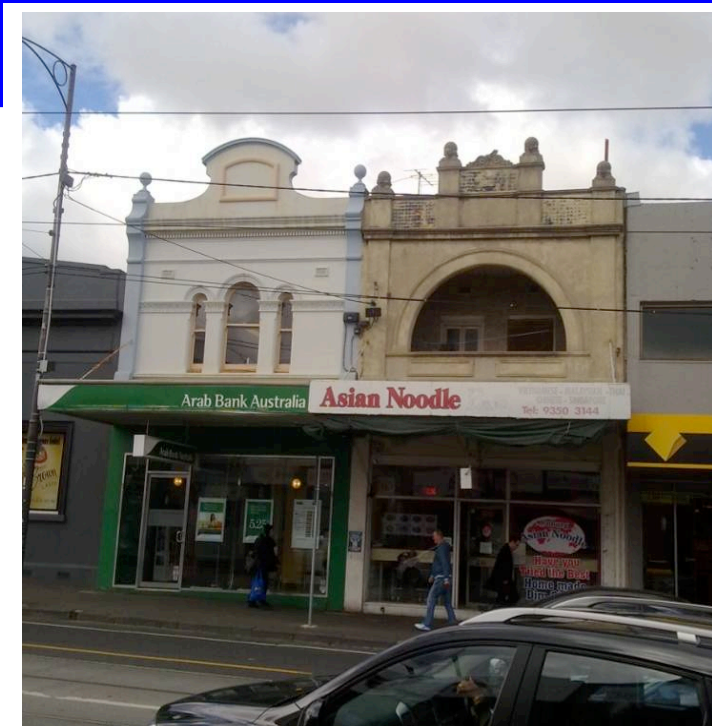


Gentrification, immigration and community cohesion in Melbourne's multicultural north



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Gentrification, immigration and community cohesion in Melbourne's multicultural north

Val Colic-Peisker, Shanthi Robertson, Peter Phipps and Petr Svoboda

Executive summary

This report analyses processes of social change affecting two multicultural suburbs in Melbourne's north, Coburg and Fawkner, focusing on factors that impact on community cohesion. The Moreland Council (2006, 2011) has identified that national trends of rising housing costs and spikes in unemployment disproportionately affect culturally diverse communities. This report seeks to contribute to an in-depth understanding of these issues, drawing on existing demographic data as well as residents' perceptions. The report is based on ABS data, interviews and focus group discussions with residents and local service providers, and participant observation in the neighbourhoods. It provides a brief social profile of each suburb before presenting the narrative data gleaned through this project. The report focuses on the issues of gentrification, immigration, employment, housing and community cohesion in the two suburbs. The report makes the case that these two suburbs share some broad experiences of social change:

- The de-industrialisation of Melbourne's former industrial heartland for textiles, footwear, food and auto manufacturing.
- The rapid increase in housing costs across Melbourne in the context of a growing population.
- Increasingly skills-focused immigration in the context of a labour market dominated by service jobs.
- Socio-demographic transitions (differently affecting the two suburbs), including: the ageing of established migrant communities; the influx of new migrant groups; and gentrification.
- Relatively harmonious inter-ethnic and community relations.
- A relative lack of new public infrastructure including public transport, public housing and public education facilities, with some recent investment in recreation facilities.

In the context of social transition, Coburg is experiencing:

- Rapid gentrification measured by housing prices as well as household income, occupation and educational qualification of residents.
- Increasing pressures for residential densification.
- An influx of international and local students and temporary migrant workers in various precarious conditions of immigration status and employment.
- A shift to a mixed service-based and retail economy alongside an increasingly middle-class resident base who tend to commute to the CBD and elsewhere on well-connected public transport lines.

Fawkner, by contrast:

- Has a concentration of disadvantaged households on the basis of income, education, occupation and unemployment.
- Continues to have affordable land and housing relative to other parts of Melbourne equidistant to the CBD.
- Continues to be a destination of choice for relatively newly-arrived migrant groups, especially people of Muslim backgrounds from a range of source countries.
- Is relatively isolated and poorly serviced by public transport lines, making locals largely dependent on private transport to access employment and services outside their immediate neighbourhood.

The report flags a number of policy recommendations. The recommendations have been developed from the report's findings and discussions during a stakeholder workshop held with Council staff and local service providers in April 2013.

This exploratory study was conducted by researchers at RMIT University, Melbourne, in collaboration and with in-kind support by the City of Moreland. The study has been funded by a small grant (\$25,000) from the Scanlon Foundation, Melbourne. Using previously established research links, this collaboration is intended to generate findings that are of interest not only to academics but also to local and state policymakers, service providers and local residents.

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PART ONE

Introduction

Our research project focuses on an in-depth comparison of two suburbs within the City of Moreland: Coburg and Fawkner. We look at several key processes: gentrification, especially in Coburg, affecting availability, quality and affordability of housing in the area; availability of local employment and the state of affairs with (un)employment among the local residents; ongoing immigration and general demographic change and their effects on community cohesion, including neighbourliness in the suburbs and social inclusion of the new arrivals in these two ethno-culturally and socio-economically diverse suburbs. These neighbourhoods are currently experiencing socio-economic and demographic change through the interaction of newly arrived and emerging communities of international migrants and ‘gentrifiers’ with established residents, the Australian-born or immigrants alike. The group we call ‘gentrifiers’—those with higher levels of education and higher incomes than the existing population—are attracted to the Moreland area from other metropolitan areas of Melbourne or from elsewhere in Victoria and Australia due to several factors. The main factor seems to be relative housing affordability coupled with proximity to job-rich inner suburbs and the Melbourne CBD. Relatively affordable housing in these suburbs are a crucial attraction for first-time homebuyers—younger couples and families—keen to establish a foothold and a financial nest-egg in the dynamic metropolitan housing market.

Of course, in the ‘liquid modernity’ of the 21st century, where according to Bauman (2005:1) ‘conditions under which its members act change faster than it takes the ways of acting to consolidate into habits and routines’ and exposed to the winds of globalisation, all Australian suburbs and localities experience social change, but these processes may be more dynamic and visible in a large metropolitan area such as Melbourne. The ‘Greater Melbourne’ area has received the largest number of arrivals, predominately international migrants, of all Australian cities since the beginning of the 21st century. In the mid-2000s the city surpassed Sydney as the main immigrant gateway in Australia, reaching a population of 4.2 million by January 2013. According to ABS, most migrants initially settle in the outer suburbs of Melbourne, especially in Melbourne’s west and north, as well as some areas of the outer south-east.

Our case study suburbs of Coburg and Fawkner have been chosen because they are experiencing transition in different ways. Coburg is a suburb with long-established diverse population that has been in the process of rapid gentrification over the past decade, alongside a number of other middle-ring Melbourne suburbs, while Fawkner has recently transformed into a visibly multicultural hub further away from the city centre, experiencing considerable demographic change in a context of relative socio-economic disadvantage. In broad terms, in Coburg, the established migrant communities that arrived in the post-war decades are being gradually replaced by ‘gentrifiers’, while in Fawkner, they are being

replaced by more recent migrant arrivals from different source countries and ethnic backgrounds. These processes are described in more detail in Part Two of this report.

The project's aims have been developed through consultation with the City of Moreland Community Development and Social Policy Unit. Providing housing and employment support services for recent immigrants, understanding cultural expectations, and managing the impact of gentrification and social change on the cohesion of diverse communities are identified in both the *Moreland Affordable Housing Strategy 2006* and the *Moreland Multicultural Policy 2011-2015* as key issues in need of further research. In a dynamic sub/urban system such as Melbourne, demographic and social change is an important backdrop of any social scientific investigations as well as local government policy and service provision. The recommendations of the report have been developed in close consultation with the City of Moreland, with the intention of highlighting local government best practice for social cohesion in multicultural neighbourhoods through housing, employment and community development strategies.

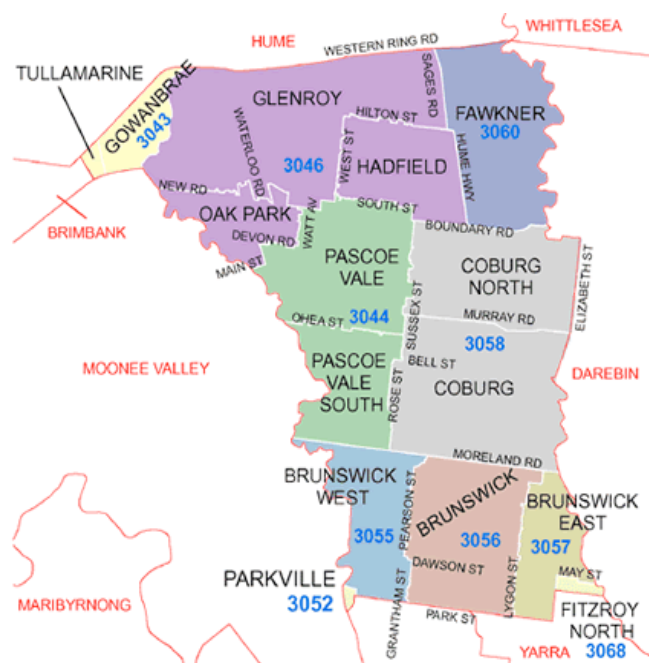


Figure 1: City of Moreland: suburbs

Our approach is comparative and we use a combination of methods to investigate how local housing, employment, community cohesion and ‘social capital’ facilitate, or otherwise, the social inclusion of recent arrivals, and how established residents of Coburg and Fawkner are affected. These issues are explored with a significant input of local residents, service providers and policymakers. The research is participatory, foregrounding community members’ experiences through one-to-one interviews, focus groups and participant observation in the two localities. Our study also has elements of so-called ‘action research’, as it brings together diverse community members for focus group discussions and in the occasion of participant observations in the local areas. These ‘transect walks’ through Coburg and Fawkner were guided by local residents who shared their stories of the suburb and experiences of living in it in the past and today.

This report consists of three parts: Part One contains the introduction and methodology sections; Part Two provides profiles of the suburbs of Coburg and Fawkner; Part Three is a comparative, in-depth discussion of key issues for social cohesion: housing; local economy and employment; and local residents' access to services (public transport, shopping, education, medical services, food, 'culture', entertainment etc.). The report especially interested in the issues of community engagement and cohesion among diverse local residents and communities, and surveys similarities and contrasting differences between Coburg and Fawkner with regards to these issues. The report uses primary and secondary sources: our own data collected through a combination of ethnographic methods and, as secondary sources, ABS data, academic literature and government reports.

This research report was presented and discussed at a project workshop on 24 April 2013. The workshop served to further build on this report's recommendations through consultation with Council staff, service providers and other key stakeholders, and to begin to develop best practice frameworks around housing, employment and social cohesion for local government contexts. The workshop recommendations are incorporated at the end of this report, which will be disseminated to other metropolitan local councils with similar demographic and socio-economic profiles and experiencing similar issues across Australia, and to other interested agencies and individual researchers.

Methodology

This study set out to explore the following research questions:

1. How does ethnic and socio-economic diversity shape the local community life in the case study sites of Coburg and Fawkner?
2. What are the emergent and established migrant communities in Coburg and Fawkner?
3. What are the housing issues confronting suburban communities in Coburg and Fawkner, with an emphasis on availability, access, affordability and cultural and social expectations of housing?
4. What are the prominent employment and economic participation issues in Coburg and Fawkner?
5. Given the identified direction and type of social change in Coburg and Fawkner, what are potential problems facing the two suburban communities in the near future?
7. How do individual experiences and perceptions illustrate and illuminate these themes?
8. How can housing and employment policy help foster social inclusion in these communities, especially for recently arrived international migrants?
9. How can the data help shape best practice models in social inclusion and social cohesion policy for Moreland and other local government areas experiencing similar demographic and socio-economic transitions?

Methods

Moreland Council has identified that large scale demographic and survey research has been insufficient to capture the complexity of local issues. Demographic data are best understood in concert with qualitative, face-to-face and community-engaged research. The methodology in this project developed from these assumptions and involved a careful triangulation of methods. The researchers have drawn from their previous experience with mixed-method research and urban social research in areas of high ethnic and cultural diversity. This methodology has applied well to an understanding of community experiences of housing and employment, and the intersections of these issues with the experience of social inclusion, neighbourliness, social cohesion and wellbeing in Coburg and Fawkner. Importantly, we adopted a comparative case-study approach: we focused on two in-depth case studies of ‘multicultural suburbs in transition’, starting from an assumption (or ‘research hypothesis’) that these two suburbs, although geographically close and part of the same local government area, are in many ways different social and built environments, experiencing different transitions over recent years and at the present moment.

The following data collection methods were used to ‘build profiles’ of Coburg and Fawkner and to engage with the perspectives of diverse groups of residents in both localities:

- 1) Analysis of the Australian Census data and other large quantitative datasets to establish the demographic, housing and employment profiles of the two case study suburbs. A selection of relevant census data is presented throughout the report in Tables 1-7.
- 2) One focus group with community service providers, including Moreland Council staff. These providers were working around housing, employment, diversity and community development issues in the Moreland area. They served as an advisory reference group whose initial input into the project’s key themes helped to further direct and refine the study.
- 3) Six focus groups with local residents, divided by suburb and gender of participants, involving over fifty participants of ethnically diverse backgrounds. Two focus groups were conducted in Coburg (one male and one female) and four were conducted in Fawkner (one male, two female and one mixed-gender). Resident focus groups in Coburg were held at the Moreland Council offices in Coburg, while Fawkner focus groups were held at the Fawkner Community House and St. Peter’s Anglican church. Three Fawkner focus groups were separated by gender in order to avoid any barriers that inter-gender discussions may have brought about, especially for people from some ethnic and religious backgrounds, and also to allow gender-specific issues and perspectives to emerge. Focus groups consisted of a mixture of established and recently arrived residents of Coburg and Fawkner. Focus groups discussions focused on housing, employment, social cohesion and recent changes in the social and built environment of the two suburbs that long-term residents were able to identify. During the focus group discussions, we encouraged dialogue and sharing of experience between diverse participants: recent and longer-term residents, people from different ethnic backgrounds, and people from different walks of life.

4) Twenty-six in-depth individual interviews with residents of diverse backgrounds, including eight ‘key informants’ who were both local residents and also involved in community service provision or local policymaking. These interviews generally took place in interviewees’ homes or local locations convenient to them. All but one were conducted in English; one was conducted in Italian and translated by a bilingual interviewer. Interviews approached the issues under investigation—employment, housing, social cohesion, diversity and changes in the suburbs over the past several decades—through participants’ life narratives and personal employment, housing and settlement histories, as well as their social engagement and sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods.

5) Three ‘transect walks’, one in Coburg and two in Fawkner. Transect walks are a specific participant observation method where researchers are guided through the local area by local community members. Visual (photographic) data was also recorded by researchers during transect walks and some of it is included in this report (Figures 2-13).

All focus groups, interviews and transect walks were recorded with the permission of participants and transcribed. Pseudonyms are used for all participants throughout this report, and any data considered to be identifying has not been included.

We use the overall term ‘social mapping’ to describe the way in which our data collection methods are linked to forms and methods of analysis. Much of this data includes ‘objective facts’ and social outcomes but also subjectivities underpinning the ways in which people choose to articulate their lived experiences, tell their stories and relate them to ‘objective facts’. Different aspects of qualitative analysis enable us to capture events and issues within local communities from different angles and at the same time relate these perspectives to broader social themes, such as the changing nature of community life, gentrification, changing patterns of employment, the way diversity and multiculturalism are refracted through local contexts and so on.

