

Hendy Street Hall

Reimagine Hendy Street Hall



Rosewall
Community Centre

 **COMMITTEE FOR
GEELONG**
LEADERS FOR GEELONG



Content

Acknowledgement of Country	03
Acknowledgements	04
Foreword	05
Project Team	06
Executive Summary	07
Project Timeline	09
Approach and Engagement	10
Background	14
Community Profile	16
Corio's Socioeconomic Profile	18
Local Strengths	19
Community Infrastructure & Local Leadership	22
Service Landscape	23
Service Snapshot	24
History of Hendy Street Hall	25
Community Engagement - Outcome	29
Survey Results	31
Overall Findings	33
The Opportunity	35
Case Studies	36
Insights	41
Challenges	44
Adaptations	46
Recommendations	47
Reflection	54
Conclusion	56
References	57
Appendices	59

Acknowledgment of Country

The project team wishes to acknowledge the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Hendy Street Hall stands, and where we live, move, play, and work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging, and honour their enduring connection to Country, community, and culture. Here, on land shaped by stories and seasons, we draw inspiration from the Wadawurrung People's spirit, resilience, and adaptability. In reimagining Hendy Street Hall, we commit to listening deeply, recognising both the strengths and the struggles of our region, and responding to unmet needs with care and respect. Guided by the principle of leaving no one behind, we strive to create a place that fosters healing, learning, and belonging — where traditional wisdom and community aspirations meet, shaping a more inclusive and connected future for all.

The values held at Rosewall Community Centre, inclusion, collaboration, lifelong learning, creativity, and integrity are deeply reflected in the wisdom of the Wadawurrung People. For generations, they have practised inclusion by fostering a sense of belonging and care for all. They have modelled collaboration through collective decision-making and shared responsibilities, ensuring the wellbeing of the whole community.

Lifelong learning has been embedded in the passing of knowledge, stories, and skills from one generation to the next. Creativity has flourished through language, song, art, and innovation in living with the land and its seasons. Integrity has been upheld through deep respect for cultural protocols, the environment, and one another.

This project — Reimagine Hendy Street Hall has been proudly developed through the Leaders for Geelong program, made possible by the Committee for Geelong, whose vision is to design Geelong's best future and whose mission is to act as an independent catalyst for the city's success. Their commitment to building a world-class city that is vital, inclusive, progressive, smart, and sustainable resonates strongly with the aspirations for a reimagined Hendy Street Hall. Just as the Wadawurrung People have nurtured their community and environment for generations, we seek to honour those same principles ensuring that this space becomes a lasting source of connection, opportunity, and resilience for all who call it home.

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We gratefully acknowledge the support of:

- Rosewall Community Centre — particularly Centre Manager Monique Jacques for her leadership and generosity, and Dylan Mulgrew, Treasurer, for his ongoing advocacy.

- Project Mentor, Brad Keating (Department of Transport and Planning), for his valuable insights and advice.
- The Committee for Geelong team — Karen MacAdie and Lauren Carnegie — for their guidance and support.
- Leadership Portfolio Partners — WorkSafe, Kane, GMHBA, and CFA — for their commitment to community leadership.
- Scholarship Providers, including CFA, whose sponsorship made participation of Yin Peng Lee possible.

Finally, this project has been strengthened by the significant engagement and contributions of a wide range of stakeholders in the 3214 region. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all community members, organisations, and groups who generously shared their time, experiences, and perspectives to inform the findings of this report. Their voices and stories have been instrumental in shaping the vision for a reimagined Hendy Street Hall, one that reflects the aspirations, needs, and strengths of the community it serves.



Scholarship Partners

Day Sponsors



Foreword

Dylan Mulgrew

Rosewall Community Centre has long been a cornerstone of the Corio community, delivering high-quality education, creative and wellbeing programs that bring people together and foster a sense of belonging. This report presents a bold vision for the Hendy Street Hall, a space poised to become an even more dynamic hub for connection, learning and celebration.

Rosewall Community Centre has long been a cornerstone of the Corio community, delivering high-quality education, creative and wellbeing programs that bring people together and foster a sense of belonging. This report presents a bold vision for the Hendy Street Hall—a space poised to become an even more dynamic hub for connection, learning and celebration.

The proposals outlined here build on Rosewall's proven track record of responsive, community-led initiatives. By reimagining the Hall's possibilities and hearing the voices of the community, this holistic approach reflects Rosewall's commitment to making the most of our physical environment and amplifying the impact of our programs.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Reimagine Hendy Street Hall project team. Their unwavering dedication - through countless hours of planning, community consultation and creative problem-solving - has shaped a report that truly reflects local needs and aspirations. Their collaborative spirit and attention to detail have laid the groundwork for a transformation that will resonate for years to come.

As we look ahead, excitement is palpable. The reimagined Hendy Street Hall will stand as a vibrant testament to what's possible when vision meets community. We eagerly anticipate welcoming new audiences, fostering fresh partnerships and igniting innovative ideas under one roof. Together, we will unlock the Hall's full potential and strengthen Corio's social fabric for generations.

Project Team



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Executive Summary

Project Overview

Vision

This project was initiated to guide the revitalisation of Hendy Street Hall into a vibrant, inclusive, and multifunctional community asset that responds to the evolving needs of Corio and its surrounding neighbourhoods. Commissioned by the Rosewall Committee of Management, the work is grounded in research and shaped by community voices, ensuring the hall's future is informed, inclusive, and sustainable.

Purpose

At its core, the project seeks to generate evidence-based recommendations through meaningful engagement with the 3214 community. The aim extends beyond upgrading a building — it is about unlocking the hall's potential as a hub for connection, wellbeing, and local development.

Background

Located at 36 Hendy Street in the heart of Corio, the hall sits within a diverse and resilient community that has long faced social and economic challenges. Despite its central location and historical significance, it remains underutilised. Yet the potential is clear: with the right investment and approach, the hall could once again serve as a focal point for community-led activities, capacity building, and long-term social and economic growth.

The Challenge

The hall requires renewal, with upgrades needed to flooring, IT/AV systems, and general maintenance. At present, the site experiences limited engagement and use from the broader community. In a region experiencing systemic disadvantage, there is a growing demand for inclusive spaces that support wellbeing, access to services, and opportunities for social and economic participation. Without a clear, evidence-informed plan, the hall risks remaining underutilised or being redeveloped in ways that will miss its true potential.

The Opportunities

This project presents a unique opportunity to reimagine Hendy Street Hall as a dynamic, inclusive community hub. By leveraging its location and existing footprint, and drawing on independent research and meaningful community engagement, a future-focused model that is fit for purpose can be identified.

Lessons from comparable community-led redevelopments, both locally and nationally, offer valuable insights into what works. These case studies will inform strategies for activation, sustainability, and design that align with the specific needs and strengths of Corio.



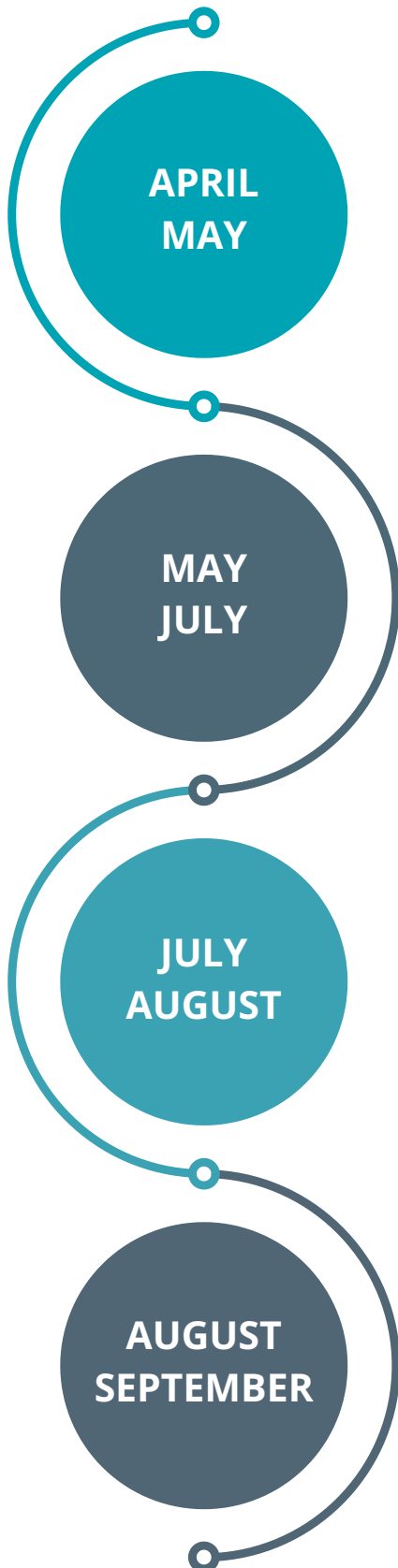
Executive Summary

The Project

The project aims to deliver a set of clear, actionable, evidence-based recommendations to the Rosewall Committee of Management, underpinned by:

- A comprehensive assessment of the hall's current uses and limitations;
- Independent research and broad community engagement capturing diverse perspectives across Corio and surrounds;
- A needs analysis focused on addressing systemic disadvantage, improving community wellbeing, and identifying potential economic benefits;
- Key insights from successful case studies of community asset repurposing;
- A clear and community-endorsed vision for the hall's future, along with guiding design principles;
- Defined next steps to support the Committee's engagement with the City of Greater Geelong, including concept planning and further community consultation.
- Ultimately, this work lays the foundation for a transformation that is not only feasible but deeply grounded in the aspirations, realities, and potential of the Corio community.

Project Timeline



Project Initiation & Framework

- Foundational meetings with Project Champion, Mentor and RCC manager
- Clarification of project scope, hall usage, finances, conditions & historical context
- Definition of research objectives & key questions with finalised project scope
- Identifications of key stakeholders

Milestone: Establishment of project scopes

Community Engagement & Data Collection

- Planned engagement approach
- Survey development (public & organisation stakeholder versions)
- Implementation of multifaceted survey distribution methods - Listening Post, Letterbox drop, Youth Focus Group

Milestone: Initiation of community engagement

Analysis & Synthesis

- Data analysis of survey results
- Compilation of case studies on community asset transformations
- Historical research for local context
- Insight consolidation
- Report drafting

Milestone: Completion of community engagement and initiation of report drafting

Reporting & Recommendations

- Recommendation development
- Report finalisation
- Findings presentation

Milestone: Final report & presentation delivery



Approach & Engagement

Project Approach

From the outset, the project was shaped by a commitment to inclusive, respectful, and context-aware engagement. The project team undertook a multi-layered process to gather insight, build relationships, and understand the lived realities of the Corio community, particularly around Hendy Street Hall.



