-sustainable - you are growing your own food and saving money. It also ticks the box of social cohesion. People mix. When you come here on the evening or weekends there are many people around, all from many places, including local Australians."

"It also ticks the box for people whose background is farming. It becomes a hobby for them. Instead of watching TV people feel happy here. Especially older people. It is great for their mental health and feeling that they can do what they used to do back at home."

"The seasons here are different from the places people come from, so they learn about gardening in Tasmania's climate. Some people are growing things you can't normally buy here, so other gardeners are learning about new produce too."

"It's not just about growing vegetables. It's about growing connections, confidence, and a new life in a new place."

"When you're working towards a common goal in a shared space like this, it brings people together."

- John Ali, Welcome Cultural Services



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Combats food insecurity experienced by newly arrived communities.
- ✓ Promotes connections belonging and social cohesion.
- ✓ A healthy activity that maintains mental health.
- ✓ Offers something to do and a sense of purpose.
- ✓ Provides opportunity to exchange knowledge and learning.
- ✓ Builds knowledge and skills.
- ✓ Demonstrates how a Council asset can be adapted to benefit community.



Old stomping grounds, new hopes

Since 1909, the Invermay Bowls and Community Club has been an important part of its local community's fabric, and now with 115-year celebrations ahead, Club Secretary, Vicki Quail says there is even more to celebrate.

club has always helped its community, providing low-cost spaces, hosting activities and offering much needed social connections, an experience hosting the ABCDE program for a year, has brought new ideas about the club's contributions to the community, its growth and expansion.

Vicki, who has been volunteer secretary, licensee and bar manager for more than 20 years says that while the

"We are an eclectic community. We have always been classed as a blue-collar club, but you have more affluent people coming now."

"We are not only a meeting place. A lot of people here are solo, and this is a place that opens up things for them. It helps people in many ways."

"When I heard about the ABCDE program and read about it, I thought maybe we can start offering meals. Cheap, economical straight into containers. Cut out the middleman."

"The volunteers come in and cook the meals. Keep the costs down. The club makes very little money - it brings people into the club and they get out."

"I think this has really addressed loneliness. One chap who lives with his mother comes and buys six or seven meals so that he has food. We have another who will just come here to have a feed and talk to people. Otherwise, he is in a unit all day."

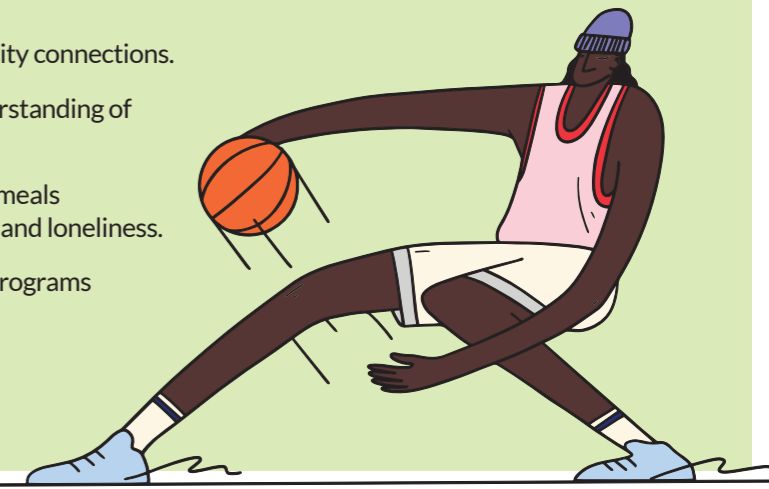
"In communities like ours you can hear a lot of negativity. This work has guided me in thinking about how to be positive. That was something I had thought of before, but this partnership has helped put it into action."

- Vicki Quail, Invermay Bowls Club



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Established new organisational and community connections.
- ✓ Brought in diverse voices and a greater understanding of what the club could do for the community.
- ✓ Inspired new community support initiative - meals program addressing growing food insecurity and loneliness.
- ✓ Experience has rejuvenated the club - new programs and expansion plans.
- ✓ ABCDE sets standards for a positive approach - a different way of doing things.