Research participants

Our research participants—over 110 people in total, who took part in focus groups, interviews and transect walks—were local residents, local business owners and local service providers and officials, and often had a combination of these attributes. Local residents (a large majority of our participants) represented a range of different resident groups in terms of age, gender, socio-economic background, ethno-cultural and linguistic backgrounds and their length of residence in Moreland. In the case of international migrants, we balanced our sample in terms of their time of arrival in Australia.

Out of 26 interview participants, 15 were women and 11 were men. Interview participants were from Italian, Turkish, Lebanese, Iraqi, Greek, Polish, Anglo-Australian, Pakistani, Indian, Afghani, Kurdish and British backgrounds, with many more backgrounds present in the focus groups. Several participants were second-generation migrants (Australian-born with migrant parents). Ten interview participants were older migrants, who arrived in Australia 1957-1980. The rest were more recent migrants, who arrived in the period 1982-2009.

Local services providers and officials worked for either local council or local agencies in youth services, migrant settlement, employment, community and other social services. Two of them worked for state-level youth or ethnic organisations.

While our sample of participants is small and cannot be considered representative of the local population, we took care to have main ethnic and other groups represented among our respondents, and their voices heard. The individual participants did not speak as representatives of their respective groups but nonetheless their stories, concerns and suggestions are likely to resonate with many other Moreland residents and service providers, and point to issues that are relevant to local population and therefore worthy of attention by local service providers and policymakers.

PART TWO

Suburb Profiles

In this section we provide a broad-brush comparison of the two suburbs. We start from select socio-economic and ethno-cultural diversity data from the 2011 Census, using the City of Moreland, Greater Melbourne and Australian data as reference points.

The City of Moreland is not only ethno-culturally, but also socio-economically diverse area. The inner city suburb of Brunswick has been gentrified over the past quarter-century from a typical working-class suburb, housing a large number of southern European immigrants who arrived in the post-war decades and mainly worked in manufacturing, to a fashionable ‘yuppie’ suburb with expensive real-estate and a white-collar workforce. Jakubowicz and Moustafine (2010: 4), taking Brunswick as an example, write about Melbourne in the 1960s as ‘a city in which social class mattered, and in which religion and ethnicity marked boundaries of interaction.’ At the time, there were significant residential concentrations of Italian, Greek, Turkish and other southern European ‘blue-collars’ in Brunswick, Coburg and elsewhere. Their labour market placement went as planned by the Australian immigration authorities, unlike their assimilation into the Anglo-Australian society, which did not work as expected, for several reasons. A key reason was the very success of their labour market placement at the bottom of the ‘segmented’ labour market, largely separate from Anglo-Australians who were pushed upwards in the labour market by this influx of the first large contingent of non-Anglophone immigrants. This lack of assimilation brought about the Australian policy of multiculturalism in the 1970s, largely as a necessity of accommodating diversity.

A point of significance for our project is that the 1950s and 1960s were marked by a strong and neat overlap between ethnicity and class: being non-Anglophone (and also non-Protestant, either Catholic or Orthodox) meant being working-class—with some exceptions of course. Today we like to think, and indeed we have argued (see Colic-Peisker 2011a) that the overlap of ethnicity and class have become less pronounced, with a large ‘multicultural middle-class’ created in the white-collar service sector since the 1980s through large intakes of skilled and professional non-Anglophone immigrants and the social mobility of children of the post-war arrivals.

This is perhaps nowhere more visible than in Coburg, with its pronounced ethno-cultural and socio-economic transformation. Over the past 10-15 years, the gentrification has crept north from Brunswick to Coburg. The process was initially prompted by a dramatic reduction of manufacturing jobs in the late 1980s, and the switch to a service economy. Unlike fast-gentrifying Coburg with socio-economic indicators tending towards the Greater Melbourne averages, the suburb of Fawkner is on the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum within Moreland, falling into the 2nd decile (1-10, 1 meaning most disadvantaged) on the ABS’s Index of Socio-Economic Disadvantage (ABS 2008).



Figure 2: Sydney Road: the central transport and retail artery of the city of Moreland and a multicultural service district in Brunswick and Coburg

Table 1 shows some indicative comparative census data for Coburg and Fawkner.

Table 1. Coburg and Fawkner: comparative select demographic and socio-economic data

	Coburg	Fawkner	Moreland LGA	Greater Melbourne	Australia
Persons under 15 (% of total population)	16.9	19.9	16.2	18.4	19.3
Persons over 65 (% of total population)	14.2	21.2	14.9	13.1	14.0
Personal weekly median income (\$)	548	362	551	591	577
English only spoken at home (%)	53.4	32.5	55.2	66.3	76.8
Top 3 LOTE spoken at home (%)	Italian 11.0 Greek 7.3 Arabic 7.3	Italian 18.4 Arabic 10.6 Urdu 6.1	Italian 9.7 Arabic 5.7 Greek 5.5	Greek 2.8 Italian 2.8 Mandarin 2.5	Mandarin 1.6 Italian 1.4 Arabic 1.3
Labourers (% of 15+)	6.9	13.4	7.2	8.0	9.4
Professionals (% of 15+)	30.8	16.4	29.0	24.1	21.3
Top 3 religious affiliations (% of population)	Catholic 32.2 No relig. 24.8 Orthodox 10.3	Catholic 42.6 Islam 24.4 Orthodox 7.2	Catholic 33.1 No relig. 22.8 Islam 9.3	Catholic 27.2 No relig. 23.5 Anglican 10.8	Catholic 25.3 No relig. 22.3 Anglican 17.1

Source: ABS, 2011 Census

Coburg

Coburg is a large suburb (6.9 sq kms) with 25,000 residents recorded in the 2011 Census. It is close to the Melbourne CBD and inner suburbs where jobs are located, and well connected by public transport. Sydney Road is the main traffic artery of the City of Moreland that also connects the area with the CBD by tram. Sydney Road's history starts in 1837, when it was first surveyed by Robert Hoddle, dividing the land between the Merri and Moonee Ponds creeks in two (MMA 2009).

Coburg is a diverse and interesting suburb in terms of its natural geographic features and its built environment. For example, the idyllic Coburg Lake and surrounding parkland are across the street from the site of former high security Pentridge Prison, which is currently being redeveloped into medium-density housing. In addition, typical quiet, low-density suburban areas are a stone's throw away from the bustling Sydney Road. Diversity is also a feature of Coburg's population: the suburb is often described as ethno-culturally diverse and 'cosmopolitan'.

Due to its spatial and social advantages, Coburg has been rapidly transforming into a 'middle-class' suburb. In the post-war decades, Coburg was a typical working-class suburb with factories and plenty of manufacturing jobs in situ or close by, and dominated by the first large wave of non-Anglophone immigrants to Australia, mainly Italians, Greeks, Turks and Maltese. During the late 1970s and the 1980s Lebanese migrants started settling in Coburg in larger numbers. With the economic restructuring of the late 1980s, which extinguished many manufacturing businesses and jobs, came a demographic and social change. One word that best describes Coburg's transition is 'gentrification'. This means an influx of people with higher socio-economic profile than the existing residents, which usually lifts housing prices and squeezes out the population with lower socio-economic profiles. Gentrification is considered a favourable urban transition following the dramatic shrinking of the manufacturing sector, even if it also means that social problems (e.g. unemployment or precarious employment status) are pushed out elsewhere. The unfavourable transition out of manufacturing is the creation of (sub)urban 'rust belts', which Australia largely succeeded in avoiding, unlike the UK and US, where some dramatic examples of urban decline were created by economic restructuring.

Employment in Moreland is nowadays largely with the local government and small businesses providing local services. Most Coburg residents travel to work outside their suburb and local government area. The unemployment rate in Coburg was at 5.8% in the 2006 Census, and it increased slightly in the 2011 Census to 5.9%. In 2011 the Australian rate was 5.6% and Melbourne's 5.5% (ABS 2012). More details on employment and residents' perspectives on the issue can be found in Part 3 of this report.

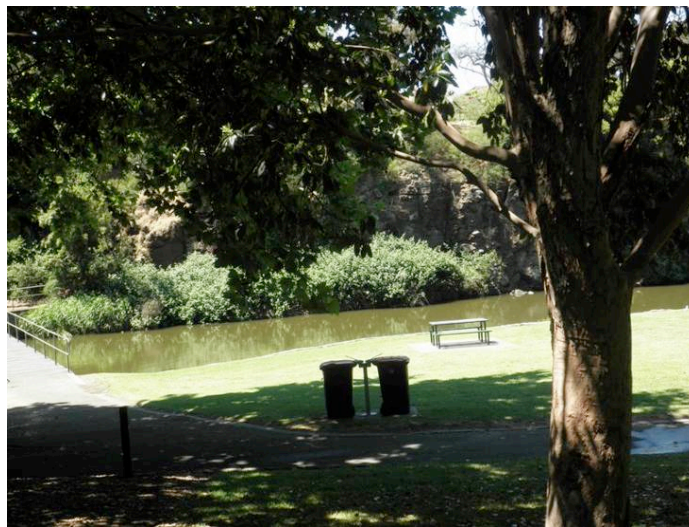


Figure 3: The idyllic corner of the bustling suburb: Coburg Lake

Over the past two gentrifying decades, Coburg has attracted a diverse demographic of the Australian-born and migrants alike, raising its socio-demographic profile from census to census. For example, the 2011 Census recorded 30.8% of Coburg residents as ‘professionals’, which is significantly higher than the national rate of 21.3%, and the Greater Melbourne rate of 24.1%. Only 6.9% of Coburg residents described themselves as ‘labourers’ compared to 9.4% nationally and 8.0% in Greater Melbourne (see Table 1). These are reliable indicators of gentrification.

In the 2011 Census, Coburg had many socio-economic and demographic indicators close to the Greater Melbourne values, for example the median age of 35, the average household size of 2.6 people and the median total personal weekly income of \$548 (Table 1). About 10,000 Coburg residents (one half) were born overseas and 53.4 per cent of residents speak English only at home, which means that the remaining 46.6 per cent speak other languages at home and are therefore likely to be either migrants or children of migrants, the part of the second generation fluent in the language of their parents. As recorded by the 2011 Census, the largest migrant group in Coburg were the Italy-born (1710 people), followed by Greece-born (827) and Lebanon-born (730). The majority of migrants living in Coburg arrived in Australia in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s: about 4600 of the 25,000 residents recorded in the 2011 Census. However, a considerable number of Coburg residents arrived in Australia during the 2000s: 2314 people, but from different source countries. While southern Europeans predominated in the post-war decades, the 21st century immigrants came from India, China, New Zealand and the UK. This reflects the dominant immigration pattern across Australia, which now largely focuses on skilled migration streams.



Figure 4: Italian migrant Emilio Russo built a new house in Coburg in 1980 where he lives to this day. Like many houses built by Italian migrants, it has Mediterranean columns (balustrades), a lemon tree and a superb vegetable garden at the back (source: A. Jakubowicz, *Making Multicultural Australia* website, 2009, at <http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/library/media/Image/id/1207.Emilio-Russos-house-in-Coburg>)

We were fortunate to have had a long-term local resident as our interviewee and a guide on our ‘transect walk’ through Coburg. Çevik migrated to Australia from Turkey in 1974, lived in Coburg for 27 years, and only a few months ago downsized and moved to Pascoe Vale. Like many migrants from this cohort, he worked in a car factory, saved and established enough capital to start his own business, in his case clothing manufacturing in Coburg. Like many small textile and footwear manufacturers in Melbourne in the early 1990s he had to close his business due to the impact of import tariff deregulation and consequent offshoring of manufacturing. Before moving to Coburg he had lived in the then industrial, working-class Richmond and in Port Melbourne, which he described as ‘smelly at the time’. Çevik told us about ‘old Coburg’ and ‘new Coburg’. He described friendly, supportive neighbourhoods consisting of Turkish, Greek and Lebanese migrants in the 1980s and 1990s and he praised the ‘respect between different nationalities’ that makes ‘Australia still the best country...where everyone is accepted’. Çevik told us Turkish families used to congregate at Coburg Lake around the barbecue every weekend, a tradition that new migrant families continue today. Coburg was much quieter then, he told us, with fewer cars, but the Pentridge Prison was a menacing presence, and the locals used to worry about prisoners escaping. The prison was closed in 1997 and is currently being redeveloped into a ‘walled’ medium-density residential area.

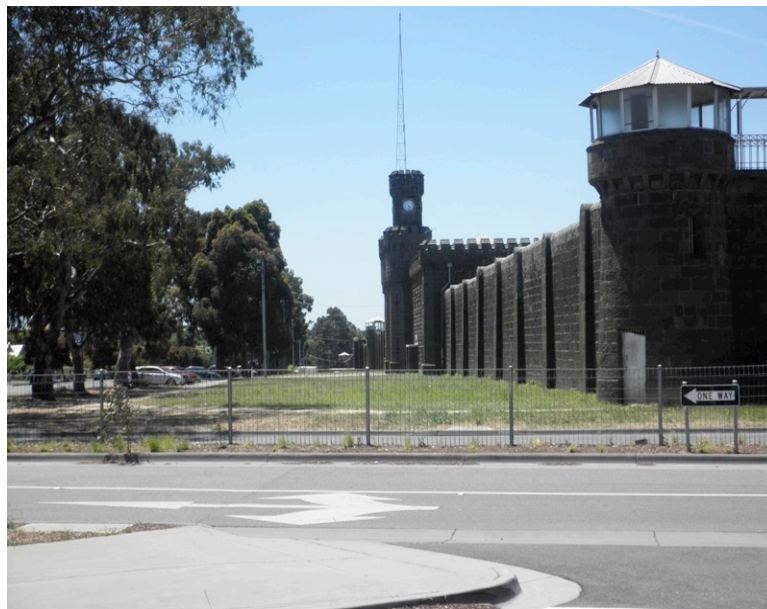


Figure 5: Pentridge high-security prison in Coburg (1851-1997) used to be a menacing presence in the suburb.

We heard different stories and impressions of Coburg from its residents: recently arrived migrants, long-term migrants, those who grew up in the area and the ‘gentrifiers’. The impressions varied by gender, age, ethnic background, socio-economic position and the point of comparison—for some their overseas hometown and for others another Melbourne suburb. For example, several Anglo-Australian women told us Coburg was ‘safer’ before and nowadays they felt uncomfortable at night and in certain places which were meant for ‘men only’. A middle-aged long-term Anglo-Australian resident told us:

Safety for me has dropped. I don't feel as safe as I used to in these areas. [...] I live in a laneway as well and [...] I don't mind the kids, they hang out there and drink and smoke but they're generally harmless. But I think there's a bit of division. For me personally with a lot of the Middle Eastern cultures it feels... and I live with my nieces who also feel a bit like this, with a lot of these new shisha bars. They feel very predominantly male orientated and as women we don't feel comfortable to go in there.

A participant who hails from Mexico City said she felt safe in Coburg in comparison. Unlike Coburg women's focus group, Coburg men's focus group did not have any concerns about safety of the suburban streets and venues. One participant described an incident of road (or, more precisely, parking) rage, when his car mirror was deliberately destroyed by another driver. Anglo-Australians who made up a majority of the Coburg men's focus group were in agreement that the suburb ‘used to be really rough but it has changed, it is now generally much safer’. An Anglo-Australian participant told us:

I came from the bush originally [...] my brother actually worked at Toyota in Port Melbourne and I got a job there [...] We lived in three houses in Brunswick and then I bought a house in Coburg [...] because I could afford it [...] that's 18 years ago, and I've lived there ever since. Again, I have found Coburg is good and I am probably luckier than most people, I work in the municipality that I live in. [...] Back in the 1980s Brunswick was a shocking place to live and Coburg was the same [...] [These days there are] pubs you can actually go into but years ago you couldn't... just about every one for the length of Sydney Rd... I reckon someone's been shot in everyone of them! [...] It happens a little bit

now but nowhere near as bad as it used to be, I can tell you. Pubs that you would never, ever go into unless [...] you were looking for a fight or you wanted to buy drugs or something like that.[...] You would never take a female into them – no.