How We Undertook the Work

The project team's engagement approach included:

- Targeted discussions with leadership from the Rosewall Community Centre;
- Community and stakeholder surveys, supported by in-person outreach and focus groups with young people;
- A desktop review of relevant literature and case studies.
- This combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was designed to reach a broad cross-section of the community while balancing lived experience with evidence-based research. Throughout the process, we were aware of the structural and social dynamics that shape who feels heard, whose input is valued, and what voices are typically left out.

Method 1: Engagement with Rosewall Community Centre Leadership

The project began with a series of conversations between the project team, Rosewall's Project Champions, and the Centre Manager. These meetings helped establish shared goals, clarify priorities, and align on expectations. A site visit to Hendy Street Hall provided a first-hand view of the building's condition, current use, and untapped potential.

As the project progressed, emerging insights and ideas were presented at a Rosewall Committee meeting in August 2025. This created space for feedback from the broader management team and helped ensure the work remained aligned with the Centre's strategic vision.

Rationale: *These early steps built trust and rapport, surfaced valuable local knowledge, and ensured governance alignment from the outset.*



Method 2: Community Voice and Stakeholder Perspectives

To capture a broad range of perspectives, the project team designed two distinct surveys—one for local individuals (residents, families, and community participants), and another for organisations (such as service providers and local groups) operating in the 3214 region. Questions focused on unmet needs, service gaps, and community aspirations for a reimagined Hendy Street Hall.

To improve reach and accessibility, the team held listening posts at the Beckley Park Saturday Market over two weekends in July. Here, informal conversations helped enrich and contextualise survey data, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of community sentiment.

Additional outreach was undertaken with young people through the Seed Programme at Northern Bay College, in collaboration with the Blue Connect (Victoria Police) initiative. A targeted focus group also ensured the inclusion of voices that are often harder to reach.

Rationale: *Surveys provided structured input, while in-person conversations captured less tangible but equally critical insights such as pride, informal support networks, and emotional connection to place. Focus groups with targeted audiences ensured that perspectives often missing from formal consultations were included.*

Method 3: Desktop Literature Review

In parallel with community engagement, the project team conducted a targeted review of local and international literature on the social value, governance, and activation of community spaces. The project team analysed case studies from regions with similar demographic and economic profiles to Corio to identify transferable strategies and design principles.

Rationale: *This external scan ensured the recommendations were both evidence-based and practically grounded to position Hendy Street Hall within a broader ecosystem of successful community asset transformations.*

Who We Engaged

The engagement process involved a diverse group of stakeholders, including:

- Rosewall Community Centre leadership (Project Champions, Manager, and Committee)
- Local residents across Corio and the broader 3214 postcode
- Families and young people, including through the Seed Programme and Blue Connect initiative.
- Service providers, local organisations, and community leaders

For a full list of stakeholder groups, refer to Appendix A.

How Engagement Shaped Outcomes

The perspectives gathered from the community, Rosewall leadership, and local service providers played a pivotal role in shaping both the direction and final recommendations of this project.

Several key themes emerged:

- The need for flexible, inclusive spaces that reflect cultural and social diversity
- A desire for better coordination between services, reducing fragmentation
- A strong but often unspoken sense of local pride, particularly among residents with long-term ties to the area
- The presence of engagement fatigue, especially where previous input has not led to visible change

While survey data provided useful indicators, it was the conversations at markets, in meetings, and within youth groups that truly revealed the complex, layered reality of the community's relationship with Hendy Street Hall.



Background

Understanding Our Community - The Case for Hendy Street Hall



Background

Before delving into the research findings, it is essential to understand the broader context surrounding Hendy Street Hall. The 3214 region, including Corio, is marked by both systemic disadvantage and significant community strength, particularly its cultural diversity and resilience.



Overview

The Rosewall Community Centre plays a key role in this landscape, serving as a long-standing hub for connection, learning, and support through inclusive and collaborative programming.

Hendy Street Hall itself holds a complex history. From its prominence as a community space to its destruction by fire in 2000 and subsequent rebuilding, the hall's story reflects both community hardship and enduring advocacy for shared places.

In forming a complete picture, the analysis also considers unmet local needs alongside existing services and infrastructure. This helps identify gaps, reduce duplication, and support more collaborative, effective responses.

Each of these elements is explored in greater depth throughout the report and serves to inform the recommendations for reimagining the role of Hendy Street Hall within the community.





Community Profile

City of Greater Geelong

Greater Geelong is a growing and diverse region, with a future shaped by both opportunity and challenge. While the city's average age is lowering overall, the number of residents aged 85+ is projected to increase significantly, the demand for inclusive, community-based infrastructure is more pressing than ever. Yet, not all communities share equally in the region's progress.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), social and health outcomes across Greater Geelong are uneven, with certain groups experiencing systemic barriers:

- First Nations peoples, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, and LGBTQIA+ residents
- Children, young people, and older adults
- People with disabilities and those experiencing economic disadvantage

These groups are more likely to experience:

- Poor health and wellbeing
- Housing and food insecurity
- Psychological distress and loneliness
- Limited access to culturally appropriate support systems



Community Profile

City of Greater Geelong Demographic Statistics

Population for City of Greater Geelong

282,800 (ABS, 2021)

First Nations peoples

1.3% of the population (ABS, 2021)

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities

17.7% born overseas (G21, 2023[1]);
11.7% speak a language other than English at home (Profile id, 2022)

Children and families

37.9% of households include children (Profile id, 2022)

Young people

17.8% aged 10–24 (Profile id, 2022)

Older people – 31.5% aged 55+ (Profile id, 2022)

People with disabilities – 22% identify as living with disability; 6.5% require daily assistance (ABS, 2018)

LGBTQIA+ communities – 9.6% of residents (VPHS, 2023)

People experiencing socio-economic disadvantage – including healthcare card holders, single-parent families, and those with lower education levels (ABS, 2021)[2]

Corio's Socioeconomic Profile



A Concentrated Pocket of Disadvantage

Bringing the focus back to the specifics of this project, Corio is one of Greater Geelong's most disadvantaged suburbs with the following considerations needing to be considered for this project:

Population for Corio (3214) - 15,497

Economy Hardship -

Most disadvantaged in Victoria

SEIFA Score = 822.7

(higher than Norlane-North Shore of 764.3)

Early Life Vulnerability

Children are 3X more likely to be developmentally vulnerable

Food Insecurity

23% ran out of food and can't afford more

30% worry about affording food

Cost is the biggest barrier to access nutritious food

Community Vulnerabilities

High rates of unemployment, rental stress, and social housing reliance

Climate & Housing Stress

16% report home is "always uncomfortable" especially during heatwaves

- Limited housing opportunities
- Limited relocation options due to
 - Limited referees
 - Financial costs
 - Transport
 - Fear of system
 - Lack of knowledge
 - Language barrier

Community Safety

17% feel unsafe (nearly 3X the LGA average)

41% perceive their area as less safer than the rest of Greater Geelong

High severe/moderate psychological distress (Notably higher than in other parts of the city)

Health and Wellbeing Impacts

- Increased psychological distress and loneliness
- Greater food and financial insecurity
- Housing instability and insecurity
- Higher rates of smoking, vaping and alcohol harm
- Inequitable support systems, including services that are misaligned with community education levels or inaccessible due to language and cultural barrier

Reference:

Australian Bureau of Statistics' Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA)

City of Greater Geelong Preventative Health Survey (2024),



Local Strengths

These statistics are not just numbers, they represent real people, real families, and real struggles playing out every day in the 3214 postcode. They underscore the urgent need for community spaces like Hendy Street Hall to be not only functional, but deeply responsive to the lived experiences and structural barriers that shape local life.

Hendy Street Hall

In this context, Hendy Street Hall becomes a microcosm of what's possible when investment is made in place-based, community-led infrastructure:

- A space for culturally safe programming and inclusive services;
- A venue for early childhood support, youth engagement, and elder wellbeing;
- A trusted location for food relief, climate resilience, and mental health support;
- A bridge between local voices and regional systems.

By strengthening Hendy Street Hall, it's not just supporting Corio - it's advancing Greater Geelong's Communities vision for a fairer, healthier, and more connected future. This is a model that can be replicated across other areas of need, creating a network of community anchors that uplift the whole region.

Local Strengths

Among the well-documented challenges facing Corio, a powerful counter-narrative continues to emerge, one rooted in resilience, diversity, and community pride.

Despite long-standing issues related to unemployment, health access, and socio-economic disadvantage, Corio remains a place where people show up for one another. The community is known for its close-knit spirit and deep local knowledge, with informal networks often stepping in where formal systems fall short.

Corio's Strengths

A major strength of the suburb lies in its rich cultural diversity.

Corio is home to a vibrant mix of communities, including Afghan, Hazara, Karenni, and South Sudanese families. These groups have contributed not just to the cultural fabric of the area, but to its resilience forming strong support networks, fostering inter-generational care, and offering models of mutual aid that reflect both pride and perseverance. This cultural richness has become a driver of local identity and cross-cultural connection.

While disadvantage remains a reality, Corio also benefits from key structural assets that support the community's long-term wellbeing:

Healthcare Access

Corio continues to provide relatively good access to bulk-billing GPs, especially for vulnerable groups such as children, pensioners, and Healthcare Card holders. This is significant in a broader context where bulk-billing rates are declining statewide (from 86.3% to 78.5%).

Noting some significant barriers to accessing health services for community members still exist, which include the lack of specialised clinical services in the 3214 community, costs not covered by medicare or concession and direct transport.



Local Strengths

The 3214 postcode is marked by potential, not just in infrastructure, but in people. From strong multicultural networks to committed volunteers and youth programs, the foundation for renewal is already in place. What's needed now is targeted, equitable investment, particularly in under-resourced suburbs within the 3214 community.

With continued support from local government, service providers, and community-led initiatives, this region can shift from managing disadvantage to enabling community-driven change.

The strengths of Corio, its cultural richness, grassroots leadership, and network of support offer a powerful blueprint for what's possible when communities are resourced to thrive.

Corio's Strengths

Improved Transport Connectivity

Recent investment in public transport infrastructure across the northern corridor (including Corio and Norlane) has improved access to essential services including; schools, food relief centres, employment opportunities, and community programs. Notably, local residents rely on public transport at higher rates than the regional average, reflecting both a need and an opportunity for continued investment in equitable mobility.

Proximity to Community Assets

Corio sits within reach of several key community hubs such as the Norlane Aquatic and Recreation Centre (Norlane ARC) which supports health and fitness; the Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre which delivers targeted programs for youth and multicultural families; and fOrte, a dynamic learning space, offering education and upskilling opportunities. Together, these assets create a wider ecosystem of support that strengthens resilience across the region.