Inviting the community into The Manor

Inspired by a meeting he attended about the ABCDE program in the neighbouring suburb of Youngtown, Steve Coull and fellow residents at the Manor Retirement Village developed an idea to host an exhibition of old photos from their community of Kings Meadows.

A call to the photographic society of Launceston and some local publicity got word out for old snaps and a small

grant from the Council helped install a picture rail in their activity room. The retirement village's first exhibition, called It's About Time was up and running. By May 2022, the venue had hosted three shows and had a significant impact on the lives of Manor Village residents.



"Residents came to the exhibition opening and one of those people who lived here was inspired. She had always loved embroidery and was running a class. She wanted an exhibition to show examples of lace work and embroidery and bring pieces that ladies in the village had tucked away in their rooms."

"The exhibitions put a spotlight on the village. Because no one had ever mounted an exhibition ever. People in Launceston got to know about The Manor. That led to people coming and enquiring about the village and more knowledge about life here."

"The exhibition opened others up to thinking about us as more than old people. It revitalised people and gave a good lease of life and good health."

– Steve Coull, Manor Retirement Village Resident

"The project has given people confidence. To my knowledge, the centre had not previously been used for any exhibition for the Launceston community and then this opened up all kinds of things."

– Jenny Phillips, The Manor Retirement Village Resident



Community Impacts:

- ✓ Connected the retirement village with the wider community – established better understanding and interest in the place and people.
- ✓ Enabled social contacts - the art brought back memories and inspired conversations.
- ✓ The interaction gave residents new interests and confidence when previously some had felt forgotten.
- ✓ Seed grant helped invigorate the multi-purpose space for ongoing resident use.

Valuing Launnie through younger eyes

A set of five commissioned videos, conceptualised and produced by local young people tell neighbourhood stories and explore the hidden strengths of ABCDE Learning Sites in Ravenswood, Mowbray, Youngtown, Kings Meadows, and Invermay.

The videos may seem simple and fun on the surface – and they are – but they also demonstrate deeper connections across the community, bringing in the voices and perspectives of young people, who are often

hard to reach or overlooked in traditional community development activities.

The video is the outcome, but it's the hands-on learning process that makes the real impact says film maker, David Adams who with community builder Evi Van der Niet established pop up studios at primary and secondary schools across the Launceston Learning Sites and invited young people to be actively involved in the design and production process.

"It's important to get children involved because they often don't have the chance to be. This work helps articulate what they want and what things mean to them. Then they can become more aware of the things around them and participate in their community and make the world a better place."

– David Adams, Action Crew



"It's all about what is strong in a community, bringing hidden stories to light. People get to see the assets of their own community in ways they might not have before."

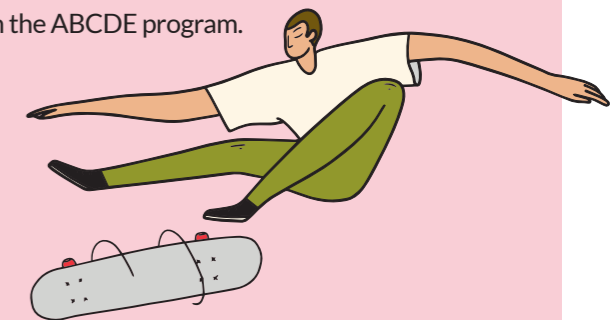
"Some of the children already feel the stigma of growing up in the place they do. They want to share that this is who we are."

"A lot of time young people are seen as the problems, but we feel like they are the ones that we have to believe in and acknowledge. They have agency and a voice."

– Evi Van Der Niet, Acton Crew

Community Impacts:

- ✓ Video projects actively sought participation by young people in the ABCDE program.
- ✓ Explored and recorded what they value and see as assets.
- ✓ Built young people's skills, engagement and agency.
- ✓ Built pride and established local connections.
- ✓ Confronted and challenged stigma.
- ✓ Increased confidence in being valued community members.
- ✓ Opened opportunities for community and Intergenerational connection within the local community.