Apparently, the Coburg pubs were an ‘English-speaking’ and ‘men only’ zone—frequented, according to our participants, by Anglo-Australians, local Aboriginal residents and Maoris from New Zealand, while non-Anglophone migrant men had other ways of socialising, in their ‘ethnic’ restaurants, private homes and outdoors (such as the already mentioned family entertainment at Coburg Lake). We were told the refurbishing and ‘upgrading’ of the local pubs was one of the noticeable aspects of gentrification. While far from being as fully gentrified as the inner-north suburbs of Brunswick and Fitzroy, Coburg increasingly displays many of these features of the service-rich and consumption-lifestyle orientated precinct.



Figure 6: Researchers and a local resident having a break in a local Turkish restaurant during the transect walk in Coburg.

Another participant mentioned that the drug problem in the neighbourhood also abated with gentrification:

Everything goes in cycles. We had the drug problem [...] Late 1990s I reckon, probably even into the early 2000’s in Brunswick and Coburg. Heroin and that sort of thing [...] in the public parks and stuff you were finding a lot of needles at that time.

An interviewee who can be described as a typical ‘gentrifier’—a non-Anglophone migrant professional working in the city, a relatively recent arrival in Australia, and partnered with an Anglo-Australian—said he enjoyed Coburg’s shops, bakeries and green spaces, but was uncomfortable on Sydney Road at night:

Walking down Sydney Road at night is not the nicest thing...um...I do not know what it is...I suppose it is a bit of a sense of...security issues. It’s just like—people hanging out in the street...part of it may be just a cultural misinterpretation of what is going on there; perhaps it is just an outdoors culture, I don’t know. Middle-Eastern men hanging out in the Victoria Street mall...young men. I dunno...there is a sense that you have to be a little bit careful around Sydney Road. The last year’s

Jill Meagher case [an abduction and murder in 2012 of a young Brunswick woman by an Anglo-Australian man] intensified the feeling that Coburg is not the safest place. My wife probably would not want to walk down there by herself at night.

Rising housing prices are one of the most quoted indicators of gentrification in Australia and overseas. Median house prices in Coburg have risen from under \$300 000 in 2007 to over \$600 000 in 2011 and median weekly rent has increased from \$275 to \$375 in the same period (Property Observer 2011). One participant summarised the effect of gentrification on housing prices:

[T]here is a push from Coburg... people being pushed more towards, like, Hadfield, Fawkner – so affordability is pushing that side [...] It's rents and the housing price and I think ten years ago it was a push from Brunswick to Coburg, these days further out [...] you have a look at the prices of houses here...like Brunswick you can just forget about buying a place there—full stop now. It is just ridiculous.

The Pentridge prison site redevelopment into residential medium-density and high-density housing seems to be attracting mixed reviews from locals. While most expressed relief that they did not have a high-security prison in their neighbourhood any more, the success and residential attractiveness of the housing redevelopment was questioned by some of our respondents: local residents definitely have mixed feelings. There is a wider concern that the heritage value of the 19th century edifice is being lost to redevelopment.



Figure 7: One of many Middle-eastern restaurants, cafés and Bakeries along Sydney Rd., Coburg



Figure 8: Coburg Mall

A middle-class, consumption-oriented lifestyle seems increasingly visible in Coburg: the myriad of shops, boutiques, cafes and restaurants lined on the long stretch of Sydney Road rely on ‘gentrifiers’ as their clientele. An interviewee in her 50s who grew up in Coburg in a family of Italian migrants had mixed feelings about changes in the suburb:

Coburg is multicultural, a very friendly and welcoming place...with its cafes and restaurants... mainly Lebanese and Turkish restaurants, the food is very good, and Vietnamese bakeries...there is a home feeling in restaurants. [...] I like liveliness in the street, even the noise of the nearby mechanic revving cars, it keeps me company [...] Sometimes I feel I do not kinda belong...I feel like a minority...but I do not mind it...there are less of us now, the Italian people. Children of Italian migrants moved further away [...] I am not totally part of it.

An Anglo-Australian middle-aged woman, also a long-term resident, regretted the loss of the sense of community that came with gentrification:

In terms of neighbours and things like that and the sense of community I find that it's not as, I don't have as great a sense of community as what I did when I was younger in these areas. I find people a bit more individualistic. There's a few occasions where some of my neighbours are quite open and, you know, exchange lemons and this and that but it's kind of rare now whereas before it used to be the norm and the kids were on the street playing cricket and like that just doesn't seem to happen as much now. I miss all the small businesses as well because you got to know all the different small business owners and you had that kind of, I think that's part of the isolation as well. Now you go to a great big supermarket generally for your things and it's quite impersonal.

The sense of isolation can be much more acute for long-term migrants, many now retired from manufacturing work, as ‘new people’ they do not know move in and people they know either pass away or move away from the area. Some of them speak limited English, which restricts their socialising to their ethnic community, and sometimes a wider language community (e.g. Arabic speakers come from several countries), as we have heard from several migrant women living in Coburg. For example, a Lebanese woman who came to Australia in 1975 told us her children and siblings moved out of the area, and she could feel quite alone if it wasn't for the Hidden Creek Neighbourhood House in Coburg North which

provides a space for socialising and various community programs, from exercise in the park for older people to putting together a multicultural cookbook. In the increasingly privatised and individualistic environment, such locally run places and programs are valuable in providing support to potentially marginalised groups, the older non-Anglophone migrants being one of them.

Fawkner

Fawkner is an outer suburb of the City of Moreland, occupying its north-eastern corner, about 5kms north of Coburg along Sydney Road and 14kms north from the Melbourne CBD. Fawkner's boundaries are Hume Highway (the continuation of Sydney Road) to the west and Merri Creek nature reserve (Figure 10) to the east. The 2011 Census registered 12,600 people living in the area of 5.1sqkms. Fawkner is at the edge of the Melbourne public transport Zone 2, directly connected to the city by the Upfield train line, which takes about 40 minutes to reach Melbourne CBD.

During our fieldwork we heard a rather extreme range of views about how far or close to 'everything' Fawkner is: some locals residents find living in Fawkner 'convenient to the City, convenient to everything' (several participants in Fawkner women's focus groups) while others thought Fawkner was 'extremely isolated' and 'impossible to live in without a heavy reliance on a car' (Fawkner men's focus group). Seyma, a long-term Fawkner resident of Turkish background, who has also lived in Brunswick and Coburg, told us:

Fawkner is middle of everywhere for me. It's close to the hospitals, there's a train station there, there's a bus just at the back, there's a bus stop is here. You can walk to the train station. You know and there's all shops around and it's close to everywhere and just we [are] in the middle. I've got family in Brunswick, Coburg, I've got a family in Craigieburn, in Cambellfield, Dallas. We're all around here and I said, "You are growing now and you've got to go to uni." RMIT is close here, Bundoora is close and Melbourne Uni is close. So you know you're probably not going to need any car.

Clearly, the distance and isolation are subjective qualities, defined by the proximity of things that are important to a particular person—for Seyma apparently her extended family—and dependent on where one places the 'centre'. For Seyma, the 'centre' seems to be right there, in Fawkner. The 2011 Census data show that there are more cars per capita in Fawkner than in Coburg, in spite of a considerably lower median income, which is a solid indication that Fawkner is more car-dependent than Coburg.



Figure 9: Fawkner Tyre Mart

Fawkner does not have the vibrant, attractive, urban street life and ‘café culture’ that has developed in Coburg over the past decade as another symptom of gentrification. On a working day Fawkner strikes one as a typical outer suburb—quiet and low-density—with several smaller shopping and service strips catering for its multicultural residents. A librarian in the Fawkner public library who is also a Fawkner resident explained:

I didn’t really like [Fawkner] at first, but I like it now. I am quite connected with the community, I’m interacting with people quite a lot. In a subtle and quiet way, there’s quite a lot community life here [in Fawkner]. I’ve connected more with it [than when she lived in Brunswick]...there isn’t that much to do, so you start your own things.



Figure 10: Merri Creek nature reserve separates Fawkner from Reservoir to the east.

Over the past almost two decades, Fawkner has attracted residents of Muslim backgrounds, mostly recent immigrants from different source countries. A participant who arrived from Pakistan in 2007 explained why he chose to settle in Fawkner:

I found [Fawkner] was very comfortable environment for me as compared to other [suburbs]. For example I have been to Box Hill [...] I lived there for a while with my friends [...] But I didn't stay there. I have been to many other like Caroline Spring where my friends live, and I [...] I go [there] often [...] I have been to Mitchum, Doncaster – Doncaster was much easier because there is a big community there as well from Pakistani background. They have a Ummah [Muslim religious community] Centre where they meet with each other, marriage celebrations and all that stuff [...] there at the mosque where a person who is interested in finding a partner for himself or herself...they meet up with each other and there are gatherings there specifically for people looking to a marriage partner, you know. [...] like Fawkner [there is] a very good setup in terms of school, in terms of mosque, in terms of our people around us.

Fawkner also attracts Buddhists, predominantly of Vietnamese background due to the Quang Duc Buddhist Temple built in the suburb in 1997, but mainly as visitors rather than residents. The Buddhist population is not large in Fawkner (not in top the five religious affiliations and under 3%). Nonetheless, the prominent edifice of the Temple adds to the multicultural atmosphere of the suburb.



Figure 11: Quang Duc Buddhist Temple in Fawkner

The rise in housing prices—a proxy for gentrification—has not been as dramatic in Fawkner as it was in Coburg. Median house prices in Fawkner have risen from \$250,000 in 2007 to over \$430,000 in 2011 and median weekly rent has increased from \$225 to just under \$350 in the same period (Property Observer 2011). The 2011 Census gives a different median rent figure for Fawkner: \$283 per week. Our participant explained that Fawkner rental properties are often not in a good condition:

[...] many of the houses are not really good enough because they have been built 40-50 years ago sometimes [...] A lot of my friends are student and they are living in shared accommodation and many of them are saying that the landlord is not happy in renovating, in painting, or anything, doesn't care about it – just needs the rent and that's it.

In total 4812 people were outside the labour force in Fawkner (City of Moreland 2006), and this can partly be attributed to an above-average proportion of people above retirement age, and significantly lower labour-market participation by women compared to Victorian and city-wide figures. In 2006, Fawkner had an above-average unemployment rate of 9 per cent. At the time of the 2011 Census the unemployment rate was down to 7.8 per cent, but according to our key informant at the Fawkner Community House, this is likely to be an underestimate. She explained that recent migrants from Islamic backgrounds have considerable problems securing jobs. We also heard about employment issues from the Muslim participants in the Fawkner men's focus group. Many Muslim residents of Fawkner migrated to Australia through points-tested skilled migration programs and therefore have no welfare rights during the first two years in Australia, which places many families in a difficult situation:

[...] the new arrivals, the husbands probably you know, they're professionals, they know how to go and find jobs, but they might not get them and they often end up taxi driving. [...] the new arrival families [...] the financial pressures are extreme because they're trying to establish themselves materially and have no income, they have no eligibility for support [...] I was working with new people, businesses and people, and they just, they couldn't get jobs. [...] Engineers, people who had been managing huge civil engineering projects overseas – nothing. [...] One family I've worked a lot with, he was a sociologist and she was a vice principal of a girls' school and he was lecturing in social work and you know, he's now a taxi driver and she does family day care. And, again and there's no supports. Women aren't even eligible to do English. [...] You've got no Healthcare Card, you've got no access to Centrelink.

The 2011 Census registered over 3,000 Muslims in Fawkner, or 24.4% of the suburb's population (compared to 9.3% in Moreland, 2.9% in Victoria and 2.2% in Australia). The only larger religious group in Fawkner are Catholics (42.6%). The considerable presence of Muslims in Fawkner is almost uniformly understood as a challenge to social cohesion because of perceptions of vast cultural differences between Muslims and non-Muslims, and monolithic understandings of Islam that neglect significant cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and even religious difference within the Muslim population, originating from many different countries around the world. One Italian woman in Fawkner said she had been very surprised, upon getting to know some of the local Muslim women through the community house that they came from a variety of different countries and spoke different languages. Some of our respondents blamed Muslims for 'keeping to themselves' and not 'talking to others' while others tended to blame the 'mainstream prejudice' and 'the scare campaigns that have gone on about Muslims'. Muslim women in the Fawkner focus groups spoke of verbal abuse occurring on public transport and also of being spat at in the street. A Fawkner service provider who works closely with the Muslim women in the neighbourhood also told us about considerable prejudice and abuse directed towards Muslim women who wear a hijab or burkha, especially when they venture outside Fawkner.

Fawkner Community House, in existence for 12 years, runs a number of educational, welfare, community development and other programs. It seems to be a dynamic hub in the suburb, with a considerable pull especially for Fawkner Muslim women and older citizens.

It is close to other services central to the community life of the suburb: the public library, the Darul Ulum Islamic College, the leisure centre and the seniors' centre. At the time we visited the suburb, renovations to John Fawkner College were occurring in the same central area.



Figure 12: Major Street shopping & services strip in Fawkner

We spoke to a professional Anglo-Australian family who moved to Fawkner five years ago and plan to move out next year. Their children travel far to their respective schools because of 'the poor quality of public schools in Fawkner' while both parents work in the city. The mother of the family told us:

When we started looking to buy [in Fawkner], we expected much the same as Coburg, lots of Italians and Greeks, but when we're going around looking at houses we noticed there was quite a lot of Muslim people, and the 'subcontinental' population, and a few Asians, but then the main thing to go by is whether people in the street look happy, whether they're smiling [...] It seemed like a happy family neighbourhood. We looked at about ten houses, and when you look at houses not only you see houses but also the other people who are looking to buy, so who is going to live nearby[...] It is a nice suburb, and I have never had problems with anyone, apart from our next door neighbours [a young Anglo-Australian couple]. The only problem here is young boys on Friday and Saturday nights hooning in cars, quite a lot of it [...].

Fawkner is currently going through a demographic change, not only in terms of the ethnic background of the population but also in terms of age. Younger families are moving in and replacing post-war arrivals who contribute to Fawkner being a relatively 'old' suburb. The 2011 Census registered 1239 people aged 70-80 (9.8%), and 969 people aged over 80 (7.7%) in Fawkner (Victorian figures are 5.9% and 4.1 respectively). This older group consists largely of post-war southern European migrants who do not downsize because, as we have heard from several interviewees, they feel attached to their houses, gardens and familiar neighbourhood. Seyma explained:

We got neighbours like, the oldest are, you know, passing away, God bless them, and the young ones are moving in now. And my neighbour got three children and this one got only one. I said, “Thank God there’s a bit of a life is coming in’ [...] Cause there was no much young ones you know. We were young once, we used to walk around and things like that, [...] But then I mean, now you could see this [...] there’s little children, like, coming and playing at the park. You could hear them you know now. [...] It’s just changing because the oldies are passing away. When like doctors or dentists and whatever, they say to me [...] when they see my address “Oh my mother lives there, oh my mother-in-law lives there’. [...] And I say, “Oh my God, it’s just like age care Fawkner. It’s just an age care now.



Figure 13: Darul Ulum Islamic College in Fawkner

Another long-term Fawkner resident, of Polish origin, who recently moved back to the suburb, had mixed feelings about changes she found. She compared the ‘old’ and ‘new’ Fawkner:

Mum and Dad moved here in early 1963, so it was Moomba Park. And they were still establishing roads and drainages. Anderson Road was a dirt road. We were surrounded by paddocks and horses and chicken farms. [...] as young girls, we were embarrassed because no, we did not have a flower garden in the front of our house, we had a vegetable garden that grew potatoes and tomatoes.[...] And now with this ring road extension and the ugliness of the streetscape, it’s been an ongoing, long drawn out affair and it’s just become a concrete jungle. And I’m thinking, someone’s forgot to plant a tree to give us shade.[...] It’s also badly lit [...] Community shops, it looks rundown and dishevelled [...] At a café, at 3.30pm, the chairs are already up on the tables...