Grassroots and Volunteer Networks

Beyond formal services, local volunteers, schools, faith groups, and cultural associations play a pivotal role in supporting vulnerable residents, especially during times of crisis. These grassroots efforts, amplified during and after COVID, have been essential in providing informal care and reinforcing community agency.



Community Infrastructure and Local Leadership



Facilities like Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre and Hendy Street Hall are more than venues - they are places of belonging. They provide connection, learning, and creativity, while offering safety, welcome, and reducing isolation. They nurture leadership and reflect the community's resilience and diversity.

Rosewall Community Centre

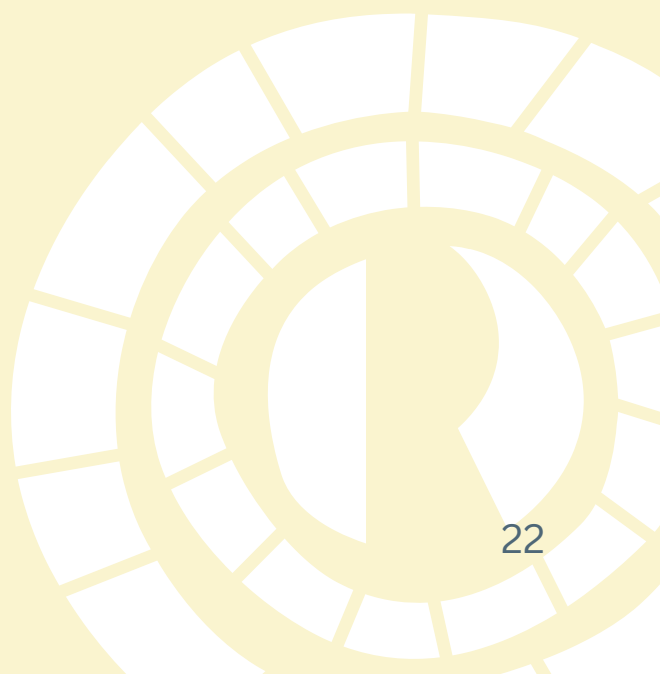
Rosewall stands out as an example of how infrastructure can embody community values. Open to all ages and backgrounds, it hosts programs that support learning, social connection, and expression. Courses build skills in literacy, digital tools, and job readiness, while arts, cultural, and practical supports — from housing help to community lunches — foster stability and wellbeing.

What makes Rosewall unique is the trust it has earned. It is known as a safe, inclusive space where needs and strengths of Corio's diverse population are respected. Partnerships with schools, health providers, and community groups further extend its impact.

The centre is also adaptive — responding to demand for digital skills or offering low-cost activities for families under stress.

Hendy Street Hall

Hendy Street Hall, however, faces limits. With little staff and funding, its small facility and reliance on short-term grants restrict growth and accessibility. Still, Rosewall remains a cornerstone of Corio: practical and symbolic, meeting daily needs while offering dignity, connection, and belief in what a strong, supported community can achieve together.



Service Landscape

Corio is supported by a wide network of local services that contribute to residents' wellbeing from early childhood education and healthcare to social supports, community programs, and spaces for connection.

As part of this project, the team mapped existing services and facilities to better understand what is already working, where the gaps are, and how duplication can be avoided. This approach highlights opportunities for collaboration and more efficient delivery of support across the community.

The following table provides an overview of key community, health, childcare, and social infrastructure in the area. Grouped by category, it illustrates the diversity of local resources — ranging from affordable childcare and accessible medical clinics to neighbourhood houses, community hubs, and low-cost cafés that foster inclusion and connection.

This snapshot is intended as a shared reference point for residents, service providers, and planners, helping to inform future development, investment, and partnerships that strengthen the local service system.



Service Snapshot

From this summary, although Corio and Norlane have a strong network of community centres, childcare services, and low-cost social spaces, several gaps remain.

There is a lack of dedicated youth hubs, limited access to mental health and specialist health services, and few employment or training centres connected to local employers. Affordable recreation facilities are scarce, and limited public transport makes it difficult for residents to reach existing services.

These gaps contribute not only to unmet social, health, and educational needs but also to higher rates of youth disengagement and antisocial behaviour. Strengthening community infrastructure through youth hubs, accessible mental health support, employment pathways, and recreational programs could provide positive alternatives for young people, helping to reduce crime and foster safer, more resilient communities.

Category	Name	Location	Social & Low-Cost Features
Community & Neighbourhood Services	Norlane Community Centre	39 Rose Ave, Norlane	Tai Chi, craft groups, community kitchen, tool pool, book library, low-cost room hire
	Cloverdale Community Centre	167-169 Purnell Rd, Corio	Community events, programs, inclusive social activities
	Rosewall Community Centre	36 Sharland Rd, Corio	Creative programs, low-cost café, book swap, affordable resources & venue hire
Social Enterprise Café & Shop	Lab Square Commons Café & Op Shop	Labuan Square, Norlane	Affordable café, community events, second-hand shop, inclusive meeting place
Health Services	Corio Medical Clinic	1 Bacchus Marsh Rd, Corio	Traditional health services — medical consultations
	Norlane Medical Centre	124 Sparks Rd, Norlane	Traditional health services — medical consultations
Affordable Childcare	Norlane Child and Family Centre	52-56 Spruhan Ave, Norlane	Maternal & child health, kindergarten, family programs
	Cloverdale Child and Family Centre	167-169 Purnell Rd, Corio	Maternal & child health, family services



The Heart and History of Hendy Street Hall

Hendy Street Hall is more than just bricks and mortar, it is a place woven into the social and cultural fabric of the 3214 community. For decades, it has served as a vital gathering point for sports teams, cultural groups, families, and residents from all walks of life. Its history reflects the broader story of Corio: one of change, resilience, and collective identity.

From the post-war arrival of Dutch migrants to the rich multicultural communities that now call Corio home — Afghan, Hazara, Karenni, South Sudanese and more — the hall has evolved in tandem with its people. Located in close proximity to local schools, sporting ovals, and tennis courts, it was originally envisioned as a hub of connection and recreation, a space where neighbours could come together not only to access services, but to share life.

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”
George Santayana



History

Historical Timeline at a Glance

Built 1950's - Development along Hendy Street with local Schools and Facilities. Hall construction date unknown.

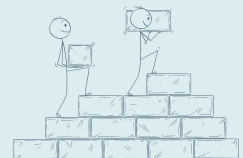
1973: Dutch newspaper article mentions the hall (9 November) - confirming community use,



Fire 2000 - Fire destroys Hendy Street Hall in 2000. Community committee pledged to rebuild the hall , highlighting strong local community advocacy.



Rebuild 2007 - Hendy Street Hall officially reopened, now the facility restores community hub function for sports, meetings, cultural events and social gatherings.



Management 2007 - Management of the Hall transferred to Rosewall Community Centre. Operational responsibilities shift, making the start of landlord - tenant dynamics with local council.



Re-imagine 2024 - Rosewall Committee of Management secure community infrastructure grant for Hendy Street Hall. The grant funds will support the re-imagine and revitalisation of Hendy Street Hall.



History

A Place with Deep Roots and a Complex Legacy

That vision was abruptly disrupted in June 2000, when a fire severely damaged the hall. In the years that followed, the loss was felt deeply. Yet, it was not met with silence. A group of passionate locals formed the “Save the Hendy Street Hall” Committee, advocating persistently for the hall’s restoration. This effort reflected the enduring spirit of 3214, driven not by resources, but by volunteer energy, community memory, and a refusal to let a vital space disappear.

The Past

Eventually, the hall was rebuilt as part of a broader municipal infrastructure upgrade in 2007, and in the same year, its management was transferred to Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre. Despite its physical restoration, the hall’s former vitality has never fully returned.

A Hall That Still Carries the Fire's Legacy

The fire that destroyed Hendy Street Hall in 2000 remains a turning point in its history. Even after the rebuild, the fire’s legacy is still visible today. The hall stands, but its role in the neighbourhood has never fully returned to the prominence it once held.

By the time the hall was rebuilt, many of the groups that once brought energy and activity to the site were no longer operating. To help re-activate the space, Council partnered with Rosewall Neighbourhood House, whose strong community ties made it well-placed to take on this role. While the hall continues to provide a venue for local use, its potential is not yet fully realised. Community members speak with fondness about the hall’s past vibrancy and with hope that, through renewed vision and coordination, it can once again become a place of connection, belonging, and opportunity.

History

Framing The Opportunities

Revitalising Hendy Street Hall is not simply about fixing a building; it's about restoring its heartbeat.

Bringing these threads together reveals both the urgency and the promise of reimagining Hendy Street Hall. The broader Geelong region faces uneven growth, with Corio at the centre of persistent disadvantage but also rich in untapped strength. Rosewall Community Centre and its partners exemplify the power of community anchors, while the hall itself embodies resilience yet awaits renewal.

Reinvigorating Hendy Street Hall offers the opportunity to:

- Address gaps in the existing service landscape without duplicating efforts;
- Create an inclusive, collaborative space shaped by community needs;
- Honour the hall's history while re-establishing it as a vibrant hub of learning, culture, and connection.

When activated with purpose, it can support:

- Food security initiatives;
- Mental health and social wellbeing programs;
- Youth engagement and intergenerational connection;
- Climate resilience education and services;
- Cultural celebration and cross-community learning.

In a region often defined by its challenges, Hendy Street Hall can once again become a symbol of possibility, helping to embed services that are inclusive, responsive, and grounded in place.



Community Engagement Outcome





Community Engagement

Survey Results and Community Feedback

The project team distributed surveys through multiple channels, including an online link, in-person engagement at listening posts and focus groups, and letterbox drop-offs.

Two survey versions were created to gather public input. The second version was developed based on feedback from the public and the project team following the first listening post session. The first survey received 23 responses, while the second garnered 78, bringing the total number of responses to 101. The complete survey questions are provided in Appendix B, along with a comparison table for both versions.

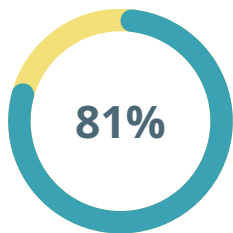
The surveys provided a strong indication of both community and organisational priorities for the future of Hendy Street Hall.

Across the community surveys, residents consistently expressed a desire for more accessible and diverse programs, with particular interest in creative, cultural, recreational, and family-focused activities.

Barriers to participation most often related to lack of awareness, accessibility, and the limited suitability of existing programs. Respondents identified modern facilities, flexible spaces, and access to support services as essential features of a redeveloped hall. Many indicated they would attend more regularly if these offerings were in place, and a significant proportion also wished to stay connected through the Rosewall Community Centre newsletter.

