



What is a Neighbourhood Centre?

The main features of a Neighbourhood Centre are:

1. **It is a centre** - It has a stand alone building or part of a larger Community Centre, but distinct from other services in that Centre. It has a distinguishable entrance that is easily identified as an approachable place for people to visit.
2. **It is attached to a neighbourhood** - It is an important part of the local community. Its main job is to know about the community and respond to the needs of local residents.
3. **It responds to all residents in its locality** - Its main job is to know about the community and its diversity and respond to the needs of local residents. It is not just about one particular type of service or one target group, but about developing a strong community. It uses both government funding and local resources such as volunteers to help others in the community.
4. **It is a generalist organisation** - It provides a core of basic information and support as well as a place to meet for anyone in the community. In addition, a centre provides a wide range of services, often with government funding, that reflect local needs. This makes it different from many other community organisations that may be set up to provide service.
5. **It is a community development organisation** - It works with people in its local community to support them in meeting their needs and to empower them.
6. **It is an independent community organisation** - It has legal status as an Incorporated Association, which is owned and controlled by its local members. It then chooses to enter into contracts with government departments to deliver services. Some Neighbourhood Centres are not auspices by an Incorporated Association.
7. **It is run by a community management committee** - Made up of volunteers from the community. This provides connection and accountability to the local community.
8. **It is flexible** - Because it is generalist it can respond to an individual in a holistic way. It also can support people who do not fit other services.
9. **It is part of a network** - It interacts with other community organisations operating in the same locality, often on joint project.
10. **It is a one stop shop** - For community service information, support and referral.