Kalina thought the suburb lost its erstwhile community spirit:

Fawkner to me was the old housing commission area, the housing estate with basically the ‘10-Pound Poms’ in that area.[...] coming back to Fawkner, it’s almost like Fawkner was locked down in a time grid and hadn’t moved forward. It was actually more progressive when I was younger growing up here with the mix of predominantly Irish Catholics and with an Australian/English heritage with a little smattering of predominantly Italians and a small grouping of Poles and Germans. [...] The people who initially moved here as [...] energetic young families of their time in the 1960’s, late 1950’s, had a consciousness, a collective consciousness. They were all in the same boat about

establishing a new house, moving a family. [...] When I came back [to Fawkner after living in St. Kilda and Caulfield] and I then started to say, “Hello’ to people in the street, they would look at me horrified and some would just not acknowledge me.

Within Fawkner, the extraordinary ethnic diversity, a mix of long-term residents and recent arrivals, coupled with considerable housing and employment problems for recent arrivals, is a potentially volatile mix. On the other hand, the older residents may experience increasing isolation and a sense that the place they knew is gradually disappearing. Such levels of cultural, generational and socio-economic diversity represent a real challenge for social cohesion. So far, it has not caused major problems. There seems to be a good awareness in the local council and enthusiasm among the local community workers, engaged in much active ‘community development’ work (in a widest sense), for example in the Fawkner Community House and the local library.

PART THREE

Local services, housing, employment and community cohesion in Coburg and Fawkner

This section draws from the City of Moreland documents and our primary data—experiences and the perceptions of residents, service providers and key informants—to sketch out key themes around the issues of local infrastructure and services, housing, employment and social and community engagement and cohesion in Coburg and Fawkner. It highlights similarities and differences between the two suburbs. It starts by describing, in general terms, the level of access and availability of services such as public transport, shopping, education, medical services, food, ‘culture’ and entertainment in Coburg and Fawkner.

Local services: availability and accessibility

Coburg residents love their suburb because of the availability of services, shops and entertainment. To most people, local services are accessible by public transport and often even within walking distance. Coburg is exceptionally well integrated in the metropolitan public transport network: its residents have access to four train stations, three tramlines, and several regular bus services running into and across the city. Figure 14 illustrates the availability of public transport in Coburg.



Figure 14: Public transport network in Coburg

(Source: Public Transport Victoria, City of Moreland, Available at http://ptv.vic.gov.au/assets/Maps/Localities/PDFs/37_Moreland_LAM.pdf, Accessed 22 March 2013)

The suburb is centred on a busy intersection of Bell Street and Sydney Road which has been designated by the Moreland City Council as a Principal Activity Centre. Coburg is the centre of the municipality and the Moreland City Council plans to develop Coburg to have ‘a strong mix of retail, commercial, cultural, administrative and civic centre trade and

functions and a priority location for government investment and support' (Moreland City Council 2012: 7). The vision for Central Coburg in 2020 is clearly articulated in Council strategic plans:

Central Coburg develops as the prime shopping, living, employment and activity centre in Moreland. The Centre is transformed into an attractive system of safe streets and spaces. Central Coburg becomes a sought after living environment, offering a range of housing choices, including high density housing. Most people arrive at the centre on foot, by bike, or by public transport. The provision of a range of services enables people to conduct a number of different activities based on the one trip. Central Coburg is linked with networks of green space (Moreland City Council 2013b:15).

The above vision was to some degree endorsed in the interviews. While different sections of the local population have different needs and ideas on what their ideal suburb would look like, most groups found facilities that were of benefit to them. For example, the Coburg Greek Orthodox Church is an attraction for Greek residents of Coburg, many of whom have lived in Coburg for decades. The church is near the Coburg station and in a close proximity to community health facilities and shops. One older Coburg resident loves the suburb because she is 'close to Centrelink, close to doctor, because doctor sometime come to my place, close to shopping. I don't need a car [...] all shop [are] close to my place'.

However, with the increasing popularity of Coburg there is increasing pressure on public transport services as well as on existing traffic capacity. For example one interviewee, a young service provider living in Coburg, felt that there was too much traffic in Coburg:

[...] there is a lot of traffic, there is a lot of people because it is very central for all the shops in Sydney Road precinct and there is a lot of famous shops in that area and so it is very difficult to find places and go to things that you do everyday

A number of residents liked the fact that both Coburg and Fawkner are relatively close to the city. However, many participants felt they had to use cars to travel to Fawkner. There is a major difference between Coburg and Fawkner in terms of the extent to which the two suburbs are serviced by public transport.

Figure 15 indicates Fawkner is accessible only by one train line and one bus service. The residents who live in the eastern part of the suburb are far from the railway station and only have access to a bus service which runs every 20 minutes on working days and every hour on weekends. This service does not connect with other public transport services. One long-term Anglo-Australian resident of Fawkner summarised the sentiments of many other participants:

Fawkner is just that little cul de sac which is just one bus, and that's it and it takes forever to get around all the streets before you get there – but that's fine because it services people. But – so [in] Fawkner you really need a car.

This sentiment was shared by a Moreland public official who described Fawkner as having ‘terrible public transport’ and being ‘neglected’ and cut off from the rest of Moreland.

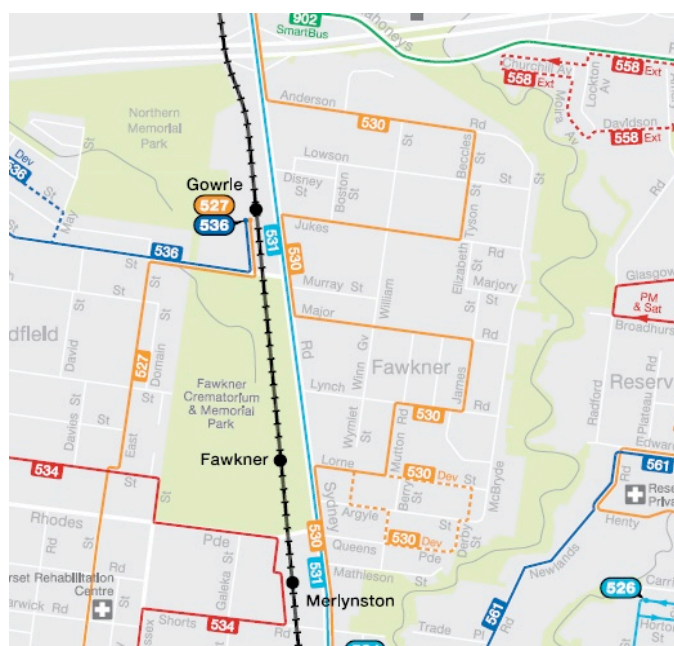


Figure 15: Public transport network in Fawkner (Source: Public Transport Victoria, City of Moreland, Accessed 22 March 2013, Available at http://ptv.vic.gov.au/assets/Maps/Localities/PDFs/37_Moreland_LAM.pdf)

General community services

There are four ‘neighbourhood houses’ in Coburg and Coburg North and only one ‘community house’ in Fawkner. While the Coburg neighbourhood houses seem to be remarkably active, they are not major public facilities, particularly in contrast to the Fawkner Community House, which seems to be a major community hub. Public spaces most frequented by locals in Coburg seem to be shopping precincts along Sydney Road and the Coburg Market close to the intersection of Sydney Rd and Bell St. Coburg’s central shopping area is relatively close to railway stations, local schools and Coburg Lake Reserve.

While there are many community services in Coburg, some of our participants suggested that they were not sufficient. There are 17 general practitioner medical clinics in Coburg plus one private hospital, the John Fawkner Private Hospital. In Fawkner there are six medical clinics (Better Health Channel 2013). A specific complaint was about trying to access public health services such as the Merri Community Health Services which have very long waiting lists in Coburg. Respondents were also dissatisfied with the quality of services medical clinics offer. Participants in the Coburg women’s focus group in particular expressed their dissatisfaction with local medical services. One participant said that ‘it’s hard to find a doctor that you can treat as your family doctor and see them and so that they get to know you.’ Another participant said: ‘we tried four different clinics. The good ones have their books closed and in some other clinics you have to sometimes wait four hours to see a doctor’.

Many older residents of Fawkner like the suburb because they feel it is close to 'everything'. The services mentioned were doctors, the swimming pool, the library and even a bus stop. The Fawkner Library was popular among our respondents, as it was seen to provide valuable services and a good range of activities for young children. The other services appreciated by the local residents were organised sporting clubs such as cricket, soccer and tennis, which were also considered 'good for children'.

In both suburbs public libraries were much valued by the community because of their collections, programs and services. Both Coburg and Fawkner libraries are restricted by their relatively small size, however. Coburg in particular is unable to provide much needed meeting rooms, study areas and sufficient access to computers. The Council identified the need for arts and performance spaces in Coburg. One young male service provider suggested that many new migrants don't understand that public libraries are provided by local councils. He suggested that councils could be more proactive, and do some community outreach work and raise people's awareness of what the council is offering. This is especially important because people who come from countries like Iraq, Iran or Afghanistan as they may come with a residual distrust of government.

One of the most often mentioned community facilities in Fawkner was the Fawkner mosque. Some respondents indicated that the main reason they moved to Fawkner was the presence of the religious community and the existence of the Islamic College. Participants at the Fawkner men's focus group mentioned that many people come to the mosque on Fridays. The influx of visitors was said to create parking issues as the Islamic College and the mosque do not have enough parking spaces. Visitors parking in the surrounding streets often face fines as parking restrictions are frequently enforced by Council officers.

Early childhood services

In Coburg there are four maternal and child health service centres. There are also six kindergartens and nine long-day child care facilities. While the population data indicate that these services are likely to be sufficient into the near future (Moreland City Council 2012) new residential developments such as the Coburg Hill (former Kodak premises) development are likely to increase the future demand on services. The Coburg Hill Estate is currently under development and is expected to include nearly 400 dwellings which will house approximately 1,200 residents at capacity (Urbis 2011).

Fawkner has one Maternal and Child Health centre, two kindergartens and one childcare centre. Participants in the Fawkner women's focus group did not consider childcare facilities in Fawkner sufficient, as only occasional care is offered locally. Family day care was mentioned as an option that not all mothers are happy with. Participants felt that children do not enjoy family day care and do not do well there, as there are fewer activities than at a non-family day care.

In relation to Council's role in providing community services one participant in the Fawkner women's focus group felt that 'a lot of pressure falls on Council to increase rates to accommodate a lot of services'. She suggested that 'developers should actually even

contribute some form of percentage of their ... profits to resource the community members that are buying accommodation off them’.

A Moreland public official argued there was a need for more maternal and child health centres:

I understand that there has been a bit of a baby boom which is going to mean that there’s a need for spending on services that haven’t been upgraded in a long time, which is the maternal and child health centres and so forth, which aren’t as accessible as they used to be. I talked to someone who had a child 20 years ago and she said you used to be able to ring up any time and come in if you had a problem or something, you didn’t know how to deal with your baby, whereas now there’s a waiting list...

Education and youth

In Fawkner there are two government primary schools, Fawkner Primary and Moomba Park Primary, and three independent primary schools; two Catholic primary schools St. Matthew's Primary School and St. Mark's PS and one Islamic Primary School within the Darul Ulum College which was established in 1997 on the grounds of the former Fawkner North Primary school.

The Fawkner Technical School (closed in 1992) was built on the site west of the Moomba Park Primary School at the same time the primary school was established 50 years ago. Fawkner also has one government secondary school, the John Fawkner Secondary College, and one independent Islamic secondary school Darul Ulum Islamic College of Victoria. All schools in Fawkner have enrolments considerably below the Education Department requirements (Moreland City Council 2013).

In Coburg there are nine primary schools, four of which are government and five independent. Two of the government schools have enrolments below the Education Department's benchmark. Coburg also has three secondary schools two of which are independent religious schools and one is a government senior only high school. The two independent schools are the Mercy College in Coburg North which is a Catholic girls’ school and the Australian International Academy of Education - Melbourne Senior Campus in Coburg North which is a Muslim International Baccalaureate school. The only government secondary school in Coburg is the Coburg Senior High School which offers only years 10 – 12. The school is expecting that by 2015 Coburg Senior High School will have received funding to open up a junior campus (Coburg Senior High School 2013).

The Darul Ulum College in Fawkner seems to have considerable bearing on the demographics of the suburb. For example, several Muslim women with school-aged children in the Fawkner focus groups told us they had lived in Sydney or in other parts of Melbourne when they first arrived in Australia, but they then relocated to Fawkner because they believed Darul Ulum to be one of the best Islamic colleges in the country. It seems that there are many Muslim families who live in the surrounding suburbs such as South Morang, Epping, or Thomastown and commute their children by car to Fawkner because of the Darul Ulum College. Both suburbs, particularly Coburg, appear to have relatively high concentrations of international students due to the availability of shared housing and

proximity to universities and colleges in the city and the inner north (Robertson and Clark 2013).

Council operates youth services from the Brunswick Municipal Office. Youth spaces and low cost or free activities are in high demand. There is one skate park in both Coburg and Fawkner. To address the need for more youth facilities Council has been planning a Youth Centre for a number of years and a new Youth Centre is now under construction in Gaffney Street, North Coburg and will open in early 2013.

Services to non-Anglophone communities

We discussed the issue of the social inclusion of migrant youth in the focus group with Moreland service providers. There was a consensus that education and employment were the key pathways to social inclusion of the second generation. However, the problems with youth services may start with the inability of service providers to ‘understand cultural issues that non-Anglophone families are faced with’ and the fact that ‘young people growing up in a community which their family is not familiar with’. This is the issue of ‘dissonant acculturation’ that affects many migrant families: the fact that children learn the language and acculturate quicker than their parents may create a cultural conflict in the family (Portes et al. 2005). Service provider focus groups agreed this was a widespread problem, that can lead to young people becoming disengaged from education and training. To counter the problem, a ‘network about intergenerational conflict in non-Anglophone communities has been created’, we were told. However, an experienced youth service provider questioned the competency of the service provision: ‘I would say that the employment services workforce in our case, generally speaking, is not a very diverse community [...] So their capacity to work with a diverse community is a concern.’

The service provider focus group emphasised the issue of ‘fragmentation between different service sectors’:

People are presenting at different services with very much the same issues. But there isn't any incentive for those services to work in a more [...] collaborative way. So you get your little pool of money from here and your little pool of money from there and there's not enough capacity or even the intention to work in a truly holistic way. [...] So it is difficult enough in the mainstream [services] let alone when you've got to deal with a variety of cultural issues as well.

Facilities for seniors

There are two senior citizen centres in Coburg and one in Fawkner. In Coburg and Coburg North there are five privately operated residential aged care facilities while in Fawkner there are only two (DPS Guide 2013). Council indicated that there is continued demand for affordable, large meeting spaces with kitchen facilities, in particular by older people from non-English speaking backgrounds (Moreland City Council 2013).

Leisure and sport

Coburg residents have relatively plentiful opportunities to use sporting facilities. Council maintains seven reserves with thirteen outdoor fields, as well as the Coburg Basketball Stadium which has four basketball courts and two aquatic centres namely the Coburg Aquatic Leisure Centre and the Coburg Olympic Outdoor Pool. Fawkner residents have

access to three reserves with seven outdoor fields, the Fawkner Community Sports Hall for basketball and the popular Fawkner Aquatic and Leisure Centre.