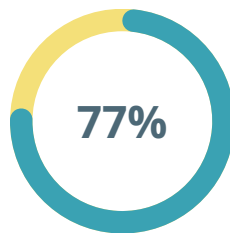
Survey Results

Community Feedback in a Glance



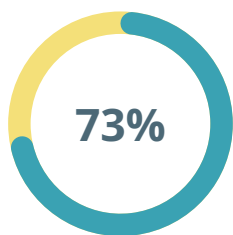
Event Attendance

Had attended programs locally



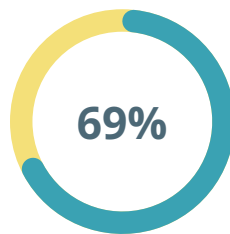
Programs & Activities

Wanted more creative, cultural, or recreational opportunities



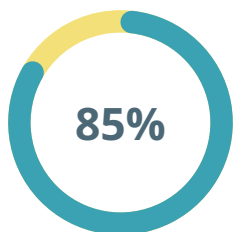
Support Services

Valued family or health-related supports



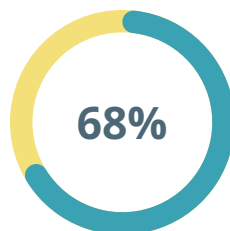
Barriers

Identified barriers (lack of information, limited facilities or inconvenient timing)



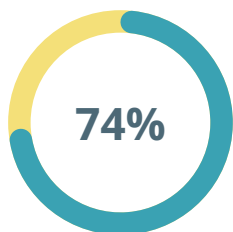
Facilities & Features

Prioritised flexible spaces, modern amenities, and accessibility



Future Use

Would attend more if the hall offers programs of interest



Staying Informed

Wanted to stay connected via the Rosewall newsletter.

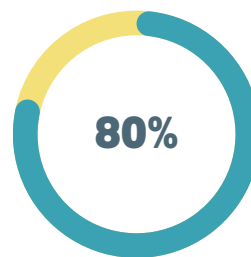


Survey Results

Organisational Feedback in a Glance

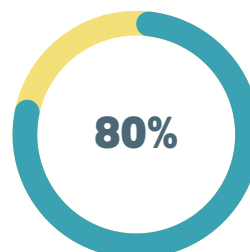
Organisational feedback, gathered through voluntary survey responses, aligned closely with these findings. All ten organisations have a long-standing presence in the 3214 area and remain active in local service delivery. Currently, 80% deliver programs, though the same proportion reported barriers to sustaining or expanding their services, primarily linked to funding, space, and resource constraints.

Likewise, 80% identified unmet community needs, particularly youth and family support. Looking forward, 80% indicated they would consider renting or using a redeveloped hall if it offered features such as multipurpose rooms, technology, accessibility upgrades, and storage.



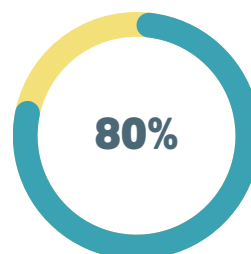
Program Delivery

currently deliver programs in the 3214 area



Barriers to Growth

face barriers such as limited funding, space, and resources



Future Use of Hall

would consider renting/using a redeveloped hall



Overall Findings

Overall findings highlighted:

Significant barriers

Around 70% of residents and 80% of organisations face constraints that limit participation or service delivery.

Strong demand

75% of residents and 80% of organisations expressed interest in expanded programs and facilities.

Future readiness

Approximately 70% of community members and 80% of organisations would actively use or rent the hall if redeveloped.

Together, these results point to four clear themes:

- 1. Strong community interest and support:** High levels of engagement confirm both residents and organisations are ready to embrace a revitalised community hub.
- 2. Barriers that need addressing:** Challenges of awareness, access, resources, and funding must be overcome to ensure sustainability.
- 3. Demand for diverse programs and facilities:** There is strong appetite for creative, cultural, recreational, and family-focused activities, supported by flexible, modern facilities.

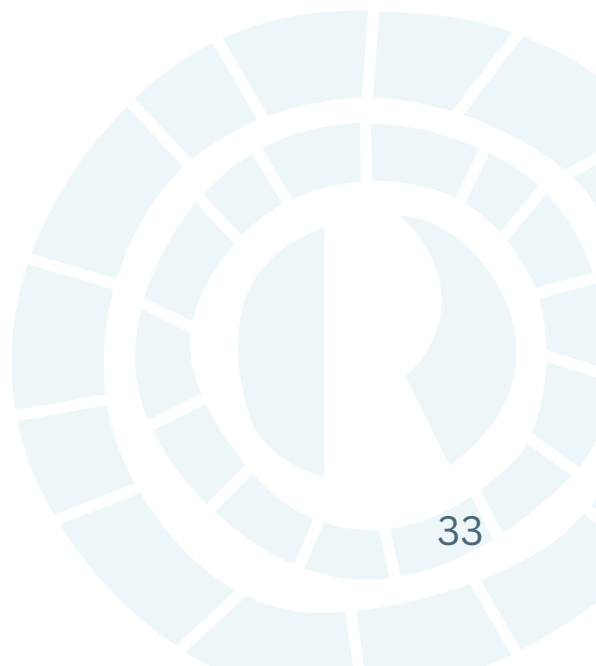
4. Opportunities for collaboration:

With most organisations open to renting or sharing the space, redevelopment could strengthen partnerships, broaden service delivery, and create sustainable revenue streams.

At present, Hendy Street Hall is not reaching its full potential. While event attendance is relatively strong, barriers and outdated facilities limit regular engagement.

The surveys suggest a clear gap between current and potential use: 68% of residents in the larger survey would attend more if programs matched their interests, and 80% of organisations would consider utilising the hall if redeveloped.

With targeted investment in programming, accessibility, and infrastructure, Hendy Street Hall could transition from modest, occasional use to becoming a well-utilised, central hub for the 3214 community and its service providers.



*Reimagining it isn't just about
fixing a hall — it's about
restoring trust between the
community, council, and
service providers.*





The Opportunity

Reimagining Hendy Street Hall

Reimagining Hendy Street Hall as a vibrant, inclusive, and multi-functional community hub offers a powerful response to the social and economic challenges facing the 3214 community. This revitalisation is not just about upgrading a building, it's about creating a space that brings people together, supports those most in need, and nurtures the potential that already exists within the neighbourhood.

The vision is to transform Hendy Street Hall into a place where programs and services are co-located in a way that:

- Meets the needs of priority populations;
- Strengthens protective factors like inclusion, connection, and access;
- Delivers practical supports to address entrenched disadvantage;
- Builds local capacity for long-term social and economic wellbeing;
- Aligns with Council's long-term planning priorities as landowner, talyst for momentum and reach.

In exploring how best to achieve this vision, the project team looked to successful models of community asset transformation both locally and internationally.

A key principle that emerged across all examples was this:

"Do with, not for, and be willing to step aside."

The most successful transformations weren't about handing over ownership to any single organisation but about embedding community leadership and making space for shared, evolving uses.

Common themes across these models included:

- Embedded community governance;
- Flexible, multi-use spaces that adapt to changing needs;
- Sustainable funding models;
- Built-in resilience and agility;
- Partnerships as a catalyst for momentum and reach.

Learning from Elsewhere - Case Studies from Across the Globe



Case Studies



Case Study 1: Bromley by Bow Centre, East London, UK

In one of East London's most disadvantaged areas, the Bromley by Bow Centre has become a global exemplar of holistic community health. What began as a local initiative evolved into an integrated hub where healthcare, social enterprise, training, arts, and childcare coexist under one roof. A GP practice sits within the centre alongside art studios, a community café, gardens, and enterprise support services.

Its success lies not only in its services, but in the way it delivers them—with dignity, flexibility, and a commitment to local leadership. Today, it sustains itself through a mix of funding streams including grants, rental income, and social enterprise. Importantly, it has remained adaptable, evolving post-COVID to address digital inclusion and rising mental health needs.

Lessons for Hendy Street Hall:

A multi-disciplinary approach, grounded in strong partnerships, can create a resilient and responsive centre. Even modest facilities can be transformative when they prioritise flexibility, community governance, and a sense of place where people feel seen and supported.



Case Study 2: Renew Newcastle, NSW, Australia (Renew Australia)

In Newcastle, urban decline left many buildings empty and inactive. Instead of waiting for large-scale investment, the Renew Newcastle initiative activated these spaces with temporary licenses, offering zero-rent arrangements to local artists, creatives, and entrepreneurs.

The result was a cultural and economic revitalisation. Shopfronts came alive with exhibitions, micro-businesses, and creative energy - generating jobs, increasing foot traffic, and building renewed interest in neglected parts of the city. What started as a temporary solution built long-term momentum and investment.

Lessons for Hendy Street Hall:

Pop-up activations—such as youth markets, community art projects, or short-term programs—can provide low-risk ways to test ideas and build momentum. They also help draw attention, invite participation, and refine a sustainable long-term model before significant capital is invested.



Case Study 3: Youth Futures Hubs Initiative, UK

The Youth Futures Hubs are a UK-wide initiative providing holistic support to young people by bringing services such as mental health, career guidance, education, and social activities under one roof. These hubs aim to create safe, accessible spaces where young people can get the help they need without barriers.

A defining feature of the hubs is their co-designed approach, involving young people in planning and service delivery to ensure relevance and foster empowerment. Strategically placed in high-need communities, the hubs focus on addressing social and economic disparities while building sustainable models that can adapt and continue serving future generations.

Lessons for Hendy Street Hall:

Hendy Street Hall can become a vibrant community hub by integrating multiple services in one accessible space. Involving local residents, especially young people, in planning ensures programs are relevant and empowering. Strong community engagement builds trust, while sustainable, flexible practices allow the hall to adapt and continue supporting future generations. Creating a welcoming environment where people feel seen and valued is key to lasting impact.



Case Study 4: Dandenong Drum Theatre, Victoria, Australia

In one of Melbourne's most culturally diverse municipalities, an underused civic hall was transformed into the Drum Theatre — a space now known for celebrating cultural identity, fostering intergenerational participation, and strengthening community pride.

By redeveloping the hall into a modern, accessible performance and event space, and partnering with schools, migrant organisations, and local creatives, the project created a platform for both professional productions and grassroots festivals. This mix of cultural programming and community use has generated sustainable income through ticket sales, venue hire, and strategic partnerships.

Lessons for Hendy Street Hall:

There is a clear opportunity to position Hendy Street Hall as a cultural connector — complementing nearby neighbourhood houses by offering what's currently missing in 3214: a hub for arts, performance, and cultural exchange. Embedding cultural programs alongside community services supports inclusion, creativity, and resilience while also attracting new partnerships and audiences.

Case Studies

Taken together, these case studies provide compelling guidance for the future of Hendy Street Hall.