All locations:

Building job-ready skills

ABCDE Learning Site connections with schools and TasTAFE are opening new learning and job opportunities for local students, a number of whom have found it hard to thrive in mainstream learning environments.

Early and ongoing collaborations with the Launceston Big Picture School and TasTAFE have resulted in hundreds

of students participating in ABCDE Learning Site launch workshops and joining to deliver community-led programs.

Throughout the program a selection of students engaged more deeply, taking on internship opportunities linked to higher qualifications, including community services and hospitality.

"These experiences have helped students develop vital communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, making them more confident and connected within their community."

- Mel Van Aspen, The Big Picture School

"People from different cultures, abilities, art projects, growing food, meeting places developed - the City of Launnie are amazing and progressive as far as this goes. They are being so supportive."

- Jane Chapman, TasTAFE

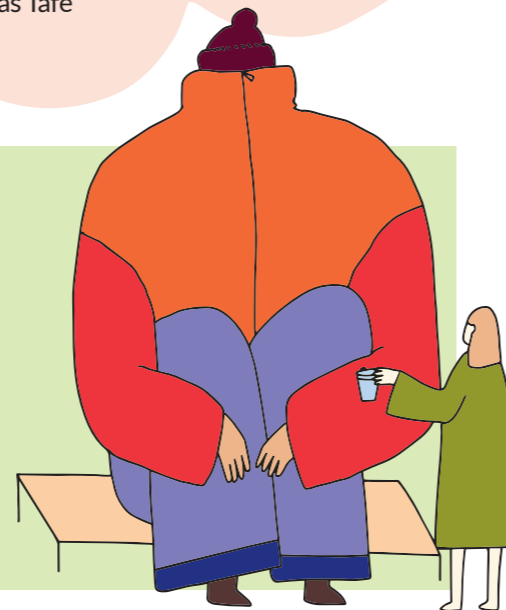


"I can look back at my study - what it got me to and where I am now with further career and development. These days most of what I do goes back to the community I am in."

- Erin Stone, Mowbray Resident And Former Tas Tafe Student

"A lot of people who do community development focus on what is missing and on the gaps. Now I have changed my thought processes to focus on what is good and what the assets are. Then things just happen."

- Jane Chapman, Tas Tafe



Community Impacts:

- ✓ ABCDE approach has engaged and empowered students to play an active role in shaping their local environment.
- ✓ Skill building and cross community connections are bringing value to communities by addressing a generational lack of education.
- ✓ City of Launceston should be proud of the breadth of programs initiated
- ✓ Skill building and experience gained through programs is going directly back into communities.

ABOUT THE REPORT AUTHOR

This Social Impact Report was developed on Bunurong and Lutruwita land for the City of Launceston by Leanne Mitchell.

Leanne Mitchell worked in local government for 15 years. She is a writer, researcher and anthropologist convinced that we can all do better to make the world a fairer place.

Her work and study over the last two decades - in local and state government, at the United Nations and in the not-for-profit sector - has allowed her to rethink policy and deliver community development and resilience initiatives that improve people's lives, enhance social inclusion and maintain human rights.