To cater to the special needs of its Fawkner residents the Fawkner Aquatic and Leisure Centre has introduced the men's and women's only swimming sessions 'to accommodate men and women who seek more private swimming and fitness' (Active Moreland 2013). There is one session for men and two sessions for women. The two women's sessions differ in the dress code where one has no dress code and the other run by the Fawkner Multicultural Group has strict dress which includes 'wearing the appropriate swimming attire and swimming headscarves' (Active Moreland 2013). Participants were generally happy with these facilities, although Muslim women in Fawkner felt that more women's only swimming times would be of benefit at the Fawkner Aquatic and Leisure Centre.

Shopping and entertainment

Coburg and Sydney Road in particular offers a large diversity of shops and restaurants. The main commercial activity is between the Coburg railway station and Sydney Road, consisting of about 250 shops, a small indoor market, several supermarkets, and discount stores surrounded by ground level car parks (Coburg Traders Association 2013). Residents seem to like the fact that Coburg is not as gentrified as Brunswick, for example Coburg restaurants are seen as still relatively affordable in comparison to Brunswick.

Fawkner has a number of smaller shopping strips. The two largest are on Bonwick Street and Major Road. Both are located close to the secondary college, the mosque and the CB Smith Reserve which hosts the Fawkner Library, leisure centre, senior citizen centre and the Fawkner Neighbourhood House. The Bonwick Street shops include a small supermarket and a mix of grocery shops and takeaway shops. One young male service provider suggested that over the last several years of demographic changes many shops have adjusted to a growing Muslim clientele and started offering halal food.

While the existing shops are appreciated, participants in the Fawkner women's and men's focus groups indicated they often travel to larger shopping centres in Coburg, Dallas, and Broadmeadows and to Campbellfield to shop or visit Lebanese and Turkish restaurants. Some Fawkner women's focus group participants expressed interest in having more shopping options in Fawkner, as they felt there were not enough shops that sell fresh produce in the suburb.

In the focus group with local service providers we heard that both Coburg and Fawkner lack public places suitable for people meeting and communities gathering—apart from commercial establishments such as restaurants and cafes. This is especially critical for young people who, in Coburg for example, have no 'hub', 'nowhere to hang out'. We were told the only public space is the Coburg Market and Sydney Road. This may create misperceptions about young people loitering, and especially about 'visible' migrant youth gathering. Disengagement and a lack of constructive entertainment may indeed lead to delinquency. Therefore it would be valuable to secure a free public space, such as a youth

‘club’, where local youth, including international students, could meet, gather and spend their leisure time.

Moreland Business Women’s Network, running for the past almost three years, was singled out by a service provider as a very successful Council initiative: ‘You put on some drinks and some nibbles and you bring people. And the people themselves kind of help each other out. So that group has sort of really grown from strength to strength’.

Housing in Coburg and Fawkner

Choosing to live in Coburg and Fawkner

As the suburb profiles of Coburg and Fawkner have shown, the attractions of these suburbs have changed significantly over time, reflecting in part the change from an industrial to a post-industrial or service-dominated national economy. Where previously residents settled in these suburbs to work in the light (textiles, footwear, food) and heavy (cars) manufacturing jobs accessible from the area, today such jobs are unavailable in the City of Moreland on a larger scale.

Housing prices, community connections and being close to services are the main attractions of both suburbs. Both groups of residents cited the suburbs’ relative proximity to the city as a drawback. However, ease of access to the city and access to public transport were generally spoken of more favourably by Coburg residents, who are also more likely than Fawkner residents to travel to the CBD for work. Many Coburg residents also mentioned living in a multicultural community as a reason why they chose to live in Coburg. Residents of Coburg tended to define the lifestyle benefits of living in a ‘multicultural community’ through the diversity of cultural entertainment and consumption available—characterized by different shops, foods, and cultural festivals, often centred on and around Sydney Road. A focus group participant expressed a common sentiment of appreciation for both the diversity and affordability of Sydney Road:

I like Coburg ... The shops along Sydney Road there – there’s plenty of culture, lots of different people, diversity, the shops are cheap.

The emergence of the commercial space of Sydney Road in Coburg as a ‘multicultural precinct’ reflects the multi-ethnic history of the suburb and the embedded role of ethnic entrepreneurship, as well as the processes of gentrification occurring as Coburg emerges as a service-rich and middle-class lifestyle precinct. Long-term residents noted that the entertainment, particularly the bar and restaurant culture of Sydney Road, has become increasingly targeted towards a middle-class clientele, yet still retained an authentic ethnic character. The transect walks, which took us to some of the increasingly upmarket Turkish restaurants and cafes on Sydney Road, confirmed these perceptions.

Fawkner residents, however, did not usually mention the multicultural community as a reason they were attracted to the suburb, despite the fact that, ethno-culturally, Fawkner is more diverse than Coburg. Fawkner residents had either lived in the suburb for a long time

and had extended family and community connections to the area, or were attracted by relatively cheaper housing options available. Some Anglo-Australian participants had moved to Fawkner due to the rising costs of housing in other northern suburbs closer to the city, such as Brunswick and Fitzroy. Some had also spent their childhoods in Fawkner, and had returned there after living elsewhere. The Fawkner mosque and Darul Ulum College of Victoria are, as discussed previously, a strong attraction for Muslim residents. While Fawkner does have a number of ethnic businesses that reflect the cultural make-up of the community, it lacks any significant commercial space comparable to Sydney Road. Most residents, both Anglo-Australian and of migrant background, reported they often travelled to Broadmeadows or Coburg for shopping and entertainment. We were told that the small cafes in Fawkner tend to close earlier than those in Coburg, reflecting the prevalence of a suburban ‘family lifestyle’ rather than the ‘café culture’ that has developed among the ‘gentrifiers’ of Coburg. During the break in our Fawkner transect walk we had coffee at a family-owned fish and chip shop that closed at 5pm.

Table 2. Coburg and Fawkner: household characteristics

	Coburg	Fawkner	Greater Melbourne
Average children per family	1.8	2	1.8
Average people per household	2.6	2.8	2.6
Average number of persons per bedroom	1.2	1.2	1.1
Average motor vehicles per dwelling	1.4	1.5	1.7

Source: ABS, 2011 Census, Basic Community Profiles

As Table 2 shows, family sizes are slightly bigger in Fawkner compared to Coburg and Greater Melbourne. As can be expected due to the less robust public transport network in Fawkner, there is a higher number of cars per household than in Coburg, although this is still less than the Greater Melbourne average, most likely due to Fawkner’s relative socio-economic disadvantage.

Table 3. Residential mobility (persons aged 15+)

	Coburg	Fawkner	Greater Melbourne
Lived at same address one year ago	85%	88%	85%
Lived at different address one year ago	15%	12%	15%
Lived at same address five years ago	63%	69%	61%
Lived at different address five years ago	37%	31%	39%

Source: ABS, 2011 Census, Basic Community Profiles

As shown in Table 3, people in Fawkner are more likely to have lived at the same address both one year ago and five years ago than people in Coburg, where the level of residential mobility is very close to that of Greater Melbourne. The larger numbers of long-term and elderly residents in Fawkner are likely contributor to this trend.

Affordability

In both suburbs, affordability was by far the most prominent issue mentioned when we inquired about housing. As shown in Table 4, housing costs in Coburg are somewhat higher and in Fawkner somewhat lower relative to Greater Melbourne median values. However, the housing costs are very high in Fawkner when we relate them to the median income in the suburb: personal weekly median income is \$362, while median weekly rent is \$283.

The affordability concerns reflected a general rapid upward trend in housing costs across metropolitan Melbourne over the last 10 years, with house prices increasing over 40 per cent since 2003.

Table 4. Coburg and Fawkner: Household income and housing costs

	Coburg	Fawkner	Greater Melbourne
Median weekly household income	\$1,325	\$865	\$1,333
Median weekly rent	\$330	\$283	\$300
Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$1,954	\$1,625	\$1,810

Source: ABS, 2011 Census, Basic Community Profiles

In Coburg interviews and focus groups we repeatedly heard that housing is becoming more expensive and that more medium-density housing with flats is being built, replacing small family houses; and that ‘new people’ are moving in, while many long-term residents are moving out. Most residents and service providers were concerned about the impact of rising housing prices on vulnerable groups such as single person households, low-income families and the elderly. Service providers spoke of increased homelessness in the Moreland area, particularly among young people from migrant families and single parents. This included ‘secondary homelessness’ (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2006), such as moving frequently between different forms of temporary accommodation. Table 5 shows

the dwelling structures and tenure types in Coburg and Fawkner in comparison to the Greater Melbourne area.

Table 5. Coburg and Fawkner: Dwelling and tenure types

	Coburg	Fawkner	Greater Melbourne
Main Dwelling Types (% of all private dwellings)			
Separate house	68%	82%	66%
Semi-detached	13%	5%	11%
Flat, unit or apartment	12%	4%	14%
Main Tenure Types			
Owning outright	34%	47%	33%
Owning with a mortgage	32%	24%	37%
Private rental through agent	21%	14%	18%
Social rental	2%	2%	3%
Renting from parent/relative/other	6%	6%	5%

Source: ABS, 2011 Census, Basic Community Profiles

Table 5 shows that levels of residential densification are still relatively low in both suburbs, particularly in Fawkner, where owner occupied separate dwellings make up the vast majority of households; densification, however, remains a prominent concern for residents. In terms of ownership structure, the higher rate of outright homeownership in Fawkner reflects the older population and the relatively low rate of residential mobility. This older group may fit into the category of ‘asset rich but cash poor’, with homes owned outright, but incomes fixed at a low level (e.g. age pension).

Residents saw housing affordability not only as a financial issue, but as a barrier to being able to maintain community and a sense of connection to place. Coburg renters often expressed concern that rising rents would eventually ‘push them out’ of areas they knew and loved:

I don't think I'll be able to find somewhere affordable if I have to leave where I am. If I want a dog, and I want to keep my dog basically, well I don't think I'll find a house. You're looking at \$400 a week. It's just ridiculous. [...] I would love to buy a house in Coburg and I just could never, ever do it. I just will never have \$600,000 or \$700,000 on a single income as well. Yeah, no way.

Some of the newer residents in both suburbs, who would demographically fit the ‘gentrifier’ mould, in fact felt that they had already been ‘pushed out’ into Coburg and Fawkner from rising prices in neighbouring suburbs of previous residence, like Brunswick and Fitzroy. These experiences reflect the uneven nature of gentrification as a social, as well as an economic, experience.

While long-term homeowners acknowledged that they had profited from the housing boom, there was often a sense of sadness in knowing that their children and grandchildren may not be able to afford to own homes in the areas in which they had grown up. Many older

migrants in particular were reluctant to move out of the suburb, but were unable to have children and grandchildren live nearby due to increased housing costs. Çevik, for example, our Turkish transect walk guide who lived in Coburg for 27 years, told us that his children had moved to the more affordable areas of Craigieburn and Essendon, and that his grandson may never be able to save for a deposit on even a small apartment in Coburg at today's prices. There was also a sense of loss around knowing that long-term family homes, when sold, were likely to be demolished and blocks subdivided. Apparently, the economic advantages of gentrification were matched by some community losses. Brian, who had grown up in Fawkner, lived elsewhere and then returned to care for his ailing mother in their old family home, was ambivalent about the process: 'I would suspect the old house will be bought by a developer and it will be pulled down and two units will be put up. I don't know. And in a way it will be the end of an era. It is sad, maybe.'

Community service providers were concerned about housing stress, and in particular the reduction in social housing. One community official expressed concern that genuine models of social housing were being replaced by ideas of 'affordable housing' that actually did not provide enough affordability or protection from housing stress for vulnerable residents, particularly in Fawkner:

I think there is a huge issue about housing [...] A lot of people are just barely holding onto their mortgages. [...] also the number of public housing dwellings is decreasing in Moreland because the state government is getting rid of public housing [...] All the government services and the Moreland council talk about affordable and social housing but in reality [...] what they are arguing for as 'affordable housing' isn't actually affordable housing. Real affordable housing is public housing where there is a rent cap so if you lose your job or get sick and go on to a sickness benefit or whatever, your rent is cut to a proportion of your income. [...] When there is a lot of people [...] paying 50% or more of their income in rental, or mortgage, and with unemployment increasing at the moment, especially affecting areas where a lot of [previous] manufacturing workers live, like Fawkner, then that's going to get worse.

As Table 5 shows, social housing, which includes state housing as well as community and cooperative housing, makes up a small percentage of housing stock in Coburg and Fawkner. In Fawkner, residents were seeking to create their own affordable housing strategies through the establishment of a community housing co-operative through the Fawkner Community House. This initiative, however, was still in its infancy, and service providers felt that it would need government support in some form to eventually be viable.

Overcrowding

Both residents and service providers expressed concern about overcrowded rental accommodation. Service providers were primarily concerned about international students in overcrowded shared accommodation, and newly arrived migrant families in housing that was too small for large or extended family groups. This further reflects concerns in the Moreland Affordable Housing Strategy (2006) about the difficulties in identifying and researching overcrowded rental housing. There was discussion around the difficulties in reconciling different cultural patterns of housing and kinship obligation with Australian standards of appropriate housing. A Council employee noted:

I mean, our Australian standards of residential standards are lavish to most people in the world. [...] People from more kind of diverse backgrounds... sometimes for them it's a nice and cosy arrangement whereas it may be perceived from the outside as a problem. Sometimes it is a problem because it creates interference of various needs and mothers with children and grown up males and youth.

Issues of overcrowded rental accommodation were raised in two Coburg focus groups and one Fawkner focus group. One Coburg resident had lived in an apartment block where he said taxi drivers were 'hot-bedding' in one of the apartments, and another Coburg resident was similarly concerned that multiple migrant families were living in small apartments in a building in her street. Older migrant women in the Fawkner focus group were similarly concerned about a 'Big Brother' house, where a number of young people appeared to be sharing crowded accommodation. Apparently, affordability is a key cause of overcrowding in rental accommodation, but equally important are different cultural understandings of appropriate uses of housing space. Living near overcrowded rental housing was often a source of concern for long-term residents, both migrant and non-migrant, although no-one had reported the incidents of suspected overcrowding to the Council.

Housing, community and urban density

From the perspective of residents we spoke to, housing had direct bearing on the level of social engagement in the neighbourhoods. Residents of both Coburg and Fawkner seemed to be seeking connections to neighbours but also space and privacy. These desires reflect much of the literature on social connectedness within cities (e.g. see Kelly et al. 2012). In discussing interactions with neighbours, most residents would not or did not encroach into private spaces- for example, knocking on neighbours' doors to say hello or inviting neighbours into their homes. Much neighbourly interaction occurred on the street, over fences, in public spaces like libraries and neighbourhood houses, and in 'third places' (Kelly et al. 2012), such as shopping areas and cafes.

Overwhelmingly, residents who lived in detached dwellings had more interactions, as well as more positive interactions, with their immediate neighbours than those who lived in apartment buildings. There seem to be two main reasons for this. Firstly, high density housing did not provide physical spaces and opportunities for people to chat over fences or trade produce from vegetable gardens. Previous research has noted that housing that has 'soft edges' and semi-private areas like street-facing front gardens and verandas provide more opportunities for residents and passers-by to interact in and thus create greater feelings of community and safety (Jacobs 1993; Macdonald 2005; Gehl 2010). The other reason why those in high density housing interacted less was because of the more transient nature of the residential population. The high residential mobility of households in and out of apartments, particularly in newer developments like the Pentridge Village in Coburg for example, meant fewer connections among neighbours were made. A participant in the Coburg focus group felt that this was the main failing of the prison redevelopment:

Really high density and really disconnected communities and even though it looks fantastic. [...] We only knew one person and they moved out within a year. They constantly keep moving in and out.