Key Insights from these comparable sites for Hendy Street Hall

They show that:

- Co-locating services under one roof can deliver holistic support and increase access for vulnerable communities.
- Temporary, low-cost activation can generate excitement, draw people in, and build momentum toward longer-term investment.
- Cultural programming has a unique power to strengthen identity, pride, and participation across generations.
- Community-led governance, space flexibility, and diverse revenue streams are essential for long-term sustainability.

The opportunity ahead is to reimagine Hendy Street Hall not just as a building, but as a living, evolving community asset, a place where local strengths are celebrated, new possibilities are created, and everyone feels a sense of ownership and belonging.

Case Studies

Overview

Case Study	Context	What was done	Impact	Lessons for Henty Street Hall
Bromley by Bow Centre (London, UK)	Inner-city London, high unemployment, poor health outcomes, fragmented services.	Turned a church site into a hub for health, education, arts, and enterprise.	Better health access, jobs, and community connection.	Co-locate services and embed community leadership.
Renew Newcastle (NSW, Australia)	Newcastle CBD in decline, with high commercial vacancy rates and limited cultural vibrancy.	Used empty shops for artists and small businesses on short leases.	Revived city centre, cut vacancies, boosted pride and creativity.	Show how flexible, low-cost use of space can spark local enterprise.
Dandenong Drum Theatre (VIC)	Multicultural municipality with limited cultural identity spaces	Redeveloped hall into cultural hub; hosted performances, festivals, youth events; partnered with schools & migrant organisations	Strengthened cultural pride; youth engagement; sustainable revenue through events & hire	Position hall as a cultural connector; complement existing centres with arts, cultural expression, and intergenerational programs
The Young Futures Community Hub Model (UK)	Developed in response to rising youth unemployment, mental health concerns, and social exclusion in disadvantaged urban areas.	Youth-focused hubs with mentoring, training, recreation, and counselling.	More youth in jobs/education, reduced antisocial behaviour, better wellbeing.	Put young people at the centre and fill gaps in youth, training, and mental health.

Insights, Challenges and Adaptations



Insights

What we Learnt

Over the course of this project, the project team has listened carefully to stories, data, and the deep knowledge held within this community. Through workshops, conversations, and research, a clearer picture has emerged, not just of the challenges, but of what's possible when local voices lead the way.

In Corio, the impacts of poverty, food insecurity, and isolation are not abstract; they're everyday realities, shaped by geography, policy, and history. These are not city-wide problems spread evenly across a map; they are concentrated, lived intensely in specific neighbourhoods. That's why responses must be grounded locally.

Solutions that work here are the ones that are built here by the people who understand the needs, the gaps, and the strengths of their own community.

It's also clear that how services are delivered matters just as much as what is offered. When supports are scattered across multiple locations, hard to find, or difficult to access, people fall through the cracks. Bringing things together with youth activities, food support, mental health programs, family services into one trusted, familiar space makes a difference.

Hendy Street Hall has the potential to become that kind of space: a central point of connection that makes it easier for people to access what they need, when they need it.

One issue raised time and again is food. The rising cost of living means many families are forced to make hard choices, with fresh, healthy food often out of reach. This is not simply a nutrition issue - it's a matter of dignity, health, and equity. Food access needs to be embedded into community infrastructure, not treated as a charitable extra.

A revitalised Hendy Street Hall could play a central role in this, offering practical food support in ways that are consistent, culturally respectful, and free from stigma.

People also spoke about the physical comfort of public spaces, something increasingly important as climate conditions change. Many local homes are too hot in summer, poorly insulated, or simply not built for extreme weather.

Community spaces must offer more than programming, they must provide refuge. That means cool, shaded, welcoming environments where people can gather safely and comfortably. The future design of Hendy Street Hall must consider not just usability, but climate resilience.



Insights



What we Learnt

But perhaps the most important lesson is this - genuine community involvement takes time, care, and commitment.

True engagement isn't about asking people what they think once and moving on. It's about creating ongoing opportunities for local voices to shape decisions at every stage.

That means removing barriers to participation. Childcare, transport, and small payments for people's time are not just thoughtful, they're essential for inclusion.

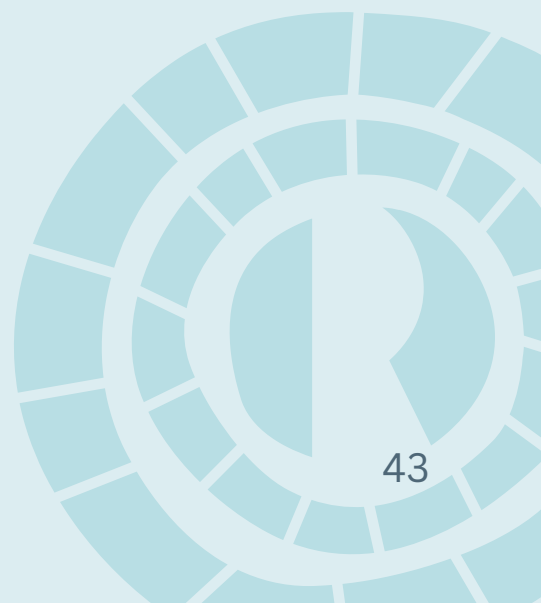
Engagement also needs to be flexible: pop-ups at schools or sporting clubs, youth-led workshops, design walls in public spaces, storytelling sessions led by community members. Different approaches reach different people and help everyone feel like their voice matters.

Ultimately, this is about shifting from consultation to co-creation. The community shouldn't just be asked for input; they should be given the tools, time, and trust to lead and take ownership. Establishing a local advisory group could be one way to ensure that ongoing leadership is embedded into the hall's future.

And importantly, the future of this project isn't starting from zero.

The Reimagine Hendy Street Hall project has already built strong foundations. Relationships have been formed, ideas shared, and priorities surfaced.

What comes next isn't a new beginning, it's a continuation. With the leadership of Rosewall Community Centre and support from partners and Council, the community is ready. The vision is already here. Now it's time to bring it to life.



Challenges

What Was Difficult or Surprising?

A standout, and deeply human insight from our community engagement was the number of children and young people in Corio who described feeling shame about their home environments, and expressed a strong desire for safe, neutral public spaces where they could simply spend time with friends.

This feedback revealed layers of unmet need that go beyond physical infrastructure touching on safety, privacy, dignity, and the emotional impacts of housing stress.

At the same time, initial community engagement was lower than expected, particularly during the early pop-up events at Corio's Beckley Park Saturday Market. While the team had designed accessible survey tools and in-person engagement opportunities, many residents were hesitant to participate.

This caution reflected a deeper issue of consultation fatigue and low institutional trust, particularly in relation to engaging with Local Government/Council. Past under investment and unfulfilled promises have shaped a community that is hopeful but understandably sceptical.

Formal stakeholder engagement also presented challenges. Limited responses from service providers and partners in part due to reliance on a single distribution channel highlighted the difficulty of engaging busy organisations through transactional methods like surveys alone. It became clear that stronger, relationship-based engagement would have yielded greater participation but was constrained by time and capacity.

Additionally, at times, misalignment between key stakeholders created uncertainty and slowed progress. Differing expectations, communication gaps, and unclear roles underscored the importance of shared vision, transparent communication, and a clearly defined governance structure from the outset.



Challenges

Key Constraints & Limitations

Beyond engagement dynamics, several structural and planning-related constraints shaped the scope of the project:

Zoning Restrictions:

Hendy Street Hall is located within a Public Park and Recreation Zone, which limits the extent of development possible without complex approvals (both at a Local and State Government level). This restricts opportunities for permanent infrastructure upgrades without additional planning work.

Lack of a Masterplan:

There is no current masterplan for Hendy Street Reserve, leaving the surrounding area, including underutilised ovals and change facilities without a formal strategic direction. This makes it harder to advocate for coordinated improvements.

Gas Pipeline Buffer:

A major gas pipeline along Hendy Street imposes a 126-metre buffer zone on the Hendy Street Hall site, significantly limiting where construction can occur and potentially triggering additional safety and compliance requirements.

Funding Constraints:

While small-to-medium grants (such as the City of Greater Geelong's Community Infrastructure Grants) are available, they are typically capped at \$250,000, far below what would be required to deliver a major transformation of the site.

There is currently no dedicated council budget for this facility beyond previously allocated funds. This means future funding for the site will be subject to funding allocations or successful grant allocations from federal, state or local government.

Proximity to Other Services: The presence of other nearby community centres, such as Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre, required a careful approach to avoid duplication. Instead, the focus shifted toward complementarity, identifying unmet needs that Hendy Street Hall could address without competing for resources or program delivery.

Adaptations

How the Project Team Responded and Adapted

Despite these challenges, the project team adapted with flexibility, care, and a strong commitment to community voice. The Project teams approach evolved in several key ways:

Building Trust Through Small Wins:

The team shifted early efforts toward meeting people where they were focusing on meaningful conversations, acknowledging past frustrations, and offering realistic ideas for activation. This helped build trust and showed that change didn't need to wait for large capital investment.

Designing With Dignity and Inclusion:

Informed by youth feedback, our recommendations now centre on creating spaces where young people feel welcome, respected, and proud, rather than judged or overlooked. This shaped both the programming focus (e.g. youth-friendly drop-in spaces) and the language used in community-facing materials.

Working Within Constraints:

Instead of proposing large-scale redevelopment that may be unrealistic given current zoning and funding conditions, the project team focused on low-impact, high-benefit uses, such as shade structures, community events, mobile services, and modular or temporary activations. These ideas are more likely to receive planning support and align with funding realities.

Identifying Untapped Potential:

While constrained by zoning, the open space surrounding the hall remains underutilised. With the right planning framework, this area could support future uses such as sport, recreation, play, or climate-resilient design. These opportunities were flagged for future master planning efforts.

Aligning with Strategic Documents:

To avoid duplication and build momentum, the project team cross-referenced existing planning documents such as the Corio - Norlane Structure Plan (2012) and the Corio North Community Services Infrastructure Plan to ensure continuity with past work and support alignment with future funding bids.

Scaffolding for Future Investment:

The project team developed a phased activation model, starting with realistic short-term actions that lay the groundwork for future funding and growth. This includes outlining a potential pathway for future governance, community-led programming, and infrastructure investment that can scale over time.





Recommendations

Reflecting on both the insights gained from our research, engagement and the limitations encountered, it is clear that reimagining Hendy Street Hall requires a balance between aspiration and practicality.

What can we do next?

The findings point to unmet needs around dignity, safety, and belonging, particularly for young people and families under housing and financial stress. At the same time, the case studies demonstrate that small, staged interventions, when guided by strong partnerships and community voice can spark wider transformation.

Building on this understanding, the following recommendations are designed to be both ambitious and achievable.

They prioritise actions that honour community input, respond to systemic disadvantage, and position Hendy Street Hall as a catalyst for connection, resilience, and opportunity in Corio and the broader 3214 region.



