

BRAIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Conclusions of the working group

1. Introduction

At a public meeting held on 17 May 2018 two motions were carried unanimously, namely:

Motion 1

The meeting agrees in principle to the formation of a Braidwood Community Association (name to be determined).

Motion 2

A working group be established to further investigate ways to achieve the formation of a Braidwood Community Association, including the aims, structure and financing of the proposed Association. This working Group will report back to another open meeting within two months.

The working group was comprised of a number of volunteers¹ and met 4 times face-to-face and undertook numerous on-line and other exchanges.

During its deliberations the working group decided to follow a two-track approach: looking at how the proposed organisation would be structured; and the identification of social capital and ideas and issues.

This report provides the conclusions and recommendations of this working group. In reaching these conclusions the working group considered a range of options and approaches which are not elaborated here for brevity.

The working group has chosen to recommend an organisation which is inclusive and starts modestly, which can grow and expand its activities in the light of experience and the wishes of its membership.

2. Structure of the proposed organisation

The Working group recommends the following:

I. Name

The Braidwood Community Association.

II. Aims

i. Object

To promote and develop Braidwood and its surrounding areas, with the view to further enhance the well-being and sustainability of its community.

ii. Objectives

- a. Provide a forum to discuss issues affecting the Braidwood community and the development of collaborative strategies to address these challenges;
- b. Promote broader understanding of these issues; and
- c. Reflect the interests of the Braidwood community to all levels of government;
- d. Help strengthen local community capacity through networking and supporting activities of other community organisations in the Braidwood and its surrounding areas.
- e. Assist in activities that will help enhance the natural and built environment of Braidwood and its surrounding areas, including the provision of community facilities.

iii. Guiding Principles

- a. Inclusive organisation which treats everyone's views with respect and politeness and seeks to bring residents together in a harmonious way;
- b. Seeks to utilise the diversity of Braidwood as a strength; and
- c. Have a focus on consensus. The Association will facilitate and broker respectful discussion on issues with the intention of developing a better understanding of all sides and if possible

¹ David Anthony, Hollie Baker, David McClymont (resigned), Paul Cockram, Meraiah Foley, Richard Jolley, Billie-Mae Kennedy, Sue Murray, Sarah Spencer, John Tuckwell, Ray Whiteman, Tim Wimborne and Eryn Wood

building a broad consensus of community opinion. Where there is no consensus, the Association will not take a position.

III. Activities

- i.* Hold regular meetings and forums to discuss issues;
- ii.* Networking and supporting activities of other community organisations;
- iii.* Communications to the community (eg website, Facebook page, calendar, newsletter, community notice boards, where these are not already available); and
- iv.* Representation to all levels of government, both in response to government policy and activity and on any proactive Braidwood community initiatives.

IV. Other issues

i. Geographical coverage

Braidwood and surrounding areas. How it relates to other community associations adjoining Braidwood on issues of common interest will be developed on a 'learning by doing' basis.

ii. Membership structure

Individuals who are a full or part-time resident of Braidwood and its surrounding areas. It will not be an association of associations, but will have an important networking and supporting role between associations.

iii. Committee structure

Initially a single committee will be elected.

iv. Future issues to be determined

The determination of financing, legal structure and need for a Constitution will be made once decisions have been made on the activities of the organisation.

3. Identification of social capital, ideas and issues

I. Giving everyone a Voice

The working group's aim is to try and give everyone a voice regarding community development. Many individuals cannot attend meetings due to other commitments or find it difficult to express their views in public meetings. It therefore examined a range of other mechanisms to gauge community opinion, most notably the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) methodology (see box on page 3 of a summary of this approach).

Attachment 1 provides a short survey form which is intended to gather information on the Braidwood community's social capital and issues (all are encouraged to complete and return this).

As part of the identification of the community's social capital, the Braidwood Community Association will establish an inventory of all the existing community-based organisations in Braidwood, including their contacts, aims and activities. These organisations will also be invited to identify their issues of concern.

II. Initial listing of ideas and issues

The identification of ideas and issues will be an ongoing process and is intended to help both flag them to the broader community at an early stage and provide focus on the ideas and issues which have broad community interest.

The ideas and issues identified to date include:

- Youth training initiatives
- 'Fake' heritage issues
- Ryrie Park and Duncan St beautification
- Skate park location(s)
- Footpaths for the aged and young mums with prams
- Possible Braidwood bypass
- Need for a youth group and youth indoor facilities

4. Motions

On the basis of this report the working group proposes two motions:

Motion 1

The meeting agrees to form a Braidwood Community Association along the lines recommended by the working group's report.

If adopted, Motion 2

A further public meeting be held on Wednesday 29 August to elect a committee to the Braidwood Community Association and commence discussion on ideas and issues.

What is Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) methodology?

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities based on their strengths and potentials. It involves assessing the resources, skills, and experience available in a community; organising the community around issues that move its members into action; and then determining and taking appropriate action. This method uses the community's own assets and resources as the basis for development; it empowers the people of the community by encouraging them to utilise what they already possess.

When applying ABCD principles, communities are not thought of as complex masses of needs and problems, but rather diverse and capable webs of gifts and assets. Each community has a unique set of skills and capacities it can channel for community development. ABCD categorises asset inventories into five groups: individuals, associations, institutions, place-based and connections.

Beyond the mobilisation of a particular community, ABCD is concerned with how to link micro-assets to the macro-environment. The premise is that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing, but often unrecognised assets. Thereby responding to challenges and creating local social improvement and economic development.

Whereas needs-based community development emphasises local deficits and looks to outside agencies for resources, asset-based community development focuses on honing and leveraging existing strengths within the community. Principles that guide ABCD include:

- Everyone has gifts: each person in a community has something to contribute.
- Relationships build a community: people must be connected in order for sustainable community development to take place.
- Citizens at the centre: citizens should be viewed as actors—not recipients—in development.
- Leaders involve others: community development is strongest when it involves a broad base of community action.
- People care: challenge notions of "apathy" by listening to people's interests.
- Listen: decisions should come from conversations where people are heard.
- Ask: asking for ideas is more sustainable than giving solutions.
- Inside-out organisation: local community members are in control.
- Institutions serve the community: institutional leaders should create opportunities for community-member involvement, then "step back."

ABCD is not a set formula that can be prescribed in a 'one size fits all' manner. Some basic common steps of application are: collecting local stories; bringing together core groups; identifying and mapping capacities and assets of individuals, associations and local institutions; identifying local physical and natural resources; and engaging community in visions and plans.

Braidwood Community Survey

We want to know what's important to you. This short interview collects information to benefit the development of our community. Hopefully, distributing these questions will reach voices in the community who may otherwise be unheard.

You're invited to add only the details you wish to share.

The information you provide will be used by the Braidwood Community Association to map the various assets of our community. All personal information will be held confidentially, and when data is published, names and identifying details will be omitted.

Name

Location

Contact details

What are your skills / abilities / gifts?

What are your passions / interests / desires?

What networks / groups / associations / schools / work place are you connected to?

If you had just one hour of your time to dedicate to volunteering for any topic / subject you can imagine, what would you most like to do?

What is the single most important issue of concern in Braidwood that you would like to see changed?

If you have questions or would like more copies to share please phone **0419 293 901**. Completed pages can be dropped to the **Visitors Information Centre** in Wallace Street and left in a secure box.