Residents of Fawkner, where less higher-density housing can be found than Coburg and where traditional detached dwellings predominate (Table 5), seemed to have, in general, more interactions and more positive interactions with their neighbours. Residential mobility, (Table 3) also had significant bearing on social engagement with neighbours. The strongest links between neighbours were, unsurprisingly, between long-term, older residents. This was particularly apparent among the older residents of Fawkner, one of whom noted:

In my street we are all the same neighbours as what we started off – still the same. Some have passed away, otherwise the same people. So I think that says something for the area, too. People have been there for 40+ years. You make close friends as well as neighbours. If anybody needs anybody you are there.

Mirella, an elderly Italian participant, had most of her social interaction in her neighbourhood and frequently had coffee and shopping trips with other Italian women:

Yes, there are a lot of Italians in this street. [...] We oldies... There's coming and going. At the Centrelink. People come to visit. For a cup of coffee. If they need something. If they want to go out. [...] Many times we go to K-Mart. To bingo, here nearby. We go to Coburg. To the shops there. We go for a walk, have a coffee.

There was some indication in the data that people built closest relationships with the neighbours who were demographically similar to themselves, not necessarily in terms of ethnicity, but in terms of age, family and lifestyle. For example, young professionals tended to interact with other young professionals, and families with children interacted most with other families with children. These demographic similarities between neighbours seem to be more important than 'culture'. People also appreciated having neighbours on the same work schedules and therefore making noise at the same times. This is why shift workers, such as the hot-bedding taxi drivers and students were often seen as undesirable neighbours.

Urban densification seemed uniformly unpopular with long-term locals, and especially with Anglo-Australian men in our focus groups. One participant described renting a flat in Brunswick as 'the most miserable experience of his life'. He complained about noise, cooking smells, lack of privacy and 'having people in your face all the time'. This is a prevailing view in Melbourne: community resistance to medium density housing is considerable, especially in the established middle-class inner-city suburbs but also in the middle-ring gentrifying areas (Cook et al. 2012). The persistent negativity about higher density housing, particularly high rise apartment buildings, expressed in resident focus groups and interviews, contradicted equally persistent calls for more affordable housing. This paradox was much more apparent in Coburg, which has seen a recent increase in high density developments, although Fawkner residents were also concerned about trends towards sub-dividing residential blocks. Residents almost uniformly felt that the increase in high density housing was having or would have a negative impact on the area, in terms of the 'look' of streets and neighbourhoods, increased traffic and parking congestion, and straining public transport. Residents also felt that the quality of accommodation in new high density housing was poor, that this housing was unsuitable for families, did not provide

enough outdoor space and was only affordable to those on high incomes. These two female Coburg residents had very typical views:

What I'm afraid is – Brunswick I know the CBD some part and Moreland too – a lot of town houses and they are pulling down old, old houses and constructing – the development is two-stories – I don't like to see that. Residential area should be residential area, the main road shopping area, that can be apartments, you know. I'm afraid this one become like that too – high rise, yes.

A lot of the people are saying there's big high rises or whatever coming in but they only seem to cater for a specific community which is single people or maybe a couple or something, but not families. The families seem to be struggling.

Rather than providing more affordable and modern housing options, increased high density apartment living in Coburg was generally seen to be a part of the gentrification process that was putting strains on affordability for long-term residents. Lots of participants agreed that if higher density living was inevitable, then more and better quality public outdoor spaces needed to be provided:

Subdivision puts more pressure on public space. You have got no backyard and most people like to have a pet or something like that so naturally take it to the park and so that's the problem.

Residents who came from cultures where high density living was the norm were generally more comfortable with it, but there were some differences across cultures around the concept of rental rights, landlord/tenant relationship and neighbourly relationships in higher density housing. Habibe, a temporary migrant from Turkey living in Coburg, was shocked that the landlords of her apartment would not provide adequate pest control, and was disappointed with the lack of maintenance in the shared spaces in the building:

Small bugs, creatures, they came out everywhere and I asked them [the landlord] to get rid of them for me. They tried [...] but it didn't work and I was so unhappy. [...] My next door neighbours they just kept the place dirty. They just left some extra things outside which looked a bit – you know – the mess around. So I didn't like that. Even if you clean your place [...] but when you see outside your door [is] a mess [...] I am not used to that – it is the culture maybe. In all apartment [buildings] in Turkey there are people who clean – they take care of maintenance. Every day they clean the stairs, [and] around, they take your rubbish out, they bring in your bread and milk.

Employment in Coburg and Fawkner

Since the closing down of much of the manufacturing industry in Melbourne's north, fewer jobs have been available locally in Coburg and Fawkner. This is especially true for Fawkner, which resembles a typical service-poor and jobs-poor middle or outer suburb. The contrast between service- and job-rich inner suburbs and service- and job-poor outer suburbs has been described as the 'inner-outer divide' (Colebach 2012). Nearly all employed participants commuted out of their suburbs, apart from those who worked for council services. The cemetery was the only large employer in Fawkner, and although there are large retailers like Coles and Woolworths in Coburg, the local council was still cited as the largest local employer. Most residents travelled to the city for work, or further north to Broadmeadows, Essendon or Tullamarine. There was a general concern in the community

about the disappearance of industrial work, particularly in Fawkner, and about social problems created as a consequence of young people being unemployed and disengaged. Tables 6 and 7 show general employment participation and levels of education by gender for Coburg and Fawkner, in comparison with the Greater Melbourne.

Table 6. Coburg and Fawkner: employment by gender (persons 15+)

		Coburg	Fawkner	Greater Melbourne
Males	Employed, worked full-time	44%	35%	49%
	Not in the labour force	27%	38%	26%
	Unemployment rate	6.2%	7.5%	5.5%
Females	Employed, worked full-time	27%	16%	27%
	Not in the labour force	38%	57%	38%
	Unemployment rate	5.5%	8.1%	5.6%

Table 7. Coburg and Fawkner: post-secondary education levels (persons 15+)

		Coburg	Fawkner	Greater Melbourne
Males	University educated	26%	13%	22%
	Other post-secondary	22%	23%	28%
Females	University educated	32%	13%	25%
	Other post-secondary	16%	13%	20%

Source: ABS, 2011 Census, Basic Community Profiles

Migrant experiences with employment

We targeted a diverse range of participants and migrant experience with employment was a key theme of discussions, particularly the contrast between the experiences of old and recent migrants. Older migrants' stories of employment were largely of full employment immediately upon arrival, regardless of their initial language capabilities or levels of education. One participant explained: 'You walked up to the door, two arms, two legs and you got a job.' Our older migrant participants also shared stories of employment mobility. Most started with factory work, and then moved through varied careers of skilled and trade occupations or started their own businesses. Although the initial factory work was often described as physically taxing and unpleasant (smells, noise, heat etc.) people were happy about having full-time jobs and with them community respect and economic security. In most cases, the children and grandchildren of this group (mostly southern Europeans) grew up in a supportive extended family and 'ethnic' community environment and experienced social mobility through securing skilled trade occupations or professional jobs after completing post-secondary education (Colic-Peisker 2011b; Jupp 2002).

In contrast, previous research and our study indicate that recently arrived migrants struggled to enter the workforce, in spite of low unemployment over the past two decades and the fact that most entered Australia through skilled migrant categories. Unemployment and underemployed for significant periods of time is due to several factors, an initial issue being the lack of qualifications recognition and the need to re-skill and retrain for the Australian context:

I think one of the major challenges for newly arrived communities is they have qualifications overseas but when they come here that is not recognised [...] I have seen taxi drivers [...] and they say back home I was an engineer or I was a medical doctor, but you know, for different reasons – number one language, number two the standards that are different – they couldn't get into their professions so that is why they opted for the jobs that are – you know – not in their field. [...] They are lower paid and lower skilled jobs and in the due course of time they will forget what they have learned and what they have acquired. [Aamir, interview participant, Moreland resident and service provider, male]

In some cases re-skilling in Australia does not lead to desired employment outcomes. One issue that did not affect the earlier working-class arrivals, but is significant in case of recent skilled immigrants, is the very high level of spoken and written English proficiency required for white-collar and professional jobs. Often, it is difficult to acquire that level without 'on the job practice', which creates a vicious circle. Employment agencies do not seem to make people aware of this issue, and tend to simply channel them into lower-skilled jobs, as our respondents told us. One skilled immigrant who then re-acquired his degree in psychology from an Australian university, told us:

I went to the employment agencies and I tell them about the story and I was really worried about it and I am still worried but they checked my CV and everything and they were very happy with that. [...] A long time ago, yes, I found factory job and I was working part-time [...] that job was also through a friend of mine and I never find these agencies like – I couldn't find a job through them ever, ever [...] The employment agencies have to improve a lot, they are not [...] really effective way of finding a job [...]. I think they find job for themselves but not for us.

This is significant because federal policy around 'demand driven' migration presupposes that points tests and eligibility requirements for skilled visa categories result in relatively seamless labour market integration. Recent literature, however, both nationally and internationally, is beginning to show that entry with a skill-category visa is far from being a guarantee of successful labour market integration. Downward career mobility is a common experience of skilled migrants, particularly those who are 'visibly different' or have English as a second language (Birrell and Rapson 2005; Birrell 2006; Colic-Peisker 2011b; Qureshi et al. 2013). This can then push migrants into ethnic and gendered job markets and employment niches (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2006; Qureshi et al. 2013). It came out in our interviews and focus groups that the occupational down-skilling was especially frustrating for people who arrived on skilled visas, with a condition that their occupation be on DIAC's 'skilled occupation in demand' list, as this created an expectation that they would be able to secure appropriate jobs without much difficulty.

What is interesting to note here, is that although finding employment was much easier for the 1950s and 1960s arrivals, the perception of most older residents was that recent arrivals

have it much easier time upon arrival in Australia than they had had and that the latter receive a great deal of government support, including a strong support in finding jobs. These perceptions, largely misconceptions, are a potential source of tension between established residents and new arrivals.

The post-war migrants did not speak about workplace discrimination. They tended to be employed in industries staffed nearly entirely by non-Anglophone migrants and there were stories of camaraderie between the different ethnic groups, and of migrants learning each other's languages and customs in the workplace. Recent arrivals and second generation migrants, however, had many stories of discrimination, particularly in job-seeking. Service providers confirmed that Australian employers and workplace cultures were not immediately receptive to new migrants. Cultural difference, especially 'visible' difference, such as Islamic dress and recognisably non-Anglo names, were seen to be barriers to finding suitable employment. One story repeatedly heard was about migrants choosing to put Anglicized names on their job applications, because this increased their chances of being granted a job interview. A recent migrant from India told us:

If my name is not English that does not mean that I do not speak English – I don't know how to interact in community who speaks English – and it was difficult for me. It was a challenge for me to establish that. I had to follow up myself – call them and tell them – did you actually receive my application, did you consider me for the application.

A second generation Egyptian migrant, working in service provision in the Islamic community, confirmed the issue of workplace discrimination:

I don't believe in discrimination broadly, but I do believe discrimination does occur in employment because I think they see a name and they make a whole range of assumptions. So automatically they think we don't even know if this guy can speak English, so why even waste our time bringing him in and finding out – when there is somebody else with another name. I even have another friend of mine who moved to Melbourne [...] and been trying to get a job as an accountant for a long time. Put in for so many jobs – and changed his name [from Sharif] to Charlie and got a job!

Cultural and religious customs were also seen to limit employment opportunities. One Muslim man, for example, chose to become a casual employee because his boss would not give him time off for Friday prayers. Service providers in the advisory focus group also mentioned that young people from diverse backgrounds were sometimes held back from further education by family expectation to become income earners as soon as possible. Many of the migrant women in the Fawkner focus groups stated that their husbands preferred them to stay at home, while Fawkner service providers noted that Muslim women who wore Islamic dress were limited in the employment market, both because of discrimination and because of cultural limitations imposed by their own cultural expectations, families and communities. The considerably lower labour market participation rates of women in Fawkner, as shown in Table 6, reflect both the large Muslim population and the presence of retirees.

Employment services

There was some cynicism from both residents and service providers about job-seeker agencies and government support programs' ability to assist migrants in finding meaningful work. For skilled migrants, basic help with CVs and job-seeking skills was often not needed. A migrant resident and service provider recalled:

When I got my visa, Centrelink introduced me to one job seeker agency and I went there honestly – like they were teaching me how to do my CV and so on [...] I told them look, I have passed through all these stages that you are talking about. My CV looks more professional probably than your manager's. [...] Then they didn't help me at all and I said probably it's just a means for them to make income on me [...] You know our clients really complain about some agencies, they say 'they waste our time'.

Furthermore, the services provided by many job seeker agencies could not deal with the lack of qualification recognition or employer discrimination for skilled migrants, let alone the more substantial barriers to employment faced by refugee or non-skilled migrants. The service providers in the Advisory Group saw targeted programs that worked with employers to be much more effective than those that just worked with the job seeker. Examples were given of programs that provided initial support for local employers to hire migrants, on the basis that cultural barriers and discrimination were more easily broken down once migrants had access to the workplace and could be seen to be good workers:

Yeah, and once they've tried a few people, they go, "Oh, they're not that bad." But it's generally if they have one person with an issue and they go, "Don't bring me anyone from that community again." So you've got to sort of get the employer back on board.

This was seen to be especially useful for recent 'visibly different' migrant groups, such as African communities, and in case of conservative 'working-class' workplaces. It should be noted that these programs were generally focussed on humanitarian migrants and low-skilled jobs, rather than skilled/professional migrants.

Employment and community

There was a strong sense for many participants that employment was crucial to social cohesion and a sense of community. Many people in both Coburg and Fawkner spoke of the way employment gives not just income, but meaning to people's lives, and a sense of belonging. The struggles faced by new migrants in having their skills and qualifications recognized in the Australian labour market often meant reframing not just career paths, but also identities. Unlike in the past, the diversification of the migrant workforce and the displacement of jobs from residential areas are making it harder for the workplace to be a centre of community-building and social engagement:

I remember when we used to have a manufacturing industry in this area. And those workplaces, and Ford is probably still like that some extent, but those workplaces the TCF industries, had enormously diverse workplaces. Just about everyone worked there, so it was, in a sense, probably a cohesion built around the workplace because that was the work that was there and you probably didn't need to speak a lot of the language to do some of those jobs.

For migrants who struggled to find employment in their fields, alternative ways of generating income had to be sought, particularly for those skilled migrants who were ineligible for government support. Many of these opportunities came from within the community itself. For example the younger Islamic women in Fawkner spoke of running family day-care centres as a source of extra income. This was seen to be a suitable form of income generation for them culturally, as it involved the opportunity to work at home and to mostly have contact with other women. However, a service provider in Fawkner noted that underpayment and exploitation of migrant women was common among the private agencies that organized training and placement of women wanting to work in family day-care.

There was an interesting continuity here as one of the older migrant participants also spoke of caring for neighbours children in her home for a small fee. Her arrangements were, however, informal and did not require agency training or registration. Other participants spoke of migrants finding jobs within their community, either working in co-ethnic small business or becoming active in the community services sector, often initially on a casual basis and then gaining training to continue to work. For several migrant participants, either newly arrived, second generation or retired, primary or secondary careers were built out of their cultural capabilities and their community connections. This speaks to the capacity within communities to find alternative pathways to meaningful employment even if there are barriers to mainstream employment.