Recommendation 1

Community Governance and Co-Design

Imagine Hendy Street Hall not just as a building, but as a living, breathing space shaped by the people who use it.

To guide its future, the project team proposes developing a Shared Outcomes Framework — a strategic plan that sets out the vision for the site, co-owned by residents, the Committee of Management, and Council.

This framework doesn't need to be formal or rigid. Instead, it should be flexible and community-led, capturing the aspirations, values, and priorities of those who call Corio home. It's about creating a shared understanding of what success looks like, whether that's a welcoming space for young people, a hub for local services, or a place where neighbours connect across generations.

Formalise an agreement with Council outlining the long-term objectives of the site to balance community leadership with ongoing operational support and security.

Advocate for inclusion in future funding opportunities.



Recommendation 2

Rapid Activation Pilots

Early activation of Hendy Street Hall can deliver immediate benefits while testing longer-term service models. The following suggested pilots could be implemented in part and focus on inclusion, dignity, and access creating a space that feels welcoming, safe, and enjoyable for all generations.

Clean, safe accessible space for patrons

The hall should prioritise an immediate update to its internal fitout, starting with the installation of new, cost-effective flooring. This upgrade would help address ongoing odour issues and significantly improve the overall atmosphere, making the space more inviting and comfortable for patrons. A refresh of this kind is essential to ensure the hall remains a welcoming and functional community hub while longer-term reimagining and redevelopment plans are underway.

Food access and transport

Launch weekly low-cost produce markets, a community pantry, and culturally inclusive budgeting and cooking workshops. Partner with local food relief agencies and pilot community transport options to and from food services, reducing access barriers for households without a car or with mobility challenges.



The community's voice during our engagement was clear, that a commercial kitchen would enable larger gatherings or a higher interest in commercial use by small community groups.

Safety and belonging

Enhance lighting and install clear signage. Trial a community hosts program (welcoming volunteers or peer connectors), and maintain a predictable monthly events calendar to build trust, routine and passive safety through regular activation.

Rapid Activation Pilots

Connection across generations

Make Hendy Street Hall a place people genuinely enjoy spending time in

Trial regular senior catch-ups (e.g., morning teas, games afternoons) and inter-generational activities that build relationships across age groups.

Importantly, create a warm, fun, and flexible space for children and young people to spend time with friends, particularly those who may feel uncomfortable in their home environments.

Feedback from local youth has been clear: they want a safe, welcoming space where they can hang out without fear of judgement of their homes.

Up-skilling and service access

Offer short, practical skills-based workshops, such as digital literacy, resume help, basic home repairs, or creative classes that reflect local interests and employment needs. Coordinate with service providers to offer drop-in access to financial counselling and housing advice, including tenancy support, Centrelink navigation, and pathways to more secure housing.

Family and youth support

Deliver supported playgroups, parenting programs, and after-school youth sessions, timed around school schedules and local transport. Partner with existing facilities for shared equipment, outreach, and after-hours use to build a seamless local service ecosystem.

The youth the project team interviewed were excited about the opportunities that could come from a shared community space.

Climate resilience

Establish a “Cool Space at Hendy” during heatwaves and high-risk weather, with shaded outdoor areas, hydration points, passive cooling, and advice on affordable home-cooling solutions. Pair this with a small-scale greening initiative like local tree planting to improve climate resilience around the hall.



Recommendation 3

Next Phase — Long Term Design and Concept Planning

Long-term design and concept planning for Hendy Street Hall must take a coordinated and strategic approach in its next phase.

This process should be guided by a comprehensive concept plan, a staged business case, and the identification of sustainable funding sources — ensuring the site's long-term viability and alignment with community needs.

A staged business case should be developed in close consultation with stakeholders. This case must quantify costs, reflect local priorities, align with the long-term vision for the site, and demonstrate the projected return on investment to the community.

Finalising both the concept plan and business case will enable the Committee of Management, Council, and local Members of Parliament to advocate more effectively for federal, state, and private grant funding. The future funding strategy will be shaped by this business case, and will depend on the intended long-term use of the site and the Committee of Management's capacity to operate and sustain the facility.



Recommendation 4

Tracking Progress and Learning as You Go

To ensure the long-term viability of Hendy Street Hall and to keep its reimagination aligned with evolving community needs it's essential to embed a process of continuous learning, reflection, and accountability.

This includes:

Tracking what matters

Monitor a focused set of clear, meaningful indicators, such as how many people are using the space, whether they feel safe and welcome, and if they're accessing support around food, wellbeing, or housing - this can be implemented through surveys, open forums and feedback opportunities.

Sharing regular updates

Publish a user-friendly Hendy Insights report annually. These reports will show what's working, what's changed, and where further attention is needed, keeping the community, stakeholders, and partners informed and engaged. This could be internal facing to the committee or externally published.

By embedding these practices, Hendy Street Hall will remain responsive, transparent, and well-positioned to attract ongoing support ensuring its long-term sustainability and continued relevance to the community.



*"We do not learn from experience...
we learn from reflecting on
experience."*

— John Dewey



Reflection

Complexity of Place-Based Work

Reimagining Hendy Street Hall brought the team face-to-face with the challenges of working in a community marked by both resilience and structural neglect. The project demanded deep listening, respectful engagement, and meaningful responsiveness — a process that was powerful, at times confronting, and transformative for the team as professionals and advocates.

Insights from Young People

One of the most impactful findings came from local children and young people, who spoke of shame about their home environments and a longing for safe, public spaces. Their voices highlighted issues of stigma, belonging, and privacy, underscoring that revitalising the hall must extend beyond infrastructure to meet emotional and social needs.

Community Engagement Challenges

Early engagement at the Beckley Park Saturday Market revealed scepticism rooted in consultation fatigue and mistrust. Politeness masked caution, with many doubting whether input would lead to real change. The team learned that trust requires presence, persistence, and openness, not just surveys.

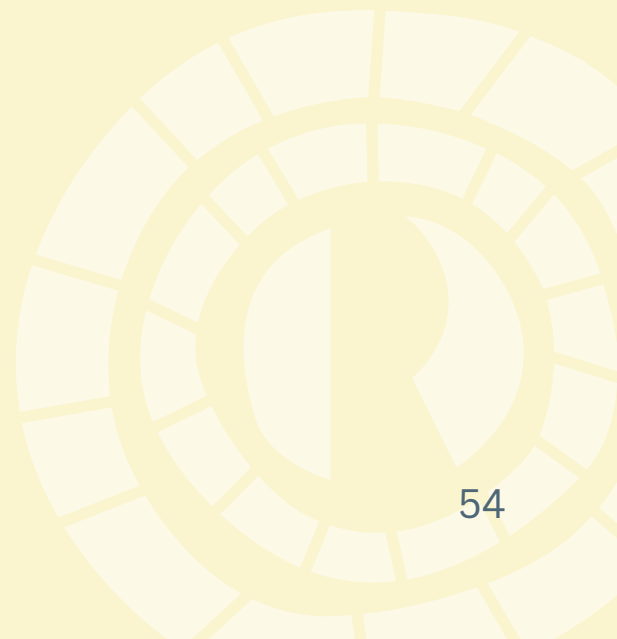
A specific challenge arose in engaging residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. While the team attempted to work with Cultura to access translation support,

these services could not be secured within the project timeframe. As an alternative, the team relied on listening posts, which proved surprisingly effective: many CALD participants were willing to engage in informal conversation and could follow along with some support.

In practice, team members often read survey questions aloud and adapted language to participants' understanding. While not ideal, this approach allowed for more inclusive participation and highlighted the importance of investing in dedicated translation resources for future projects.

Stakeholder Engagement Limitations

Stakeholder responses were mixed, with limited reach due to over-reliance on one distribution channel. The process underscored that engagement is relational rather than transactional. Time constraints restricted the breadth of participation, and this remains a limitation of the findings.



Reflection

Learning from the Hall's History

The hall's underutilisation today contrasts with its historic significance. After the fire in 2000, a six-year community campaign successfully restored the hall, reflecting its deep value. Yet since then, it has become a sidelined asset, unlike other centres that received sustained investment.

Governance and Leadership Tensions

This neglect is not just physical but symbolic of fractured trust and governance. Strained dynamics between council and project champions highlighted the need for shared governance, cohesive strategies, and community-first decision-making. The hall sits in an "in-between," important yet under-supported, reflecting missed opportunities.

Navigating Change and Resistance

Introducing positive change is complex. Even well-intentioned initiatives can meet resistance when communities feel unprepared or excluded.

The project reinforced the need for patient, empathetic leadership that bridges differences and ensures progress is inclusive.

Addressing Bias and Assumptions

Postcode bias and class-based assumptions continue to shape perceptions of Corio, often casting residents as passive recipients rather than contributors. Such assumptions fuel mistrust and undermine collaboration. The team was reminded of the need for cultural humility, reflective practice, and a strengths-based approach.

Structural and Planning Constraints

Zoning restrictions, the absence of a masterplan, and the gas pipeline buffer shaped what was possible. These constraints forced the team to think creatively about low-impact, high-benefit interventions, while recognising that true transformation will require coordinated planning, cross-sector partnerships, and sustained community leadership.

Personal Reflections

For team members with lived experience in Corio, the project was personal. It surfaced gratitude, emotional complexity, and renewed commitment to fostering inclusive, equitable, and place-based change. Moving forward, the team remains dedicated to ensuring community input is central to all decisions.

"The strength of the community is measured not by the absence of problems, but by how it responds to them."

— Unknown



Conclusion

Lesson for Future Engagement & Planning

This process highlighted several lessons that will guide future work:

Trust takes time

Communities with long histories of underinvestment need visible, long-term commitment, not one-off consultations or short-term projects.

Engagement is relational

Participation grows through face-to-face conversations, trusted messengers, and consistent follow-up. Surveys alone are rarely enough.

Shared progress, not imposed solutions

People must have agency in shaping solutions and move at their own pace.

Clarity and alignment matter

Ambiguity between stakeholders slows progress. Shared governance and clear roles are essential from the outset.

Place matters

Revitalising a building is not the same as restoring its meaning; interventions must respond to social, emotional, and practical needs.

Listening is leadership

Especially when trust is fragile, residents' voices must guide decision-making.

Partnerships must be intentional

Built on trust, transparency, and long-term vision.

Adaptability is essential

Plans must respond to shifting community needs, persistent socioeconomic challenges, and service gaps.

Recognise community dynamics

Corio and the 3214 region are shaped by long-term residents, immigrants, and low-income households; solutions must reflect this complexity.

Start where people are

Big-picture visions should be grounded in immediate needs, offering small, tangible progress that grows over time.