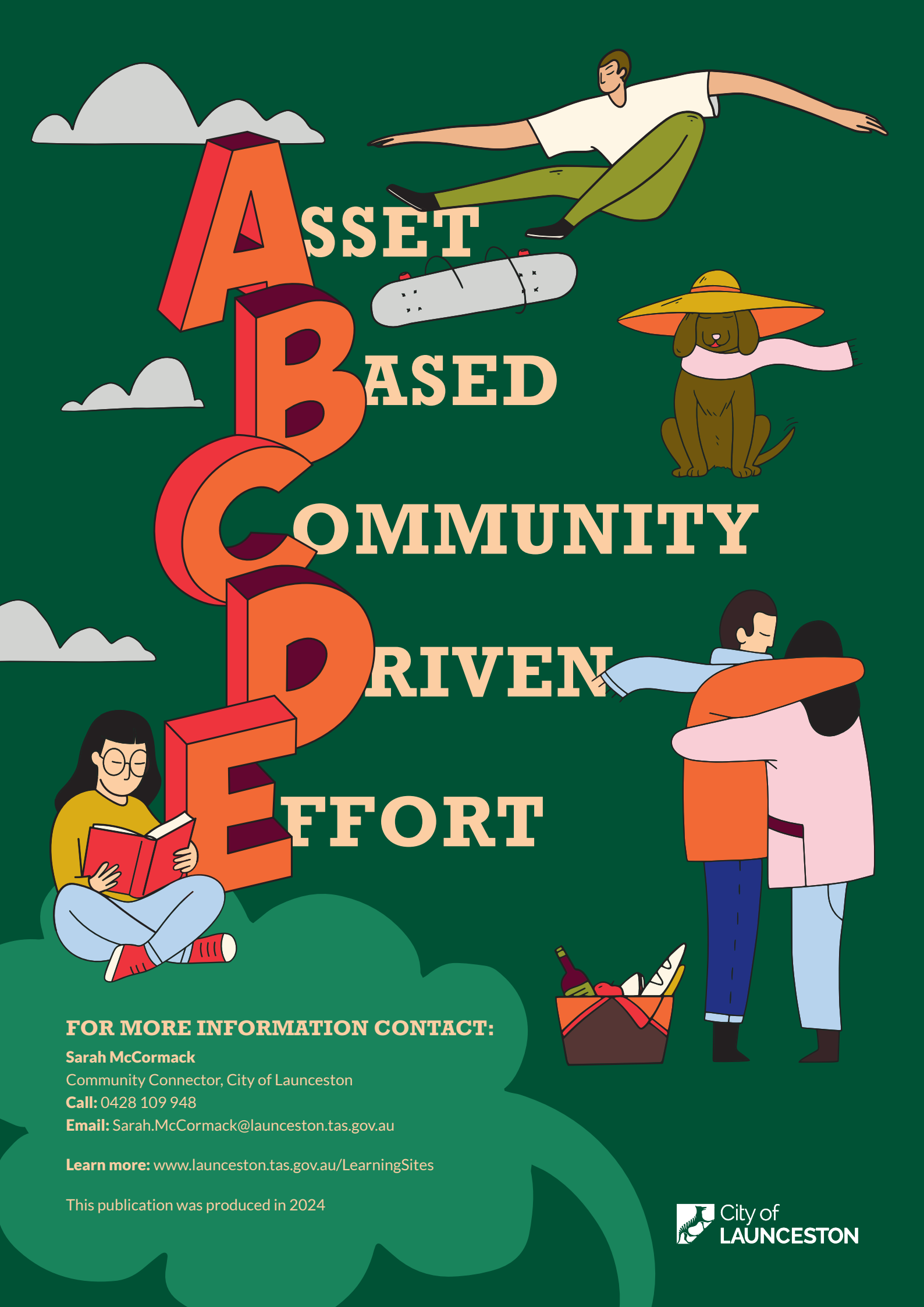
Working in the Victorian local government sector for 15 years, advising CEOs and Mayors and leading community development activities, Leanne has established a strong understanding of the situation, opportunities and challenges faced by Australian councils and the communities they support. She strongly believes in the power of community and is firmly committed to building capacity and profile in the sector.

Leanne is also the 2019 Jack Brockhoff Foundation Churchill Fellow, whose publication, *Everybody's Business: what local government can do to end homelessness* has been used across Australia and internationally to educate and guide the sector in homelessness response.



For more information, visit www.ltmitchell.com.au

In appreciation of their rich history and cultural heritage, we recognise Tasmanian Aboriginal people as custodians of the land on which the City of Launceston sits. We honour the resilience of Palawa people of Lutruwita, who have endured the challenges of invasion and dispossession while steadfastly preserving their heritage, identity, culture and rights. In the spirit of mutual respect and collaboration, it is our sincere belief that working together with the Aboriginal community, who represent the world's most ancient continuous culture, offers us invaluable opportunities to learn and grow. Our deepest respects are extended to both past and present Elders, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people residing in and around Launceston.



ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DRIVEN EFFORT

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