The ability of the ethnic community to provide work opportunities when there are barriers to mainstream employment was, however, framed as a ‘double-edged sword’. On the one hand, a cohesive ethnic community provides people with networks to find work. A service provider working with the Muslim community noted that, in Fawkner, the fact that the community is centred around the mosque and school easily connects business owners with job seekers, and also makes it easier for service providers to access the community. He contrasted this with Lebanese youth in Coburg, where there was no ‘centre’ through which to access the community. On the other hand, as the same service provider noted, working for co-ethnic businesses and within the ethnic community can lead to a sense of further exclusion from the wider community:

A lot of my employment opportunities have come through the Muslim community[...]. It promotes social exclusion because if you can't get a job through the regular process, all you are going to do is go back to your ethnic mates who are going to give you a job. That is where real racism exists - is in employment. I really believe that [...] Why couldn't anyone else give me a job? Why did it have to be through this Muslim guy? Okay, even still I probably have a bit of a chip on my shoulder (laugh) and I am still working for an Islamic organisation. So – you know – there are only just – applying for mainstream jobs is so difficult.

There are therefore some indications of the potential of harnessing community capabilities and community businesses to provide employment opportunities, but also an argument to be made for providing programs that address the barriers to mainstream employment and find pathways for employment outside of the community.

Community engagement and cohesion in Coburg and Fawkner

As earlier sections of this report have noted, the experience of community in Moreland seems extremely varied. Coburg could be described as a dynamic ‘multicultural hub’ where growing waves of relatively prosperous, tertiary educated and largely culturally assimilated professionals settle alongside established and more recent (but less visible) migrant groups. Coburg is currently a typical site of ‘cosmopolitan consumption’ where the material and cultural needs of diverse and diversity-loving consumers are met through ‘multicultural entrepreneurship’ giving rise to many small ethnic businesses. An increasing proportion of Coburg residents belong to the ‘multicultural middle class’, while the long-term migrant working class nowadays represents a minority in Coburg (as indicated by the Census data included above).

The commercial life of Sydney Road enables the cosmopolitan consumption, which seems to represent the most visible characteristic of the suburb and its main attraction for its residents and outsiders alike. The Sydney Road precinct is a busy hub where diverse residents and outsiders encounter one another through daily commercial interactions of buying and selling goods and services. However, experiences of community connection through commercial interactions have limits, and can be considered relatively ‘thin’ forms of social capital.

While being the most visible and most popular aspect of Coburg, the busy high street precinct is but one aspect of the life of the suburb, and not necessarily the one most relevant for community cohesion and engagement. ‘Thicker’ community ties are found in the civic life of the suburb, away from the commercial hub, behind the scenes in schools, sports clubs and associations, neighbourhood houses, religious institutions and in everyday neighbourly interactions over the fence and on the street. Those deeper and more substantial community connections also happen through informal meetings in restaurants and coffee shops, as well as people’s homes.

Increasing high-density developments in Coburg are a potential source of tension in the suburb, as they challenge established patterns of use in previously quiet suburban areas. The late night activity and noise of shift workers and students, unfamiliar cooking smells and new pressures on traffic and parking were all mentioned as issues by residents. These activities which in some respects might be seen as signs of a dynamic urban life are at the same time seen as a disruption of the relative quiet and privacy of established suburban living. As Coburg gentrifies there is every chance that the interest of well-off gentrifiers, local developers and other business people will conflict with the interests of lower-income residents over densification, commercialisation and other local issues. Dynamic social change brought about by gentrification indicates progress for some and a loss of cherished old ways for others, in the context of a potential conflict of commercial and community, public and private interests.

Fawkner, by contrast, is an area where the real, hard work of everyday multicultural encounters between people of different backgrounds and different levels of disadvantage is happening in a less visible way. Fawkner's communal hubs are smaller and more dispersed, as the local population has less disposable income to spend in leisure-based consumption. In the environment of 'restricted consumption', public institutions of community interaction such as libraries, community and sports centres, child care centres, educational and health services become even more crucial to the experience of community connectedness.

These institutions are essential to overcoming, or at least compensating for forms of social disadvantage, and the social marginalisation that comes with it. Our research unearthed examples of this kind of community work, at libraries and community centres, which were truly inspiring. However, one community worker made the profoundly important point that these institutions themselves are generally under-resourced and frequently precariously funded, and therefore always concerned about getting cut at the next 'budget crisis'. One community worker described services as 'providing band-aids' for social problems, rather than building strong local communities with high levels of human and social capital, which could 'make themselves well'. The participants in this project seemed broadly aware of a transformed social and economic context where the policy imperatives (and related levels of resources) directed at disadvantaged suburbs and communities seem to be directed to 'keep a lid' on social problems, to stop them getting out of hand, rather than having an emphasis on building thriving communities able to fully participate in economic, social and political life.

There are many ways of describing and measuring social inclusion, and its counterpoint, social marginalisation and disadvantage. In his work *Suburban Scars: Australian cities and socio-economic deprivation*, Baum (2008) identifies Fawkner as a 'Band 1' suburb in the General Deprivation Index, that is, in the category of Australia's most disadvantaged suburbs. What struck us in the course of our research project however, was the general optimism and resilience among our interviewees that did not seem consistent with this statistical measure of deprivation. Similarly, a council officer observed that:

[...] Fawkner looks like quite a neat suburb. One of my main observations about Moreland is some of the areas are in fact quite disadvantaged on paper and don't kind of look disadvantaged. And the problems are very contained in the houses.

This becomes apparent when we delve a little deeper into Baum's statistical method: the demographic factors he identifies as indicators of social deprivation are prevalent in Fawkner. These factors include: populations of older people (65+); those requiring assistance with daily tasks (disability, age); recent migrants with limited English; single parents; Indigenous people; people on lowest 10% of incomes; and those unemployed and under employment. Households experiencing more than one of these factors are at even higher risk of social disadvantage, and concentrations of such households compound and entrench the disadvantage across a neighbourhood and a suburb, hence the dramatic language of 'suburban scars'. Baum (2008: 32) explains the significance of these Band 1 suburbs in the following terms:

The band 1 suburbs are Australia's equivalent of the urban ghettos in the United States. The social and economic conditions might be at variance, but these are excluded places all the same and are likely to face the same issues of dependence, limited political participation, restricted socio-cultural integration, bad neighbourhood pathologies and, above all, increasing deprivation [...]. In short, the prognosis of ongoing scarring deserves our full policy attention.

Consistent with Baum's work, our research identified three main groups in danger of social marginalisation in Fawkner. These were elderly residents, especially those from non-English speaking backgrounds; newly arrived Muslim residents because of 'street racism' and violence and social engagement and inclusion of Muslim women who are 'stay at home' wives and mothers and employment of Muslim men and especially occupational downgrading; and all newly arrived migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds dealing with the issue of employment. Some of these new migrants (possibly as many as 20% according to one informant) are on new forms of precarious temporary and bridging visas as students, temporary graduate 485 visa-holders and 457 skilled temporary visa-holders. They can easily fall through the cracks in a system designed primarily for settler-migrants, because they lack the access to social services and other rights afforded to permanent residents and citizens. As such, they face new forms of disadvantage and discrimination in employment and housing, and are ineligible for welfare support and government subsidised health care and education. These temporary migrants are also particularly vulnerable to exploitation and manipulation by employers and landlords while they struggle to establish a basic foothold on the ladder of social opportunity, primarily through housing and employment. Service providers who are wholly or partially government-funded are often restricted in the level of assistance they can provide these migrants, and non-government community services are often uncertain where to refer them to.

Higher barriers to employment entry tend to particularly effect young people and recently arrived migrants and have a series of cascading effects on the experience of community. The men's focus group in Fawkner reflected this change profoundly, with the older men's experience of community having been driven from their participation, as well as their wives' participation, in the labour-intensive workplaces of the industrial era. One man, Vick, recalled fondly the sense of equality and shared community at work that cut across other divisions in the neighbourhood. He said how one of the engineers from the Broadmeadows Ford plant who was also a resident of Fawkner insisted he be called by his first name as a neighbour and fellow employee at the plant. This contrasted with the generally much more difficult and diverse employment experiences of the recently arrived migrant men, especially from Muslim backgrounds, and a general exclusion of their wives from employment outside the home as a cultural preference. One life-long Anglo-Australian resident of Fawkner made insightful connections between changing employment opportunities and the experience of community:

If we had maintained those (industries) and people kept in gainful, meaningful employment, you wouldn't have the social fallout, would you? So on one level you have got to find meaningful things

for people to do within the area and points of intersection where they come together in a meaningful way, not just in a superficial way. I don't know how you achieve that in a small place like Fawkner and there is now such a mix of people and because of the scare tactics, the scare campaigns that have gone on about Muslims etc. etc. and crime, people have become more insular, more inclined to lock their doors and not talk to anyone. Although sure, in any given street in Fawkner there are people who still talk to one another and they go in one another's houses [...] . I am sure that happens, you can't wipe that out completely. But points of social integration [...] usually hinge on cultural activities, around cultural activities that don't offend. And people being meaningfully and gainfully employed or occupied in their lives as opposed to being resentful and jealous of what someone else has that you think you should have also and you don't.

In contrast, unemployment, underemployment and the consequent economic deprivation represent an unwelcome but almost certain basis for social isolation and a consequent host of social pathologies. Similarly, the tendency for women who come from conservative Muslim households or who have limited English to stay out of the formal labour market is a basis of potential social isolation and marginalisation. Maisa, for example from Iraq, 20 years in Australia and 15 years in Fawkner, is a stay-at-home mother who relies for support on her immediate and extended family, who all live in Fawkner. Otherwise she does not talk to her neighbours much, as 'people stay at home all the time [...] sometimes I see them in the garden'. Similarly Assi, from Lebanon, in Fawkner for 23 years, is also a stay-at-home-mother of five. She 'says hello to her neighbours but that's all' and has no extended family in Fawkner.

In this context, community hubs like neighbourhood houses and libraries are extremely important for building day-to-day social connections and overcoming the isolation of most vulnerable residents. Many of the women in the Fawkner focus group were clear about the importance of the Fawkner Community House for them. Some of the older migrant women had been coming to English classes for many years, and the knitting group who knitted blankets for homelessness services and the food bank allowed elderly and migrant residents who were not in full-time employment to contribute to community service at the same time as having valuable social engagement. The younger, recently arrived Muslim women in Fawkner with young children also emphasized the value of children's story at the library and women's only swimming at the leisure centre, as spaces in which they can connect with other mothers and children. Some of these women are getting involved in home-based childcare and craft businesses providing opportunities for broader social connection, service provision and generating much needed income.

Small initiatives such as the Fawkner library photographic competition, which engaged older residents, students from Darul Ulum College and others in the neighbourhood, or the Community House hosting dinners for the Muslim festivity of Eid, create space and opportunities for communication and building a sense of local connection. Similarly, programs that recognise the needs of specific groups based on age, gender and language background help overcome some of the factors of isolation. The senior women's shopping group and men's shed program are illustrative examples.

The growing proportion of elderly retired people in Moreland face challenges of social isolation as they stay in the suburbs they helped build in previous decades while they raised their families and joined in community activity. For those older people of non-Anglophone backgrounds, staying connected can be even more challenging as family and friends move away, age, die, and the fabric of the old familiar community keeps unravelling. The rapidly aging Italians of Fawkner are the best such example. One interviewee who arrived from Italy in 1957 and lived in Fawkner for the past 41 years said she, 'liked Brunswick more because at least there were people around. It's too lonely here. Especially at night, but even during the day you don't see anyone. There's no-one about in the streets.' She said she knew her neighbours, but 'never sees anyone'. These older residents were a great source of local historical information in our interviews, and held a deep affection for the neighbourhoods they had spent most of their lives in. There are definitely opportunities for more inter-generational contact and recognition of these older residents, and their history in and contribution to these neighbourhoods.

At the same time a long time Anglo-Australian Fawkner resident cautioned against romanticising Fawkner's past, as did the men in the Coburg focus group. They identified that even in the 'golden age of full employment' in the 1950s and 1960s, these areas were known for racism, violence, petty street crime and gang conflict, and are probably in many ways safer now than they were for much of the post-war period. This sentiment was shared by women in two Fawkner focus groups and some older migrant residents of Fawkner who were interviewed for the project. Most residents felt safe in their neighbourhoods and thought things were generally improving, with the notable exceptions of Muslim women, who have fears about their safety in the street and on public transport, particularly outside their immediate neighbourhood. A service provider recalled one incident,

Well, I've just had women tell me they're too scared to catch a bus because of the violence, of people screaming at them on the bus. Even the drivers. [...] We took a group of women on an excursion to Richmond right, and, because we were trying to, it was a fair trade shop and we were trying to get some of the women's embroidery work taken by this shop. Anyway, and so they wanted to come, so we took them down to Victoria Street, and it was really amazing. We all went for a walk and everyone in the shops, all Vietnamese shopkeepers were bringing us in and saying here try this, you know, very interesting, and all the Anglos driving through Richmond were hanging out their windows screaming at these women, and then this huge great bus – not bus, truck, and we were over here and it was going the other direction, veered in front of all the traffic and came to try and run them over.

Social service providers working across the City of Moreland made some very important observations about social cohesion in the area. One of the most important was the shift to increasingly diverse experiences of community. One City of Moreland employee mentioned the way relatively small communities can become socially isolated, increasingly inward-looking and excluded from multiple forms of social participation as a result. While much of the focus in Moreland is on fairly large recently-arrived migrant communities, particularly Muslim migrants from Muslim-majority countries, there are smaller groups with very specific needs. This service provider made the point that those smaller, more insular communities struggle to 'build bridges out into the wider community' through employment,

cultural events and so on. By implication, larger communities, such as those organised around fairly large religious schools or institutions like mosques or churches, have more opportunity to make connections both within a bigger 'ethnic' or religious community and to build 'bridging social capital' with the wider community.

On the other hand, the relative size and visibility of Muslim communities in Australia can be a cause of disadvantage. While there is a great diversity of ethnicity, culture, language, nation of origin and forms of religiosity among Muslims in Australia (and in Moreland), there has been a tendency in the popular imagination to see 'Muslims' as a homogenous group. Added to this are negative stereotypes that associate Islam and Muslims with the 'War on Terror' agenda of Australian and other Western security agendas, which has given rise to Muslims becoming one of the most racialised and negatively stereotyped groups both in Australia, and in the West generally (Noble and Poynting 2010). Previous community consultation by Council (2011) also points to discrimination against women in Islamic dress as an issue. The national meta-framing of the experiences of Muslims in Moreland has an effect both at the level of being able to experience a sense of national belonging, and conversely a sense of belonging at the local level (Noble and Poynting 2010).

These framing narratives of stereotyping and racism have concrete effects on people's lives: employment opportunities, forms of community participation, the experience of health and wellbeing and so on, with cascading social consequences. While our Muslim informants were clearly aware of the forms of stigma and discrimination, others were at pains to emphasise their sense of belonging and social inclusion at the local level, in positive refusal to get drawn into a narrative of marginality. In the Fawkner men's focus group, these moments included stories of strong social bonds with non-Muslim neighbours, positive experiences in the labour market and a general sense of safety on the street. Women's focus groups on the other hand reflected a more ambivalent experience of social inclusion, which may reflect the different visibility of Muslim women wearing burkha or hijab, making them vulnerable to random hostility in public, and the relative isolation of not working outside the home.

Note must be made also of the different experience of long-established Turkish and Lebanese Muslim communities in Moreland who, upon arrival, had the opportunity to participate in the manufacturing boom which provided full employment on arrival. Many members of these communities now have established businesses and have considerable economic, social and cultural capital in the context of Australian society. The commercial fabric of Sydney Road is woven by precisely such businesses and the entrepreneurial migrants behind them. Interestingly, these established Muslim communities are far less visible to the broader population as 'Muslims' than some more recently arrived migrants. The history of migration is replete with such narratives of established ethnic communities as 'model citizens' while the visible new arrivals are stigmatised. Russian Jewish migrants arriving in Melbourne in the 1930s were sometimes characterised this way, in contrast to the Anglicised Jews well established in Australian social and institutional life (MMA 2013).