Ultimately, this experience reaffirmed our belief that the future of Hendy Street Hall lies not just in what is built there, but in how people are brought into the process of imagining, using, and shaping it.

The opportunity ahead is not just to upgrade a facility, it is to restore a sense of place, ownership, and foster long-term possibility for the people of Corio and the broader 3214 region.



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Appendices

A: List of Stakeholders

B: Survey Questions and Responses

C: Maps



Appendices

A: Stakeholders

Government and Planning Bodies

- City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) -
 - Supported Playgroup
 - Community Engagement Officers and Placemaking Officers
- Federal and State Members of Parliament – individuals
 - Christine Couzens Office
 - Ella George Office
- VicPol

Community Organisations

- Rosewall Community Centre
- Other Neighbourhood Houses
 - Cloverdale Community Centre
 - Norlane Community Centre
 - Neighbourhood house Barwon
- Diversitat (Cultura)

Education and Training Providers

- Northern Bay College (including Hendy Street Campus)
- Wyndham Education Centre
- Laverton Training and Education
- Geelong Regional Libraries
- Partners in Training
- Meli – Parent Education Sessions

Health and Wellbeing Services

- Barwon Health
 - including FapMi & Social Support Programs)
- Catholic Care
- Pear Tree OT
- West Vic Legal
- Raise Bump Program
- Bayside Active Adults

Employment and Economics Development Groups

- GForce – Parents Next
- Give Where You Live

Special Interest and Advocacy Groups

- **Local sporting clubs**
 - Corio Kyokushin Karate
 - GKR Karate
 - Corio Cricket Club
- **Cultural & community groups**
 - Geelong Afghan Community
 - Hazara Community
 - Sri Lankan Association of Geelong
 - Islamic (ICAN)
 - Geelong Dutch Club
- **Cultural Cooking Group**
 - Indian
 - Italian
 - Nigerian
 - Afghanistan
- **Arts & cultural groups**
 - Cloverdale Calisthenics
 - Back to Back Theatre
 - Diamond Art Group
 - Geelong Potters
 - Africa Drumming
 - Vase Weaving (Kylie Skew)
 - Zumba
- **Social support & advocacy**
 - Wathaurong Women's Support Program
 - Parent Pathways - Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services
 - Empowerment Challenge
 - Northerly Aspect
 - GeelongIsChanging
- **Faith groups**
 - Impact Church
 - Philadelphia Karenni Baptist
- **Private hirers**
- **TOWN**
- **Sutherland Services**
- **Local Businesses**
 - The Gateway Hotel
 - Corio Village



B: Survey Questions and Responses - Public Version 1

1. Name and email (optional)

2. Are you happy for us to contact you to discuss your suggestions/feedback further?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, please provide your best contact email/phone number in the comment box

3. What best describes you? Tick all that apply

- Person (under 18)
- Person (under 30)
- Person (under 40)
- Person (under 50)
- Person (under 60)
- Person (over 60+)
- Prefer not to say
- Parent/Guardian
- Live in 3214
- Attend school in 3214
- Work in 3214
- Recreation in 3214
- CALD community member (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background)
- Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

4. How many years have you lived, worked, or been active in the 3214 area?

5. Have you attended any programs or events at Hendy Street Hall or other local centres?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, what programs or events did you attend?

If No, what were the reasons?

6. What are the most important features a reshaped hall should offer? (Select up to 3)

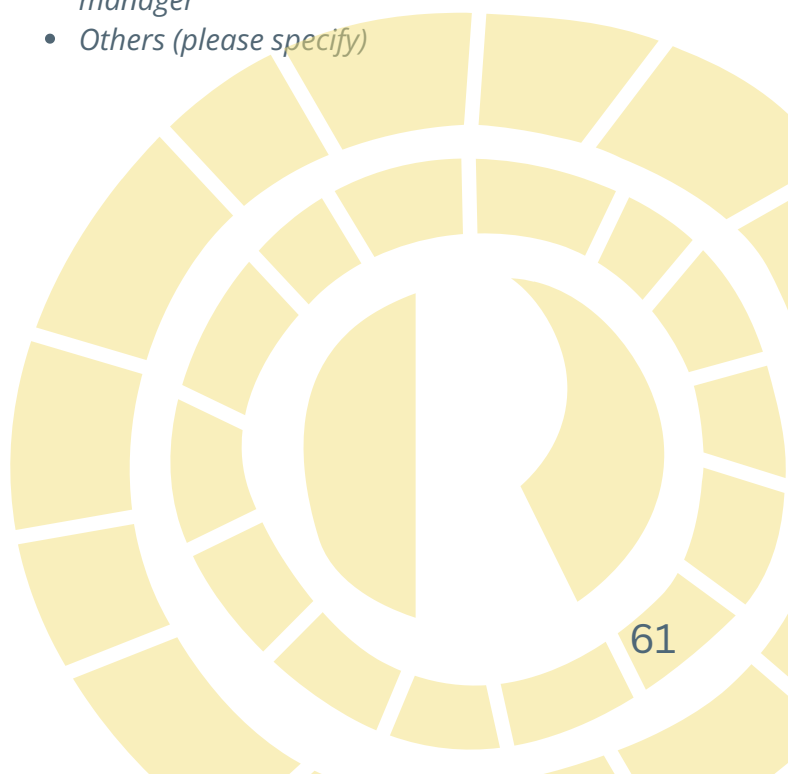
- Accessible for people with disability
- Outdoor/garden area
- Kitchen or café space
- Spaces for children and youth
- Affordable/free programs
- Multilingual support
- Quiet spaces for study or work
- Other (please specify)

7. When would you most likely attend a program? (Select all that apply)

- Weekday mornings
- Weekday afternoons
- Weekends
- School holidays
- Unsure

8. Would you or your family use the following supports if they were available at the hall? (Select all that apply)

- Help with English or language classes
- Help with school or homework (tutoring)
- Access to computers, Wi-Fi or printing
- Financial counselling or budgeting help
- Free or low-cost meals or snacks
- Translation or interpreter support
- Support from a community worker or case manager
- Others (please specify)



B: Survey Questions and Responses - Public Version 1

9. Which of the following will you be interested in participating in? (Select all that apply)

- Mental health or wellbeing support
- Food relief or affordable groceries
- Parenting programs
- Job search or training help
- Help with Centrelink, housing or legal advice
- Youth mentoring or after-school programs
- Seniors' social groups or activities
- Cooking classes
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify)

10. From your experience, what are some needs that aren't currently being met in the community?

11. If you could help decide how a new community hall should be used, what would you love to see happening there?

12. What might stop you or others from taking part in community activities?

13. Would you consider using the hall yourself? If so, for what purpose?

14. What types of events, classes or services would make the most difference to you or your household or community?

15. Any other feedback or suggestions about potential reshaping of the Hendy Street Hall?

16. Would you like to stay informed or get involved in the future?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)

17. Privacy & Collection Notice

The personal information and feedback collected on this page is being gathered by participants of the Leaders for Geelong Program - Re-imagine Hendy Street Hall Project Group (Committee for Geelong). The purpose of this collection is to inform the development of an independent research report that supports the communities vision for Hendy Street Hall.

All responses will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws. A de-identified engagement summary may be included in the final report, which will be publicly available on the Committee for Geelong's website. No personally identifiable information will be published or shared without consent.

The Project group will only use your contact information for the purposes in which they have been collected.
of the report

18. Terms of Entry

By submitting your feedback, you will be entered into a prize draw to win a Visa gift card. The winner will be selected at random by 30 September 2025 and contacted using the details provided in the submission.

The prize is not transferable or exchangeable for cash. Visa gift card terms and conditions, as set by the issuing merchant, will apply.

By entering, you acknowledge and accept these terms.

B: Survey Questions and Responses - Public Version 2

A new version was created upon comments and feedback from the public after the first round of listening post. Edits of the survey are summarised in the table at the end of this survey set.

1. Privacy & Collection Notice

The personal information and feedback collected on this page are being gathered by participants of the Leaders for Geelong Program (Committee for Geelong) — Re-imagine Hendy Street Hall Project Group. This information will be used to support the development of an independent research report that reflects the community's vision for Hendy Street Hall.

All responses will be managed in accordance with applicable privacy laws. A de-identified summary of the engagement may be included in the final report, which will be publicly accessible on the Committee for Geelong's website. No personally identifiable information will be published or shared without your explicit consent.

Your contact information will only be used for the purposes for which it was collected.

2. Terms of Entry

By submitting your feedback with your contact information, you will be entered into a prize draw to win a Visa gift card. The winner will be randomly selected by 30 September 2025 and contacted using the details provided in the submission.

The prize is not transferable or redeemable for cash. Visa gift card terms and conditions, as determined by the issuing provider, will apply.

3. Name - Optional

4. Contact Information (Email and/or Phone Number) - Optional

5. What best describes you? Tick all that apply

- Person (under 18)
- Person (under 30)
- Person (under 40)
- Person (under 50)
- Person (under 60)
- Person (over 60+)
- Prefer not to say
- Parent/Guardian
- Live in 3214
- Attend school in 3214
- Work in 3214
- Recreation in 3214
- CALD community member (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background)
- Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

6. How many years have you lived, worked, or been active in the 3214 area?

7. Have you attended any programs or events at Hendy Street Hall or other local centres?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, what programs or events did you attend?

If No, what were the reasons?

8. Are there any barriers that stop you from using the hall?

- I did not know about the hall and/or if it is still operating
- I don't know what's on
- It is too far
- It is not accessible for me
- Current programs are not relevant to me
- It doesn't feel like a welcoming environment
- Cost
- Language barriers
- Other (Please specify)

B: Survey Questions and Responses - Public Version 2

9. What types of programs or activities would you like the hall to offer? (Select all that apply)

- Educational workshops (e.g., languages, computer skills)
- Recreational sports or fitness groups
- Social clubs and meetups
- Volunteer and community service opportunities
- Environmental or gardening projects
- Cultural heritage or history programs
- Family and children's activities
- Arts and crafts sessions
- Music and performing arts
- Festivals and community events
- Other (Please specify)

10. Which creative, cultural, or recreational activities would interest you? (Select all that apply)

- Music, dance or drama classes/workshops
- Gardening or sustainability programs
- Cooking or nutrition classes
- Community events or cultural celebrations
- Sports or fitness classes
- Art & craft spaces
- Technology or digital arts workshops (e.g., computer, photography, graphic design)
- Book clubs or reading groups
- Film screenings or movie nights
- Other (Please specify)

11. Would you or your family use the following supports if they were available at the hall? (Select all that apply)

- Help with English or language classes
- Help with school or homework (tutoring)
- Access to computers, Wi-Fi or printing
- Financial counselling or budgeting help
- Free or low-cost meals or snacks
- Translation or interpreter support
- Support from a community worker or case manager
- Childcare or after-school programs
- Elder care or social support groups
- Disability support services
- Financial or legal advice sessions
- Health screenings or wellness clinics
- Transport or mobility assistance
- Other (Please specify)

12. What are the most important features a reshaped hall should offer? (Select up to 3)

- Accessible for people with disability
- Outdoor/garden area
- Kitchen or café space
- Spaces for children and youth
- Affordable/free programs
- Multilingual support
- Quiet spaces for study or work
- Other (Please specify)

13. When would you most likely attend a program? (Select all that apply)

- Weekday mornings
- Weekday afternoons
- Weekends
- School holidays
- Unsure

14. From your experience, what are some needs that aren't currently being met in the community?

15. Would you personally use Hendy Street Hall if it offered the kinds of programs or facilities you're interested in?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please tell us how you might use the space (e.g., attending classes, hosting events, joining social groups).

16. Any other feedback or suggestions about potential reshaping of the Hendy Street Hall?

17. Would you like to stay informed or get involved in the future via Rosewall Community Centre?

If Yes, please provide your email on the first page and you'll be subscribed to the Rosewall Community Centre newsletter.

- Yes
- No

18. Are you happy for us to contact you to discuss your suggestions/feedback further?

If Yes, please provide your contact information on the first page and you'll be contacted by one of our members from Leaders for Geelong or Rosewall Community Centre.

- Yes
- No

B: Survey Questions and Responses - Comparison of Version 1 and 2

Version 2 Question	Comparison	Change from Version 1
1. Privacy & Collection Notice	Revised privacy statement	Rewritten for clarity and tone. Now emphasizes explicit consent, privacy laws, and that responses will be de-identified.
2. Terms of Entry	Prize draw conditions	Now explicitly states that only those who submit contact info will be entered. Wording simplified and made clearer.
3. Name – Optional	Split from email/phone	In V1, Name and Email were combined in one question. Now split into two distinct fields.
4. Contact Information (Email/Phone) – Optional	Clarified collection method	V1 had this embedded in Q1 & Q2; now clearly separated, and linked to permission in Q18.
5. What best describes you?	Demographics	No major changes. Structure and options are the same as V1.
6. How many years in 3214?	Community connection	Same as V1, unchanged.
7. Attendance at programs or events	Participation history	Matches V1 Q5. No major changes.
8. Barriers to using the hall	◆ New question	Not in V1. Added to capture reasons people don't participate (e.g., not knowing what's on, accessibility, language, cost).
9. Preferred programs or activities	◆ New question	Not in V1. Expanded list of options like environmental projects, arts, volunteering. Gathers aspirational interest.
10. Creative/cultural/recreational activities	◆ New question	Not in V1. Provides specific insight into arts and recreation preferences. Useful for programming decisions.
11. Support services	Expanded version of V1 Q8/Q9	Much broader range of supports (e.g., disability, elder care, transport, health clinics). Combines Q8 and Q9 from V1.
12. Important features in reshaped hall	Matches V1 Q6	Mostly unchanged. Still asks for top 3 features.
13. Preferred times to attend programs	Matches V1 Q7	Unchanged from V1.
14. Unmet community needs	Same as V1 Q10	Unchanged. Open-ended for community voice.
15. Would you use the hall? How?	Reworded and expanded version of V1 Q13	Combines Q13 and Q11 from V1, and asks how people might use it (e.g., hosting, attending, socialising).
16. Other feedback or suggestions	Matches V1 Q15	Unchanged. Still open-ended.
17. Stay informed or involved via Rosewall	Replaces V1 Q16	Now links to Rosewall Community Centre newsletter instead of generic future contact.
18. Permission to contact you further	Reworded from V1 Q2	Made clearer: "If Yes, please provide your contact info on first page..." Ties back to Q4 now.

B: Survey Questions and Responses - Organisation

1. The personal information and feedback collected on this page are being gathered by participants of the Leaders for Geelong Program (Committee for Geelong) — Re-imagine Hendy Street Hall Project Group. This information will be used to support the development of an independent research report that reflects the community's vision for Hendy Street Hall.

All responses will be managed in accordance with applicable privacy laws. A de-identified summary of the engagement may be included in the final report, which will be publicly accessible on the Committee for Geelong's website. No personally identifiable information will be published or shared without your explicit consent.

Your contact information will only be used for the purposes for which it was collected.

I have read the privacy and collection notice and consent to my feedback forming part of the report

2. Name of organisation (optional)

3. Your name and role in the organisation (optional)

4. Are you happy for us to contact you to discuss your suggestions/feedback further?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, please provide your best contact email/phone number below

5. How long has your organisation been operating within the 3214 area?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10 years
- More than 10 years

6. What has your organisation's involvement been in the 3214 area in the past? (Select all options that apply)

- Service Delivery
- Community Development/Advocacy
- Events/Workshops Hosting
- Outreach/Engagement Activities
- Employment/Training Programs
- Cultural/Faith-based Events
- None of the above (Please specify)

7. What services or programs does your organisation currently deliver in the 3214 area?

- Youth Services
- Family or Parenting Support
- Employment or Training
- Cultural or Language Programs
- Disability Support
- Aged Care or Seniors Programs/Support
- Mental Health or Wellbeing Programs/Support
- Food Relief/Clothing or Emergency Accommodation Support
- Sports/Arts/Recreation
- Other (Please specify)

B: Survey Questions and Responses - Organisation

8. Are there any barriers that limit your organisation's ability to expand or maintain services in the 3214 area?

- Lack of suitable venues
- Insufficient funding
- Staffing/Volunteer shortages
- Decreased community involvement
- Transport/access challenges
- Competition for space or preferred time slots
- Other (Please specify)

9. From your service delivery in 3214, what community needs or service gaps have you identified?

E.g. Affordable venue hire, safe space for youth, programs outside business hours, etc.

10. Outside of your service, are there other unmet community needs you're aware of in the 3214 area?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- If Yes, please specify

11. What types of facilities or features in a redeveloped hall would best support your organisation's work? (Select all that apply)

- Community event space
- Training or classroom facilities
- Shared office or co-working space
- Affordable rental venue for local groups

- Studio/rehearsal or creative space
- Kitchen or food preparation facilities
- Outdoor/green space activation
- Storage for community resources
- Other (Please specify)

12. Would your organisation consider renting or utilising the Hendy Street Hall in the future?

- Yes - regularly (weekly/monthly)
- Yes - occasionally (e.g. events)
- Maybe - depending on price or availability
- No

If Yes or Maybe, what would you use the facilities for?

13. How would you envision Hendy Street Hall being used or programmed to best serve the community needs and have the greatest impact? (in terms of activities, purposes, or types of events)

14. Any additional thoughts or suggestions on the future use or design of Hendy Street Hall?

C: Maps- Planning Scheme Zone Map

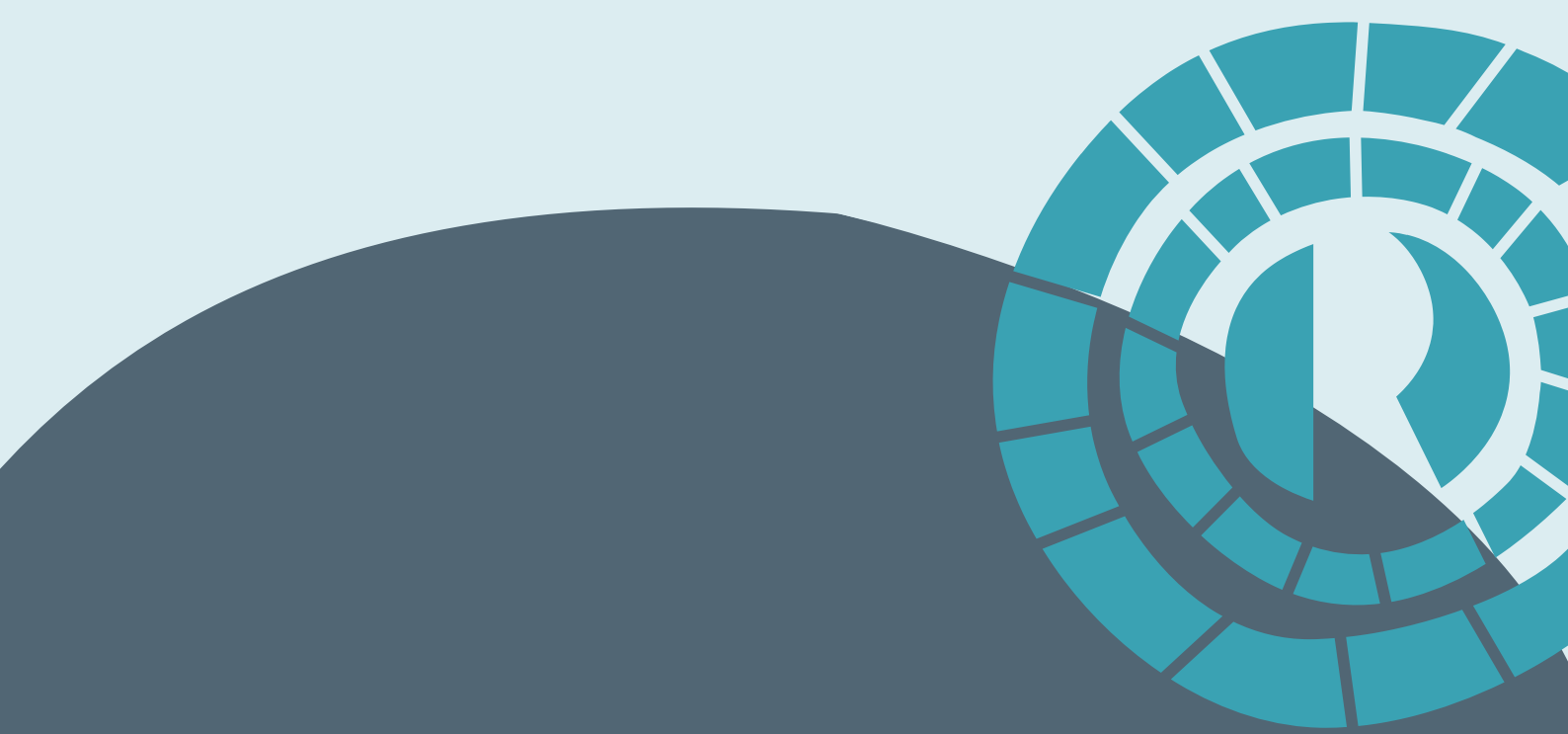
Public Park and Recreation Zone



Gas Pipeline Location and Buffer Distance (126m from Hendy Street Hall)

1. Pink line along Hendy St – Gas pipeline
2. Purple lines on either side of Hendy St – Gas pipeline buffer distance





Rosewall
Community Centre