This more generalised context of dispersed social anxieties around visible forms of Muslim difference such as Islamic dress, the presence of a mosque, observance of prayer times or gender segregation is a complex matter, and important in thinking about the future possibilities for social cohesion in Moreland, Fawkner in particular. As this report has noted at various points, one of the biggest shifts in the demographics of Fawkner has been the recent arrival of a significant number of Muslim families from a range of countries attracted by the Islamic Darul Ulum College. The school informed us they are full, and have a growing waiting list of parents seeking to have their children admitted. As a consequence of Fawkner being both attractive to new migrants generally, and specifically Muslims drawn to the area by the school, Muslims now make up a quarter of the population of Fawkner. Demographically Muslims are a much younger group than the Anglo, Italian and other established groups resident in the area, who comprise the bulk of the older population of Fawkner (16% over 70 years of age). Despite the decreasing affordability of housing in Fawkner (purchase price of houses nearly doubling since 2007 and rents increasing by a third), it remains relatively attractive for new migrants, and it would seem likely that the Muslim population in the suburb will grow further.

The Fawkner men's focus group was fascinating for giving a snapshot of the suburban community. Reflecting an aspect of Australia's skilled migration policy, all the Muslim participants in that group had tertiary education qualifications, whereas only one of the older Fawkner residents did. Many of them had faced difficulty finding employment related to their qualifications. Most of these men explained they had moved to Fawkner because of the school, the Darul Ulum College, and its emphasis on Arabic language and Koranic studies, and a fairly conservative interpretation of Islam. This kind of 'neo-traditional' religious identity is a contemporary trend within all faiths, and some adherents (frequently the more educated) seek a return to a more pure or 'traditional' version of their religion—often a contemporary interpretation of the traditional life of the community from which they come. Such return to tradition can be comforting and orienting for people experiencing the upheavals and transformations of everyday 'liquid life' brought about by rapid social change: new economic relations, global migration, changing education and employment opportunity, changing status of women and young people, decline in the traditional authority of elders, religious authorities, fathers and family. In short, these transformations can be pretty unsettling, even for people embracing many of the opportunities—for example education, employment and global migration—that come with them.

It seems that Darul Ulum College is a key institution for giving recent migrants with varying degrees of these neo-traditional tendencies a positive and purposeful focus in the education of their children and for their own sense of community. In Australian society, education is a key vehicle for social engagement and social mobility, and the education and employment outcomes for students from the school will be a key indicator of the future wellbeing of the Muslim community in Fawkner. Our respondents, including school parents and staff, indicated their aspiration that the school's academic focus combined with traditional Islamic values and learning will lead to future opportunities for their children while maintaining a strong Islamic ethno-religious and 'moral' identity. Residents in the focus group also

expressed concern with ‘academic standards’ and a reputation for ‘discipline problems’ at the local co-educational government secondary John Fawkner College, which explicitly caters for multiple education and employment pathways including the vocational training (VCAL) stream rather than exclusively focussing on the academic VCE. It must be noted that the State Government invested new funds in the school in 2009 to turn perceptions of the school around, with some success.

To a great extent, the success of the Islamic college in Fawkner will be measured by the extent to which their children are able to undertake education and employment beyond the ‘Muslim community’ without discrimination or exclusion. Should obstacles be thrown in the path of this kind of social inclusion by either educational failure or mainstream discrimination, the consequence would be to drive some members of the community into a defensive identification with marginality and exclusion, and possibly further retreat into neo-traditional lifestyles. More significantly it would reinforce and reproduce the kinds of socio-economic disadvantage Baum (2008) describes as ‘urban scars’, as opposed to the vibrant, diverse and dynamic community that so many of the people of Fawkner we engaged with aspire towards. Once again, these risks were articulated brilliantly by a local youth worker, speaking here specifically about the importance of local government (his references to ‘council’ below are to the City of Moreland):

I think very seriously about social cohesion – I think things right now are going fine but I do see the future where things can go wrong. Because – like I said in Fawkner you do have quite a lot of Muslim people moving in because of the mosque and you do have a lot of Anglos moving out. [...] They don’t do anything, no one screams at each other, but there is still a bit of suspicion there. For me, I think it is really about forcing the mosques to be out engaging more with the neighbours, getting the neighbours to engage with the mosque. That’s the thing, council plays such an important role in connecting people, it has that power. But it doesn’t do it very well. [...] There is an opportunity there that council’s not taking which is actually to bring people together. So council tends to say things – even, you know, talking to (a senior Moreland Council official) about this issue he says, ‘new migrants are just a bit shy, you know. Give them a generation or two and everyone will be getting along’. Maybe that’s true, but we can’t wait a generation. And also, what happens if you end up like London where, you know, three generations down they are still not able to speak English properly and they are still living in [...] a ghetto. You can’t risk that situation. [When] immigration in a suburb becomes so high then all the white people that are left over, just leave. It’s called ‘white flight’. So very much that’s what’s happening in Fawkner. People are just getting so scared – see so many burkhas in the street they just want to leave. So that is when a place really does become a ghetto.

Interviews and focus groups revealed some (restrained) anxiety about this change in the religious/ethnic composition of the neighbourhood from older residents, and for one newly resident family a concern about this community’s cultural difference. Capturing the softly expressed edge of this ‘white flight’ a woman in the Coburg focus group said:

I see it in, you know, you’ll have Anglo groups a bit intimidated by different Muslim groups or that kind of stuff. I was speaking to a gentleman who’s been living in Fawkner for two years and who’s had his child in there for maybe the last two years. [...] He’s the only Anglo kid at the school. [...] But yeah he’s pulling his kid out because he’s saying that, it’s not the fact that his kid is the only Anglo kid, he’s just saying that this kid, it’s a different culture. He’s saying the kids don’t have

birthday parties like they used to and no-one invites each other over for sleepovers. He says he's finding it very hard to, it's very religious as well. [...] he doesn't feel it's an inclusive area at all to bring up his kids so he's going to move all the way down to Coburg. [

Despite such stories, and the possible scenarios discussed above, our research found the bulk of everyday community interactions in Moreland to be overwhelming positive or at least neutral. As one Muslim service provider said, 'I think Moreland at the moment the thing I like – it is quite a peaceful place which is a huge strength. There isn't a lot of tension... There is a relative ease about the place. There isn't much tension between communities here. The area is really not divided'. However, the crucial issue for the future is whether the new arrivals, Muslims and others, will be able to build the 'weak ties' or 'bridging social capital' with the wider community, in the educational and employment arenas, as the key bases for a more comprehensive social inclusion which includes residential mixing, mixed social networks and inter-marriage, as shown by past examples of migrant 'integration' and inclusion (Waters and Jimenez 2005; Colic-Peisker 2011a; 2011b).

PART FOUR

Conclusions and Recommendations

Concluding observations

Both Coburg and Fawkner epitomise multicultural neighbourhoods 'in transition'. This report has utilized multiple research methods to gain an understanding not only of the suburbs' overall profiles and current demographic change, but also of residents' and community services providers' perspectives on how these changes are impacting on their communities, with a particular focus on housing and employment as fundamental elements of community wellbeing. Both suburbs have, as demonstrated by the 2011 Census data included in this report, high levels of ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity. Both suburbs are also accepting many new arrivals to the area, resulting in shifting socio-demographic profiles. Whereas in Fawkner new arrivals are more likely to be recent immigrants attracted by relatively affordable housing and established cultural and religious communities, in Coburg they are more likely to be middle-class 'gentrifiers' attracted by the consumer-cosmopolitan lifestyle. Both suburbs have also been significantly affected by structural economic changes over the past decades, particularly in terms of the de-industrialization of Melbourne's north and the subsequent decreases in local manufacturing jobs.

In our discussions with long-term residents we have heard that Fawkner has evolved from under-developed tracts of land, including farmland and bushland, into a relatively geographically insular community, somewhat separated from the rest of the rapidly gentrifying inner northern suburbs by its lack of accessible transport and persistent levels of socio-economic disadvantage. Coburg, in contrast, has always been a bustling and ethnically diverse neighbourhood, but in the past had a distinctly working-class profile. Currently, gentrification is seeing more middle-class residents moving in to the area, attracted by the

lifestyle of cosmopolitan consumption offered by a range of ‘ethnic’ small businesses along the commercial centre of Sydney Road. The gentrification of Coburg, has, for most residents we met, meant safer streets and more inclusive public venues, but also anxieties about rising housing prices and the negative impacts of higher density housing developments. As has occurred in neighbouring Brunswick and Fitzroy, former commercial and light industrial buildings are gradually being redeveloped into contemporary medium and high density housing, the heritage facades reminding of the area’s working class past. The Union Knitting Mills building on Munro Street is one such example.

Housing and employment have clear implications for social cohesion in both suburbs, but often not in straightforward ways. While rising prices concern residents in both suburbs, there is also a general antipathy towards higher density housing. Higher density housing is seen to neither meet affordability goals nor improve community cohesion, and is framed by residents as simultaneously decreasing privacy and limiting genuine encounters of neighbourliness. The lack of social housing in both areas also means the marginalized groups identified in the Moreland Affordable Housing Strategy (2006) continue to be at risk of housing stress. But it must also be noted that there are some vulnerable groups who would nonetheless be ineligible for social housing, such as newly arrived skilled settlers and temporary migrants.

Employment options within the suburbs are limited, and recent migrants, especially those ‘visibly different’, seem to be a key group suffering from unemployment or underemployment. Job seeking services are generally seen to be very limited in their capacity to assist culturally diverse clients, although there were some success stories from service providers of employment programs that worked to break down barriers by encouraging and supporting local businesses to hire staff from migrant communities. There is evidence in our findings of the value of current Council initiatives, such as the OxYgen Project, to facilitate the participation of young people from diverse backgrounds in employment and education, and the importance of ensuring that newly arrived migrants, temporary migrants and women are especially targeted for inclusion in existing employment programs.

Another issue that links employment with community relations are misconceptions that seem widespread among long-term migrants about employment and settlement services and assistance offered to recent migrants. Older migrants tend to believe that newly arrived communities received significant amounts of government assistance and had an easy time settling in, experiences that were not at all reflected in the narratives of the newly arrived migrants themselves. In fact, de-industrialization and a diversified labour market not only mean that jobs are more difficult to come by for new migrants, but that the workplace can no longer function as a locus of community interaction and intercultural engagement as it has in the past.

Overall, participant attitudes to diversity in focus groups and interviews reflect broader nation-wide trends identified in quantitative research, such as the Scanlon Foundation’s

(2007) 'Mapping Social Cohesion' surveys. A vast majority of residents in both suburbs feel generally positive about cultural diversity, but a significant minority had experienced ethnic discrimination, either in employment or in daily life. Finally, while Coburg is gentrifying into a hub of 'cosmopolitan consumption', the presence of the Fawkner mosque and Darul Ulum College, and the subsequent increase in Muslim residents means that Fawkner is developing into an area with elements of an 'ethnic enclave.' While the robust Muslim community provides some significant advantages in terms of community support for new arrivals and co-ethnic employment opportunities, there are risks of marginalization from the wider community through developing insularities. Day-to-day interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim residents in Fawkner are generally described as benign, if not friendly, but discrimination in the labour market and racist harassment in public spaces are a great concern. Grassroots connections developing between the college and the local Community House, and the general sense of good will in shared community spaces show that there is great opportunity in Fawkner for the community to flourish. Both suburbs have great capacity for ongoing social cohesion, particularly given that the many of the issues identified in this report align with Council's current strategic action plans (Moreland City Council 2006, 2011).

The two broad areas of concern for the future development of the two suburbs are in Coburg, the risks of increasing inequality as a result on gentrification, and in Fawkner, the potential for elements of 'ghettoization' due to existing socio-economic disadvantage and potential marginalization of the growing Muslim community.

Overall, there is clearly an important space of action in both suburbs for Council to continue with current strategies around housing, employment and social cohesion, as well as to investigate new initiatives in terms of economic stimulation, workforce engagement, affordable housing and community development. The comparison of Coburg and Fawkner shows that different suburbs with different socio-economic profiles deal with different challenges around social cohesion and social change. The following recommendations represent broad areas of possibility in local policy development on the basis of the findings of the report, and on the basis of stakeholder consultation conducted in a workshop discussing the report's findings, held with Council staff and local service providers. We acknowledge that many of these issues are currently being addressed on various levels by both Council initiatives and by other service providers in the area. We also acknowledge that some of the issues raised are relevant to state and federal policymaking as well as local policy. Therefore, rather than being policy directives in and of themselves, these recommendations should instead be read as openings for policy discussion and as spaces of ongoing collaboration between Council, community service providers and residents.

Best Practice Policy Recommendations

These recommendations have been developed in consultation with Moreland Council staff and local service providers. They encompass strategies for stakeholder and community engagement, suggestions for program development and implementation, and focus points for Council advocacy.

Employment and Training

- Focus on activities that promote opportunities for skills training, entrepreneurship and income generation
- Engage community leaders in program development and implementation
- Improve cross-cultural knowledge and skills of local service providers, particularly in employment services
- Develop advocacy on state and federal government initiatives around local job creation
- Investigate the value of using community role models or mentors to guide young people
- Develop employment programs that include collaboration between job seekers, local employers/business owners, education providers and existing community institutions such as churches and mosques. Work experience/recognised qualifications should be key outcomes of these programs, and they should be open to all regardless of visa category
- More research and community consultation may be needed to look at gender issues in employment
- Develop local small business and entrepreneurship capacities
- Consider a roundtable on labour market discrimination involving employers and residents

Housing

- Advocacy on state and federal government initiatives around housing affordability
- Continue to investigate potential for co-housing/co-operative housing initiatives, and support grassroots initiative from residents
- Create simple, safe and culturally appropriate means for residents to report housing issues such as overcrowding and local safety issues
- Raise awareness in communities of the benefits of affordable, higher-density housing
- Create ways for new housing developments to maintain spaces that encourage community engagement (e.g. 'soft edges', communal vegetable gardens, child care options)
- Developing more 'mixed' housing, i.e. developments that combine affordable, social and standard housing such as the Nicholson apartments in Coburg
- Develop advocacy and awareness strategies for the real estate industry in order to address the discrimination against refugees and migrants in the rental market

- Advocate for better access to state and federal level programs such as Neighbourhood Renewal, possibly by comparing outcomes in areas that were funded with those that were not

Community Engagement

- Recognise and promote success stories and effective strategies for community engagement
- Moreland Council already has demonstrated excellent capability in bringing diverse cultural groups together to share stories as part of their Multicultural Action Plan (2011-2015). Further work in this area could promote sharing of employment experiences between established migrants and recent arrivals, perhaps in collaboration with employment service providers
- Promote the role of older residents as custodians of local community histories, and find appropriate ways to record and publicly represent, narrate and honour this role
- Expand existing opportunities for gender-specific participation in community events in order to engage conservative Muslim women
- Increase community understanding of the level of consultation that the Council undertakes with communities, particularly around the Community Plans for 2020
- Improve communication between residents and the Council; promote awareness about Council services through varied avenues, including community newspapers, more translation of information into community languages, and through social media
- Sustain and further develop links to community-based non-profit organizations

Holistic Approaches

- ‘Defragment’ local services, especially those for recent migrants and adopt a more ‘holistic’ approach, where service provider agencies collaborate rather than compete with each other
- Acknowledge the employment and housing issues faced by both skilled settlers and temporary migrants and create ways to secure access of these groups to local services
- Rethink the role of Council’s Place Management staff to more fully encompass social and community issues as well as planning and development strategies
- Develop capacity to address intergenerational issues in migrant communities through family-based programs and programs that bring different age groups together
- Build on the connections, resources and ‘good will’ at existing community hubs such as community houses and libraries in order to promote new initiatives
- Develop collaborative planning responses through knowledge sharing with other LGAs in Melbourne’s north.

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